

Board Report 12/8/20 - Jennifer Sirak – Director

Good News - We have completed our transition to Surpass Cloud as well as the website changeover.

COVID Update - Over Thanksgiving break we had a volunteer with a family member who tested positive, and then she tested positive (she is recovered). Only myself and one other staff member needed to quarantine as a precaution. Happily the CDC changed the guidelines at this time. We closed the library for two days (one was porch-side only) to comply with CDC guidelines. The mayor has asked we revisit our Covid policy in the face of the spiking virus. Our Covid procedures should prevent any patron from exposure, staff is the main concern. I created Corsi boxes for the library - box fans with HEPA filters attached - that do an excellent job of removing virus particles from the air if the windows can't be opened. I can't think of any other measure we could implement to further guarantee staff safety other than to close the library again, which I do not recommend. Our recent brush with Covid has served as an excellent reminder to all that we need to take the precautions seriously every day.

Building & Technology

Surpass Cloud (5-year plan – technology) - Before Thanksgiving we completed our transfer to the Cloud version of Surpass and our new website transfer. This involved our two ebook vendors and Jersey Connect, our state library support system. It wasn't completely smooth but luckily we had our IT consultant on hand to help us. Now we can offer our patrons a new and sleek catalog browsing experience, and update our website immediately as needed. This was a major step forward in the progress of the library. Be sure to check out our new website-in-progress when you have a chance.

New Computers - We are replacing two old staff computers as well as the very old front desk computer and a printer. We are adding a new, larger laptop for our finance staff member to replace her eight-year-old one, plus a touch screen for the front desk and a handheld scanner and tablet for inventory and searches upstairs. At this time we will also update all computers to current Microsoft Office and Windows via our non-profit software service company Tech Soup. Hopefully this will all be installed by Christmas.

Staff & Volunteers

Staff wage guide and new hires - (5-year plan – staff) I ask that the Board adopt the staff wage guide for 2021, which will allow me to create appropriate job descriptions with matching hourly wages for existing staff. I am hiring both of our volunteers, who each have/will have shortly a Masters of Library Science degree and would be of great help during this busy period at the library. In addition, we have a staff member taking a temporary leave of absence and so new staff can help at the desk as well.

Communications

Logo (5-year plan – communications) - I have been working with our communications consultant who is facilitating our library logo creation with the Brooklyn Design Factory. A logo is essential not only to our branding and marketing across all medias but also to add another level of respectability and consistency to the library. I hope to unveil it Tuesday night!

Newsletter - We are working on getting a newsletter going via email. The idea is a bi-weekly, one page email that highlights 3-4 library events each time. I hope to get the first one out by the end of the year.

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Patron Request for workspace - The hardest thing about our pandemic restrictions has been to ask patrons to leave the library after one hour. It is deeply counterintuitive for everyone involved. It's made even harder by having patrons desperately needing workspace with internet access outside of their house. The idea has been floated of having appointments for workspace for 2-3 hours during porch-side pickup days. We have a few places in the library where we could seat patrons and it would not interfere with staff getting to the shelves - staff would not have to be in their area. With a Corsi fan running, I feel like this could be viable starting sometime in January.

Programming & Outreach

Beanstack - Winter Reads - Our Beanstack team, led by Fran, has been hard at work getting ready for a winter reading program that will run through January and February, and spotlight authors of different backgrounds. This will dovetail nicely into our Toni Morrison Program.

Collections & Materials

Better World Books – is an independent book repurposing/recycling service that specializes in sustainability disposing of large amounts of weeded library books. We are going to utilize their services for our weeding project and, if they sell any of our books, we may make a little money as well. They can cut a check directly to Baker and Taylor for us if we want them too.

Continuing Education

Staff Training - This month Andrea will be working with all desk staff members, including me, to get us familiar with our new catalog system. She has been working on this while in quarantine.

Did you know?

Rutgers has changed the name of its Master of Library Science degree to Master of Information. “The design of the Master of Information (MI) program engages students from a wide variety of professional and academic contexts to focus on information: its creation, organization, classification, retrieval, preservation, management and use. Built upon the values and foundations of Library and Information Science, the MI program focuses on the integral relationships between people, information and technology.”

Smile of the Month

Fran's porch has a reputation for having excesses of donated kids books out for free in cardboard boxes. Jay, the Lambertville Life guy and stalwart library supporter, has facilitated the construction of a little library box by a community member for the front of Fran's house. This is one more way the library is getting books deep into our community through our amazing staff and volunteers.

