

# **Library Director's Report**

## **July 2024**

### **HVAC Units**

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, a Mazza tech met with a rep from our fire alarm company, FSC, to determine how best to ensure that all 4 of the units are connected to our fire alarm system, so they all shut down in the event of a fire. They determined that when the new remote controls system was implemented following the installation of the two new units in 2020, the alarm system wires were left connected to the old control panel in workroom one. It is baffling why they didn't check that first, but at least now all of the units have been connected in with the new control system and are shutting down when the fire alarm is set off.

As reported last month, on June 12<sup>th</sup> I met with a couple of Mazza reps and Rob Warholic, owner of Essential Constructs, a company which works with contractors who have been pre-approved in the public bidding process by NYS and/or the federal government. Public agencies do not have to put their projects out to bid if they hire one of these pre-approved companies. I reached out to directors of two public libraries that have worked with Essential Constructs over the years, including Seth Jacobus, director of the George F. Johnson Memorial Library in Shortsville, NY. I know Seth from the advanced public library administration certification courses I took with Jerry Nichols in 2018 and 2019. He had nothing but positive feedback for his working relationship with Essential Constructs. He describes Rob as very competent and professional. Working with them takes some work off the director's plate, as public bidding is eliminated, and Rob's role is to provide a great deal of oversight of the contractor(s) and the project itself. Costs are contained as a part of the bidding process, and approved contractors cannot use change orders to drive up the cost of the projects after the fact. I'd put in a call to another director but we played phone tag for quite a while and I never connected with him. I feel pretty confident that we can move forward with working with them and hiring Mazza for the HVAC replacement project. Rob is available to meet with the Board prior to moving forward. If the Board would like me to invite him to the August meeting, I can try to arrange that. The new units have a lead time of around 22 weeks, so we would not begin installation work until sometime in early 2025.

### **June Gifts/Grants/Donations [Action Item]**

Per our Policy on Acceptance of Gifts, Grants and Bequests to the Library, the Board must formally accept the following: in June, we received \$6,000 from the O'Connell Family Fund of the Erie Community Foundation to supplement the Frances Bean O'Connell Endowment grant received in May, which was \$4,481 (therefore, the total grant this year is \$10,481); \$2,016.78 from the Marjory Burdus fund – this is a quarterly payment we receive from an endowment set up many years ago (the proceeds are put towards Kathy O'Malley's salary); \$100 memorial donation for Daniel La Voie; \$50 memorial donation for Carl McGowan; \$11.24 in anonymous donations.

### **Frances Bean O'Connell Endowment**

As noted above, in May we received the first of two installments towards the annual Frances Bean O'Connell Endowment grant. Earlier this year, Kevin O'Connell moved another \$150,000 into the fund bringing it to a total of \$300,000. However, this was done late in the fiscal year and so the proceeds were less than expected (\$4,481). We received a call in June from the Erie Community Foundation letting us know that Mr. O'Connell moved \$6,000 out of another fund to increase the total grant for this year. A check in that amount was received on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. O'Connell wants "to make sure the Library receives at least \$10,000 until the entire endowment of \$300,000 is in full force." We are so grateful for this gift to the Library, which allows us to offer amazing arts and crafts programs to patrons of all ages.

**Frable Donation**

On July 11<sup>th</sup>, I met with Merrill and Muriel Frable, who wanted to discuss a donation they were giving to the Library from the estate of Merrill's late brother Phillip R. Frable. They presented the Library with a check for \$1,000, which they asked be used to purchase books and periodicals; these were the materials Phillip made most use of during his many years visiting the Library. I suggested we primarily purchase books, as we can put bookplates in them that acknowledge the gift. They were pleased with that idea. They also mentioned being very impressed by the Library's successful teen programming, including the heavily used Teen Room. They also suggested we label the photographs in the Conference Room, which I agreed was a good idea. I'm not sure why we never thought of that before! The photographs include most if not all of the Library's previous (and current) locations. It was a pleasure to meet them—they are truly lovely people who really care about the community.

**Staff Development Day**

This is a reminder that the annual Staff Development Day will take place on Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. The day includes department meetings, mandatory state trainings, relevant library-level trainings, and other activities. The Board has always provided and eaten lunch with the staff that day. Staff really appreciate it and enjoy the opportunity to spend time chatting with and getting to know Trustees. I will have an agenda done soon and will let Trustees know what time lunch will take place. Thank you so much for continuing with this annual tradition!