**Library Director’s Report**

**January 2022**

**Restoration of NYS Aid (2022 Budget) [Action Item]**

In early 2021, when we first created the 2022 budget, we were working with reduced State Aid of 22 percent, so we produced (and ultimately adopted) a budget that took those cuts into account. Later in 2021, however, State Aid had been restored, and we received the extra money that was due to us. I did not remember put the restored Aid back into the 2022 budget, which the Board formally adopted in December 2021, so the Board will need to amend the 2022 budget to reflect the increased State Aid amounts of:

* $7,096 Local Sponsor Incentive Aid (previously budgeted amount was $5,034), an increase of $2,042
* $32,249 State Aid – Central Library Development (previously budgeted amount was $23,227), an increase of $9,022
* $12,664 Other CCLS Grants (previously budgeted amount was $12.150), an increase of $494
* $14,793 Central Book Aid (CBA) (previously budgeted amount was $8,945), an increase of $6,028

These increases total $17,094. I have attached a pdf of the adopted 2022 budget, as well as a spreadsheet reflecting the increases on the revenue side with no changes made on the appropriations side.

**2022 Trustee Election [Action Item]**

This year, President Lanna Waterman’s and Trustee Linda Edstrom’s terms expire on June 30th, and because Patty Shumway filled a vacated seat mid-term in 2021, there will be an election for three trustees this year. All three trustees will need to decide before the March board meeting if they will run so we can have a slate in place by the required deadline.

Assistant Director Kim Mahar will create an election calendar once we decide on the date of the vote. We need to decide if we want to have our trustee election on the school's ballot again or hold our own election this year. We can do either. The reason we have been on the school’s ballot the past two years is because of the pandemic. In 2020, we had to go with the school district, or we would have had to absorb the costs of mailing absentee ballots to everyone in the school district at a cost of approximately $38,000. We decided to do that again in 2021, as we were not running a budget vote, and we were not sure if the state would require school district public libraries to send out absentee ballots to all voters again for the election. We also didn’t have to pay to hire election inspectors and for putting COVID precautions in place for the vote. The school took care of that. If we hold our own vote it usually takes place on the first Tuesday in May. The school is later.

The board should vote as to whether we want to go through the school district again or hold the election at the Library this year.

**Personnel Update**

Our new Technology Engagement Librarian Chad Taylor, who will oversee I.T. and Technical Services, started at OPL on Monday, January 8, 2022. He has been training with myself and Kim since that time, and will also meet with Alijah Fox and Carla Brooks to receive training on programming, budgeting, and the Library’s website. He will also go to CCLS in Jamestown to meet with relevant staff there to better understand his job and how he will work with CCLS staff.

**Library Hours**

We are still operating at slightly reduced hours from our normal schedule (3 hours less than pre-pandemic). As of January 2nd, we were able to expand our hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 am-7 pm to 9 am-9 pm. This was an increase of 4 hours per week, bringing us to 61 open service hours per week (our normal hours, pre-pandemic, were 64 hours per week – nine hours more than that required by central libraries in NYS). We are looking to expand our Saturday hours from 10-2 back to the pre-pandemic hours of 10-5 as soon as possible. Saturdays have been difficult due to staffing limitations, but our goal is to get back to our normal operating hours as soon as possible. At this point it looks like Saturdays in February will continue to operate on the 10-2 schedule.

**Library Sinks/Pipes (see attached quote) [Action Item]**

Library custodian Roger Hain’s report on the situation: “Jason from Shembeda Plumbing was here this morning (12/27/21). He determined that all water lines are copper, this is good. He thought if they were cast iron they could deteriorate and cause our kind of problem. Being copper he had to look elsewhere.

‘He took apart the faucets in staff room. He took water line under sink off and it has good pressure, so there is clogging in faucets. The second public rest room the hot line is still plugged, the line under sink does not have good pressure. He needs to check the on/off valve under sink, perhaps replace. The staff sink faucets probably need replacing but not yet certain of that. He would check all the chrome (as he put it) when the water is shut off to install the commercial filter.

‘He thinks that since all lines are copper the problem is coming from the outside. Therefore, his recommendation is to install a commercial size and grade of filter in the boiler room. This would be installed in the water line after the water meter. If you'd like to know how it would work I can come in and show you in the boiler room.

‘Jason will start today to research such a filter and work up an estimate.” See attached estimate for installation of a filtration system to address the problem of sand/grit in the Library’s faucets.

The Board should review the attached quote in the amount of $2,147.90, which includes a one-year warranty, and vote whether to approve the installation of the filtration system.

**Grants and Donations**

We received our final 10 percent payment in the amount of $18,649 for the 2018 NYS Construction Aid-funded HVAC project on 12/20/21. That formally closes out the project.

We also received a check dated 12/27/21 in the amount of $456.00 from the First Presbyterian Church in Olean for youth programs. A letter was sent to the church thanking them for the donation and letting them know we would use it toward youth programs as requested.

The Olean Association of the Blind and Visually Handicapped gave us verbal notification that they have awarded us a grant in the amount of $8,000 for technological enhancements in the Library that will benefit the visually impaired and physically handicapped. We have not yet received the donation, but when we do, it will be promoted in our newsletter and social media. We plan to update 4 computers and monitors, a scanner, and software that are specifically designed for the visually impaired.

**Conflict of Interest Forms**

Each year Trustees and staff must fill out the Conflict of Interest form (see attached). Please fill this out and scan and email it back to me, or drop it off at the Library.

**2020 Annual Report to the Community [Action Item]**

Every year the Library publishes an annual report to the community providing statistics, success stories, and other information about the prior year. Much of the information comes from the Annual Report to NYS that libraries are required to complete every February. We typically get the final report sometime in March after DLD has a chance to review it. After we receive the final report, we do the annual report to the community, which we usually post publicly in April. This has always coincided with the annual budget vote and, for that reason, we always include Return on Investment (ROI) figures, letting the public know what a bargain they are getting in return for their library taxes.

In early 2021 we began working on this report, but when we didn’t go out for a budget vote, it got sidelined, and then, with Rachael leaving, it was forgotten (this report has always been the responsibility of the IT librarian).

I developed the narrative for the attached report this fall, which includes photographs, and had our library assistant, Abigail Meek, develop the graphics for representing statistics; she also embedded ROI information throughout her document.

I have attached both documents for your review. The Board should vote to approve these, so that we can get them posted to our website before the next NYS Annual Report is due (having this on the website is a state mandate).

We will be sure not to forget to do the report for 2021 this year!

**Photography/Video Release and Waiver Forms [Action Item]**

At the October Board meeting, the Board approved a photography and videoing policy for the Library (this was done in part due to the increasing number of First Amendment audits happening at public libraries where people come in and film people throughout the library without their permission).

I have attached two forms—a Picture/Video Release Form used for photographing or videoing adult patrons (formally adopted in 2010), and a parental waiver used for children which does not appear to have been formally adopted. These forms have been around for a long time, and with the new State Minimum Standards for Public Libraries requiring periodic review of policies, I thought it made sense to have the Board review and approve use of these forms.

**2023-2027 Long Range Planning**

Our current Strategic Plan expires at the end of this year. We will need to start work soon on the new plan (now more commonly referred to as a Long Range Plan) so as to be able to have it posted by the start of next year. Typically, a committee is formed that includes a number of staff, trustees, and a few community members (can be Friends members for instance). I spoke with Jerry Nichols about this, as I am concerned that with the capital project we are exploring, having an involved strategic planning process occurring at the same time could overtax trustees and certain staff members. Luckily he said that a simpler planning process has been developed in recent years, which he will share with us at the training. The most involved aspect of the process will be the part where we get public input, which generally comes from a survey and perhaps focus groups.

I have attached a copy of our current Strategic Plan, which really needs work! The goals are okay, but it includes a lot of action steps that should really be in a separate internal document. Trustees should read it over prior to the February meeting and start considering whether the goals and objectives are still relevant. We can discuss where we have been successful and what goals may have changed, but the first thing we really need to address is our mission statement, which is really not a mission statement at all. At some point we’ll organize an ad hoc committee to address this and begin work towards the new LRP. I have attached a Sample Planning Process Outline from the NYS Library for your review.

**2023 Budget Planning**

In order to begin planning for the FY2023 budget, Carla and I have been meeting to review every line in the budget for the year that just ended (2021). This helps us determine where we may need to adjust appropriations upward, and where there may be justification for some reductions in spending. We also reviewed our revenue lines to see if any adjustments should be made to any of those lines. Kathy has been reviewing our proposed changes as well.

We always start the budget planning process extremely early because when we ask for a tax increase, the Board must approve a budget to present to the taxpayers in April. It’s difficult planning that far in advance, but unfortunately necessary. This year, because we are not going out for a tax increase, we have more time to develop the budget; however, I think it’s good to stay on the same timeline we always work with so as not to get into a bind when we go back to asking for increases.

We will have a preliminary budget ready for the February board meeting, at which time the Board can discuss it. If necessary, a Finance Committee meeting can be called if the Board feels more in-depth discussion is warranted after a first review.

**OPL Minimum Wages and Salaries Schedule**

I have attached a document listing starting wages and salaries for each position. This is based on the old OPL Civil Service pay scale form we have updated every year since time immemorial. It will need to be updated to reflect current circumstances. The Finance Committee should schedule a time to review this so that salaries and wages are both competitive and in line with the duties required of each position.

At the Finance Committee meeting held on January 5th, it was decided to do away with the Civil Service Wages & Salary Schedule. It was a relic left over from the City of Olean Civil Service, and is not required by the County Civil Service. The wages and especially salaries on that list were not in line with current minimum wage rates and NYS FLSA requirements. The attached spreadsheet has notes explaining where some of the current amounts came from. Carla and I did change the Treasurer minimum starting wage to the minimum NYS FLSA hourly amount, as the $17.26/hour that was in there previously was grossly inadequate for the qualifications required.

**Friends of the Library**

The Friends’ have officially cancelled “FeBREWary” this year, due to the reimplemented NYS mask mandate. While it may be lifted by the time the event would have been held, they did not want to plan with uncertainty around that.

The Susan Wiggs author visit is still planned for April 9th (she will arrive on the 7th, speak at the Wellsville library on the 8th, and then speak in Olean on the 9th, departing on the 10th). There is, of course, concern that the visit could be canceled if COVID continues to be a problem. The Friends agreed to spend up to $2,000 towards her transportation and hotel costs; however, they will not cut a check to the Library until the visit is definitely confirmed.

**News from the Library**

Our new Technology Engagement Librarian (Chad) will take my place on the CCLS Coordinated Collection Development Committee, as he is overseeing Technical Services which is more closely aligned with the goals of this Committee (i.e. what resources will be purchased by member libraries).

I have been invited to serve on a statewide committee formed to rewrite state regulations pertaining to Central Library Aid, as requirements for spending of this aid were recently revised by the State. Whereas, it used to be required that CLA (which includes Central Library Development Aid and Central Book Aid) had to be earmarked towards purchase of adult nonfiction resources and foreign language materials (CBA) and the salary of a reference librarian or building improvements (CLDA), the money is now unrestricted. Therefore, previous regulations have to be rewritten. The Committee is comprised of several central library directors, system directors, and DLD staff.

I am also serving on NYLA’s Civil Service Task Force, whose primary mission is to work with the NYS Civil Service Commission, as well as local CS agencies, to persuade them to allow public libraries to make the final decision over the professional staff they hire. A message was just sent out by one of the Task Force members that this is proving to be impossible, as CS is unwilling to cede power where it already has it. It’s extremely disappointing, as these hiring processes make it very difficult to recruit people from other libraries or who are new to the profession.