



PALOS HEIGHTS
PUBLIC LIBRARY

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Palos Heights Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
November 21, 2024

Library News

Parking Lot

The big news this month was supposed to be the completion of the parking lot. And that project went quite smoothly. Construction was 99% complete after one week, with the parking lot being reopened to patrons on Monday, October 21st. Touch up work was completed in the following days. And we now have a nice, new parking lot. There were two substantive additions to the original plan. First, we made the call to have them demo and replace the curb directly in front of the entrance. That section of the curb was in fine shape, but it was always an inch or two higher than felt right. Having them tear it out and replace it was a minimal addition. And the new curb height might be the most noticeable feature of the new parking lot for me. It is much more natural to step up on, and I believe this will be a welcome change for many of our oldest and youngest patrons. The other change from the original plan was the need for a fair amount of additional gravel to grade the subsurface appropriately and make sure the sewer drains were adjusted to the right height. I'm relieved to have this project done before another winter of ice could create more problems with the old surface.

New Head of Tech/Circ

However, this project did not turn out to be the big news of the month. Susana accepted a new position as Head of Access Services at the Downers Grove Library. While I will miss her dearly, it's hard not to see this is a significant step forward in her young career. Susana gave eight years of hard work to this library and leaves behind a very smoothly functioning department with a staff that is eager to continue improving. Susana's last day with us was November 7th. While I was caught completely off guard by her announcement, I knew exactly who I wanted to talk with about taking over as our new Head of Technical Services.

Lorena and I have discussed her long-term career goals, and one of those was to return to working in Technical Services at some point. Lorena began her library career in Tech, and she always enjoyed the work. While she has grown very nicely into her role as our Head of Circulation, she and I were both aware that this wasn't going to be her ideal long-term position. Being the Head of a Technical Services Department might be the long-term fit that she has been looking for. Knowing this, seeing how Lorena has grown as a manager, and wanting to find a way to keep her with us long-term, moving her over to Tech struck me as potentially a great way of picking up where Susana left off. After talking it over, I offered

Lorena the position, and she accepted. As of November 11th, Lorena became our new Head of Technical Services.

Which meant that my attention turned to finding a new Head of Circulation. I posted the job internally and externally and immediately began receiving responses from very well-qualified people. This was perhaps the strongest applicant pool that I have ever seen. Of the 30+ applicants, I conducted 7 first-round interviews. Second-round interviews are underway with four of those applicants. I hope to get this process wrapped up and a new hire made by Thanksgiving.

Veterans Day Reception

We held our annual Veterans Day reception on the 11th, with a light lunch generously provided by library staff. We had approximately 25 attendees, and it was a nice opportunity to honor some of our local veterans.

Hawley Memorial

Thanks to Trustee Rhodes for purchasing materials and creating the pictures for the approved memorial for Elenor Hawley. Those pictures will be hung in the Reading Room shortly, along with a plaque that I still have to have made. This project will be completed in the coming days.

Building & Grounds News

We continue to patch up our HVAC and technology systems. We had to replace the seals on the two hot water pumps that send hot water from the boilers to the rest of the building. We also had to replace our wifi access points throughout the building as some of the older access points were starting to fail. These were on our Capital Needs Assessment for replacement last year.

Budget News

Our budget continues to be healthy. As is always the case as we draw near to the end of the fiscal year, we are running out of money in particular budget lines. But our bank balances remain healthy at well over \$1 million as the year draws to a close. October's spending was higher than normal due to it being a three-payroll month.

Upcoming Events

- 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 1a: McGill Construction Pay App 1

This pay application is for the originally approved items, the parking lot, curbs and sidewalks that were approved as the original scope of this project. As is customary in construction, 10% of the total cost is retained by the owner until the project has reached 100% completion.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve immediate payment to McGill Construction in the amount of \$89,205.30.

Item 1b: McGill Construction Change Order 1

During construction, a few items came up that were outside of the scope of the original project specifications. We included an additional \$10,000 in the project budget in anticipation of this kind of expense. The items that came up were as follows:

- Replacing the entire curb in front of the main entrance rather than leaving the 30' in place that was originally proposed. The cost for this was \$1,260.00.
- Replacing two parking barriers that were cracked/broken and unable to be reused. The cost for this was \$200.00.
- Providing an additional 127 tons of gravel to provide a level subsurface. It was discovered when the old asphalt was removed that it was thicker than anticipated in some places. More gravel had to be brought in to level out the subsurface prior to laying asphalt. The cost for this was \$4,555.15.
- Adjusting the existing sewer and water valves. This was to adjust the height of our existing fixtures to match the new grade perfectly. This was not really a surprise, but we didn't know whether or not this would really be necessary until the paving started. The cost for this was \$1,300.00.
- SECCO testing, AKA the "proof roll." We knew that this testing wasn't included in the original project scope, but we didn't know how much it would be until they came to do it. It came out a lot lower than the \$4,000 we had budgeted for it. The cost for this was \$1,050.00.

In total, the change orders came to a total of \$8,265.15, which was below the contingency amount that we had planned for.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the changes in Change Order 1 at a total cost of \$8,265.15.

Item 1c: McGill Construction Final Payment

While we don't have the final bill from McGill Construction yet, we do know what that amount is going to be. It will be the remaining 10% retention from the original pay application along with the changes

approved in Change Order 1. So that we don't have to wait until January to make the payment, I'm putting it before you this month.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve payment on the final invoice from McGill Construction, once it comes through, in the amount of \$18,16.85.

Item 2: Serving Our Public 4.0 Review

Please see the additional narrative in this month's meeting packet.

Recommendation: No action needed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse Blazek
Library Director