Director’s Report

February 2020

**Personnel**

The status of the hiring process to fill staff vacancies is: Children’s Librarian (Librarian I), Pernel Wilfred, started February 19, 2020. The interview process is underway for a PT Circulation Clerk; a PT CRC Clerk; and a PT Teen Services Information Specialist. The posting process is underway for a PT Children’s Information Specialist.

In keeping with the agreement between the Library and the Staff Association, the joint labor-management Health Advisory Committee continued to meet to analyze and discuss requirements and options and to compare sample health insurance plans. Our broker sent the plans that are available for us to select when renewing our service for the period of June 1, 2020-May 31, 2021. We shared the information with the NLSA, and asked that they select and rank order three plans of the many offered options. They may also include the NYSHIP plan, which they suggested the Library consider. The information they share will be considered in final analysis and selection of the best option based on the FY 2021 planned budget for purchasing health insurance coverage for eligible employees. Several eligible employees who were not previously covered have indicated that they may choose to participate in the benefit for the renewal period.

**Budget**

The proposed FY 2021 Tax Levy vote took place on February 11, 2020. Polls were open 10 am to 9 pm with over 199 voters, some of whom were not eligible to vote. The vote results were: 178-Yes and 21-No. As required, I have notified the Nyack School District Treasurer so they can adjust the September tax bills for homeowners. I would like to recognize Minerva Parker for her assistance in accomplishing this large effort.

**Facilities**

The sewer and drain cleaning vendor used a camera and found that the storm drain that exits the north west side of the Carnegie building and connects to the village storm drain system had a serious blockage, which he successfully cleared. He said that given the age of the storm drains that they were in good working order. We agreed that we need to identify whether there is a matching storm drain on the south west side of the building. If one is found, we will also have that scoped and cleaned to ensure that storm water can flow unimpeded to the village drain system. We are still waiting for a proposal on downspout repair work. In addition, storm water management will need to be addressed on the south side of the library property abutting the Berea Church and Art Café.

Lights have been replaced in the Reference area. New floor cover plates were purchased to replace damaged floor outlets that pose a safety risk. The sink in the staff restroom on the 2nd floor was replaced. The Staircase Gallery walls that were damaged during the January exhibit have been repaired and painted.

Staff continued to work with the vendor to try to correct building alarm system issues. As the repair work has not been successful, and alert beeps continue to interrupt staff, I have escalated our concerns to the vendor management. I have requested a meeting to find a complete resolution to the issues.

**Safety and Security**

In response to the February 18th tragedy at Finkelstein Memorial Library, we are working with Orangetown Police Department and with our library colleagues in the county and region to identify further measures that we can take to ensure our staff and public safety. Det. Sgt. Danny Costello spoke at the All Staff Meeting on Monday, February 24th. He reminded staff that the police are here to support us when we are coping with difficult patrons and situations. He urged staff to not be afraid to call the police if the situation warrants the additional support of a uniformed presence. Orangetown PD has two patrol cars in the area, and they respond rapidly if needed. They are also patrolling the building at least once a day as their other service calls allow. We will continue to communicate with them and other local law enforcement to strengthen our plans for dealing with security issues.

As requested at the January Board meeting, I am investigating how we can supplement the current security presence in the building by specifically seeking to fill afternoon and evening hours on Thursdays and the hours we are open to the public on Sundays. We continue to experience disruptions by teens who come into the library to use space inappropriately. We invite them to use the Teen Room, or to leave when their behavior violates library policy.

On February 26th I attended a federal grants information session sponsored by Congresswoman Lowey and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand. I learned about the programs and process for non-profit organizations to apply for federal funds managed through New York State. The funds are available to address a variety of security issues facing non-profit organizations including safety assessments, personnel/security contractors, building “hardening” and other equipment purchases like video surveillance systems.

**Advocacy**

On February 25th Ellyse Berg, Sharon Aperto and I traveled to Albany with colleagues across the Ramapo Catskill Library System to attend Library Advocacy Day. We met with our Assembly representatives, Ellen Jaffee and Ken Zebrowski, and our senator, David Carlucci to advocate for library concerns and issues that depend on their support. We continued to press for financial support and assistance to ensure safety and security in public buildings, specifically our libraries.

**Programs & Exhibits**

On February 29th I hosted the Khalid Kodi, Meet the Artist program, as part of the *Black American Culture and Art Series: The Legacy of Toni Morrison*. Prof. Kodi spoke about his exploration of negotiating boundaries and addressing conflict resolution through his art and service initiatives.

**Communications**

For the production of the Spring newsletter, I engaged a professional graphic artist and designer to layout the copy and content prepared by the Programs, Teen and Youth Services staff. The newsletter was successfully published and distributed to the public on schedule. I continue to create and publish the Constant Contact email blasts as I evaluate how to provide marketing and promotion services.