

Date: May 4, 2023

To: The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

From: Celeste Choate, Executive Director

Re: Director's Report for Board Meeting of May 9, 2023



VISION

Nurturing growth by sparking curiosity and fostering a sense of belonging.

MISSION

We encourage learning and enrich lives by providing access to diverse resources and programs.



We cultivate equity, mutual respect, and belonging by learning about and responding to our community.

WE WELCOME ALL.

Goal 1: We provide a welcoming and inviting space for dialogue and personal connections.

- We have now had two virtual meetings with Engberg Anderson to give them feedback on initial designs, color palettes, and furniture options for the Circ-A/V Area Renovation and Megan's Room Renovation. Rough cost estimates for the initial designs are incorporated into the budget documents.
- We also have had initial conversations about the building program with Engberg Anderson, and expect to bring an update to the Board in June.
- We have received a report from IMEG with recommendations for replacing the air handler, putting in a split system for the server room, and handling humidity in the Archives. Once we decide on the best options for each, IMEG will help us prepare bids for the installation.

Goal 2: We engage the community to understand and respond to unique needs of our community.

- The Library took part in an Earth Day event at Meadowbrook Park and brought examples from the Seed Exchange to give out to community members. People were very excited to learn more about the Seed Exchange and were particularly excited that the Exchange included native plants. Almost 75 community members took home seeds.
- The Library launched a community survey as part of the current strategic planning process. Digital and physical versions are both available for community members. Library staff are encouraging patrons to participate, and we have asked community partners to share the survey as well. www.surveymonkey.com/r/UrbanaCommunitySurvey



We connect people with tools and resources for learning and leading fruitful lives.

WE SPARK CURIOSITY.

Goal 1: We connect people to resources and technology for personal growth leading to greater fulfillment.

- The Library held its own Earth Day event with crafts for families to make from recycled materials. One child was so excited that she made four out of the six crafts available. Another made five examples of the same craft because they enjoyed it so much. The most popular craft turned old magazines into beads to make jewelry, followed by the pipe cleaner and butterfly pictured to the right.





- Community members had a chance to hear Janice Harrington read from her new picture book *Hurry Kate, or You'll be Late!* about a little girl who loves anything with wheels and her daddy. The interactive storytime kept the attention of the very youngest, who were telling the story from the pictures after the program. Janice also inspired older children by sharing the stories behind her other books and encouraging them to write their own stories.

Goal 2: We expand horizons and facilitate knowledge exchange by offering diverse programs.

- For the first time since 2019, the Library was able to hold the full Fairy Tale Ball. There were over ten different activities that families could enjoy at the ball, and many of the almost 900 community members who attended tried them all. Some of the favorites included dancing with the English Country Dancers, petting Chiron the miniature unicorn, having a sensory Mad Hatter Tea Party, and getting announced by the Library's royal heralds. Some people wanted to be announced multiple times! Families also took a break and sat down to read fairy tale books that were displayed throughout the ball. *The Fifteenth Annual Fairy Tale Ball was generously sponsored by Fred Schlipf and Diane Hillard.*
- Railroad fans were all aboard for a fascinating talk by Dale Jenkins from the Monticello Railway Museum, covering the history of the Illinois Traction Railroad. From the early development of the railroad, to the role it played in Illinoisans' lives, this presentation was full of surprising details for the 30 community members who attended.



We help our community thrive by creating connections and working with partners.

WE CONTRIBUTE TO A STRONG SOCIAL FABRIC.

Goal 1: We make the community better for all by promoting diversity, equity and inclusion through our collections and programs.

- Cataloging staff (Kasia Hopkins, Brian Robertson, Matthew Wetherbee, Lisa Wilson and Brian Yako) attended an online 5-hour workshop on inclusive cataloging that covered many topics including cataloging with Homosaurus (an international linked data vocabulary with LGBTQIA+ terms), reparative cataloging (removing outdated or problematic subject headings), indigenous cataloging and much more.
- The Library hosted a meet and greet with visitors, Mussa Mwale and Busta Chiona, from Urbana's sister city based in Malawi, Africa. The two discussed a grant project with the U of I's Political Science Department. Community members also got to see a presentation about the Sister City partnership with Zomba, Malawi.

Goal 2: We stimulate connections and partnerships to create a vibrant, engaged community.

- The Library was buzzing with people for this year's Boneyard Arts events. Many people stopped by to see the display of Raymond Bial's black and white photographs of the people and places of Central Illinois. The Samba Soul Band's lilting rhythms drew a diverse crowd of 42 people. The Red Herring Writers' annual event always showcases strong writing by local writers, and their work was especially compelling this year for the 34 community members who attended. The Library is hosting five events featuring local writers in April and May, and we are proud to be a cultural center to showcase emerging and established local writers.
- At an event cosponsored with the Champaign County Genealogical Society, Mary Butzow covered how and why she began digitizing the St. Joseph Record with the Champaign County History Museum through the Champaign County Newspaper Digitization Initiative. She provided several great examples of the information and context that can be gained by searching this paper (or any local small-town paper). Mary and Connor Monson (Champaign County History Museum Manager) provided a timeline for the first batch of digitized papers. They added that other local small papers in Champaign County will be targeted once this project is completed.





We are mindful of the wide array of resources needed to serve evolving community needs and are transparent with our operations.

WE ARE A STRONG ORGANIZATION.

Goal 1: We steward our physical and financial resources to allow for growth and sustainability.

- Staff recommend that the Board approve Resolution 2023-09, the ARPA grant intergovernmental agreement between the Library and the City of Urbana. The grant (\$173,5896) will fund the creation of a bilingual Programming Specialist position at least through 2025. The position will focus on youth programs and outreach and reaching those in Urbana who were greatly affected by the pandemic.
- Through a gift from the Friends of the Library, the Library was able to purchase new tables for both the auditorium and the conference room. These new tables are easier for staff to use, making program set-up more efficient and safer. They also brighten the spaces.

Goal 2: We cultivate continuous improvement among Board and staff members to create increased engagement, satisfaction, and retention.

- To mark National Library Week, the Library hosted a drop-in celebration for staff on April 27th. The festivities included activities, snacks, and the special guest appearances of two therapy corgis. Combined with a cake provided by former Board member Barbara Jones and personal thank you notes written from supervisors to staff, merriment carried on through the entire week!



Look here for additional information and action item details that are outside of the scope of the strategic plan.

- The Library Board will recognize Trustees Jane Williams and Barbara Bennett for their many years of devoted service on the Library Board at the June Board meeting. To be considered for appointment to the Board of Trustees, send in an [application](#) to the Mayor's office or contact the Mayor's Office for more information at 217-384-2456.
- Staff recommend approval of a change to the Leave Policy to reflect the law on the payout of unused personal leave. Personal leave does not need to be paid out at separation. We want to make sure our policy is up to date before new laws governing leave time go into effect on January 1, 2024.
- Staff recommend approval of a small change to the Whistleblower Policy to clarify which Associate Director is responsible for acting as the Library's primary Auditor for whistleblower complaints.

FY23 Budget Amendments

- Due to the continued interest in the Seed Exchange, staff request:
 - \$1,250 increase to New Collections (80280802 51802 80103)
 - \$1,250 decrease to CDs (80280802 51805)
- Due to the popularity of video games, staff request:
 - \$1,000 increase to Games (80280802 51809)
 - \$1,000 decrease to DVDs (80280802 51806)
- Due to the continued demand for hotspots staff request:
 - \$2,000 increase to New Collections (80280802 51802 80103)
 - \$2,000 decrease to Children's DVDs (80280802 51806 80103)
- When the website was updated last year, it was not completed in FY22, and we were billed in FY23 for it:
 - \$5,000 increase to Other Professional Services (80280809 52199)
 - \$5,000 decrease to Insurance (80280801 50210)

Library Newsletters:

- The TUFL Times, May: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/45>
- The TUFL Times: Youth Edition, May: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/47>
- The TUFL Times: School Edition, May: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/46>
- May Archives Newsletter: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/49>
- National Library Week Foundation email: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/51>
- Community Survey email: <https://uflil.patronpoint.com/email/preview/50>

Other Library News:

- March 31, 2023, *Smile Politely* – An update on the Champaign County Jail hunger strike <https://www.smilepolitely.com/opinion/an-update-on-the-champaign-county-jail-hunger-strike/>
- March 31, 2023, *Chambanamoms.com* – The Top Things to Do in April in Champaign-Urbana <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2023/03/31/april-things-to-do-champaign-urbana/>
- April 5, 2023, *Chambanamoms.com* – Champaign-Urbana Weekend Planner – Hopping Through the Weekend <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2023/04/05/hopping-weekend-easter-champaign-urbana/>
- April 9, 2023, *The News-Gazette* – Book Review by Karli Pettifer, 'What Moves the Dead' my kind of creepy https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/books/karli-pettifer-what-moves-the-dead-my-kind-of-creepy/article_ea37edca-716e-51bb-9250-e7d1a1db4258.html
- April 12, 2023, *Chambanamoms.com* – Champaign-Urbana Weekend Planner – Spring is Here <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2023/04/12/spring-is-here-champaign-urbana/>
- April 17, 2023, *The News-Gazette* – Kathy’s #Mailbag https://www.news-gazette.com/toms-mailbag/kathys-mailbag-april-14-2023/article_8219cc77-3d9e-5b4f-bd32-ab8c96c38fca.html
- April 23, 2023, *The News-Gazette* – Violins of Hope project coming to Champaign-Urbana https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/community-events/violins-of-hope-project-coming-to-champaign-urbana/article_7891ece8-c757-571f-90db-f03632449309.html

Budget and current financial information are here: <http://urbanafreelibrary.org/your-right-know#fin>, with FY23 financial reports here: <https://urbanafreelibrary.org/about-us/your-right-to-know/financial-reports>.

Bank reconciliations for the last day of the month: July 2022 - June 2023						
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Illinois Funds account	\$ 208,227.74	\$ 208,613.96	\$ 209,045.31	\$ 209,588.56	\$ 210,205.87	\$ 210,907.60
Busey Bank Cash accounts	\$ 2,992,977.35	\$ 2,846,035.61	\$ 3,350,546.37	\$ 3,763,233.91	\$ 3,498,315.67	\$ 3,376,497.11
Busey Bank Web account	\$ 35,932.46	\$ 38,854.25	\$ 41,936.98	\$ 45,199.58	\$ 47,474.22	\$ 50,363.16
Total	\$ 3,237,137.55	\$ 3,093,503.82	\$ 3,601,528.66	\$ 4,018,022.05	\$ 3,755,995.76	\$ 3,637,767.87
	January	February	March	April	May	June
Illinois Funds account	\$ 211,663.19	\$ 212,390.74	\$ 213,237.73			
Busey Bank Cash accounts	\$ 3,124,285.60	\$ 2,829,200.45	\$ 2,570,373.98			
Busey Bank Web account	\$ 53,023.54	\$ 54,137.89	\$ 57,571.07			
Total	\$ 3,388,972.33	\$ 3,095,729.08	\$ 2,841,182.78	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -