



PALOS HEIGHTS
PUBLIC LIBRARY

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Palos Heights Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
October 17, 2024

Library News

Parking lot construction is set to begin on October 14th. The library will be closed the 14th thru the 16th as those are the days the curbs and sidewalks will be torn up. There will be no way for patrons or staff to safely access the building without these sidewalks. Staff will be working remotely during this time. We will reopen on the 17th with the paving work still underway, so street parking will be the order of the day for the remainder of construction. As long as weather cooperates, we expect construction to conclude on the 21st with the parking lot reopening on the 22nd. I will have more information for you at our meeting.

Our 6th annual Fan Con event was another huge success! On September 28th, we had a fun-filled day that was attended by approximately 445 people. There was a game room with video games, board games, and a basketball shooter, which was busy all day. People enjoyed the craft room from open to close, and the giveaways and scavenger hunt were a big hit. And of course our Mario Kart tournament on the big screen was a lot of fun. Kudos to Christina and the rest of the committee for organizing a very smooth event that had a lot of moving parts.

Building & Grounds News

There isn't a whole lot to report in terms of building and grounds. The parking lot is the big news. We have a couple of dying trees that I plan to have removed in the spring. We continue to make needed repairs to keep our aging HVAC system running smoothly. There are no indications of pending systemic failure, so I hope that small repairs as needed here and there will keep the system functioning well for a long time to come. The Building & Grounds Committee will meet immediately prior to our regular meeting to do our annual building walk-through.

Budget News

Our FY2025 Budget and FY2024 Levy have been submitted to the City. The City's Finance Director has confirmed that everything looks good from their end. There have been no further tax disbursements, and none are expected at this point. Our balances remain strong, and our spending is steady. Even with the large expense of the parking lot project, we are very well situated as we approach the end of the fiscal year.

Upcoming Events

- Thursday, October 17th – Building & Grounds Committee, 6:00pm
- Thursday, October 17th – Regular Board Meeting, 7:00pm
- Saturday, October 26th – Friends Ice Cream Social,
- Monday, November 11th – Veterans Day Reception, 11:30am
- Thursday, November 21st – Regular Board Meeting, 7:00pm
- Tuesday, December 3rd – Madrigal Singers, 7:00pm
- Friday, December 6th – Kringle Market, 5:00pm-9:00pm
- Saturday, December 7th – Kringle Market, 10:00am-5:00pm
- Sunday, December 15th – Holiday Party, 5:30pm

Agenda Items

Item 1: Approval of Donated Artwork in Memory of Elenor Hawley

After our September meeting, Trustee Rhodes got to work on reimagining a memorial for Elenor Hawley that would keep with the family's wishes but also better fit our aesthetic at the proposed budget. She came up with the following design:



I sent this to Celeste Kappel to discuss with the family, and they have given their approval. So all that is left is for you to approve the design. Then we can move forward with the project.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve this design in memory of Elenor Hawley.

Item 2: Parking Lot Repaving

As stated above, construction is expected to be well underway when we meet this month. We had a kickoff meeting with the engineer, contractor, and owner's representative on 10/1 to discuss the project in detail, including timeline and whether closing could be avoided. We determined that there would be no safe way to access the building with the sidewalks torn out, so closing for that portion of the project is unavoidable. Permitting was finalized on 10/7. It should be wrapping up well short of the original two-week estimate.

Recommendation: No action needed at this time.

Item 3: 2025 Library Closing Dates

There are no surprises with regard to next year's closing dates. In addition to the normal holidays, we have our two staff in-service days and the three customary early closing days on July 3rd, July 17th, and November 26th.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the list of 2025 library closing dates.

Item 4: 2025 Board Meeting Dates

I have laid out our schedule of meetings for next year according to our current practice of meeting on the third Thursday of each month at 7pm, with the exceptions of July and December.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the list of 2025 board meeting dates.

Item 5: Staff Appreciation Awards

I have calculated the staff appreciation awards for the year, per our policy. That policy is also included in the packet, for your reference. The total amount of the awards for this year is \$4,400, which is within budget.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the annual staff appreciation awards in the total amount of \$4,400.

Item 6: Palmer Award

It is that time of year again when we recognize community members or organizations who have had an exceptional impact on the library. I have two proposals for you this year. The first is Marge Damm. Marge passed away in January. She was a very longtime member of the Friends of the Library and one of the core members of that group for many years. She was a fixture at our book sales. She was a regular when it came to sorting books. She served as their Vice President and kept track of the membership list. While she has received recognition from the library in the past as a member of the Friends, I don't believe that she was ever recognized individually. Nor would she probably have wanted to be, as she was an incredibly humble person who served without any desire for praise. Nonetheless, I can think of no more deserving person for this recognition, and I only wish that we had done so before her brief illness and passing.

The other proposal that I have for you is Bill Poore. Bill is the current president of the Friends of the Library and has been for many years. He is the glue that holds that group together, and he has put many hours and a lot of sweat into making their work a success. He is also a former library trustee, so he has decades of service to the library under his belt. Bill has had some health issues recently, and that prompted me to want to put him forward so that he can be recognized in person and while he is still active with us. He was given the Palmer Award in 2014 for his work with the Board. I believe it appropriate to recognize him again, this time for his work with the Friends.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the Palmer Award for Marge Damm and Bill Poore.

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse Blazek
Library Director