

**REPORT PRESENTED BY EMAIL
TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
BY MARGARET MORRISSEY, DIRECTOR
SEPTEMBER 22, 2020**

ARIS/State Aid

- Working on the Annual Report Information Survey for the MA Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The Board has already voted that Hours Open Requirement and Materials Expenditure Requirements “reported for FY2020 compliance period up to the Governor’s State of Emergency Declaration on March 10, 2020 will meet full compliance” with the state’s requirements. The Closure of a Public Library Policy has been revised and includes epidemics/pandemics as examples of natural catastrophes and other states of emergencies.

Capital Budget

- 6 Year Capital Budget request was presented but was not approved.

Building

- DPW Custodian hours are now M-F 8 am – 4 pm since Labor Day. During vacation periods, another DPW staff member will be covering the facility.
- DPW have removed the loose paint from the ceiling in the Children’s Room
- DPW working on the staff bathroom floor – ongoing, as time permits.
- The DPW is working on items from our punch list. Damaged plaster on janitorial office wall has been replaced, hedges have been trimmed, leg on chair has been repaired.
- Staff has noticed that a pattern of ‘dead’ calls have been happening. Verizon has checked the lines on three occasions and found no issue. The alarm company has also checked the lines. (The fire alarm is on a radio signal and has been ruled out). American Alarm are still monitoring the phone for phantom calls to determine if they are caused by the intruder alarm.
- Professional cleaning service (M&I Cleaning) started to work on the building, after business hours on 9/8. The service is also in place for Town Hall and is funded through a nonlibrary fund. They worked M-F the first week. In the interest of fiscal prudence, the service at both Town Hall and Library is now on a four days per week (M-Th.) basis and the custodian prioritizes high touch areas on Monday morning on arriving to work. When the library hours of operation change, we may need to review.
- Contract for HVAC has been awarded to Renaud HVAC. Service call 9/22 – no heat in Custodian/Staff rooms. Pressure switch was replaced in ACU-3
- Two patrons inquired about the person who is sleeping in the rear entrance, after hours. St. Luke’s Guest House was contacted and an outreach worker was going to check over the weekend 9/18-20 to try to connect with the person and offer some assistance.

- CMC Energy, a National Grid contractor was here to inspect the installation of HVAC system RTU#2 on 8/31. Approved.
- Staff bathroom toilet needed to have parts replaced 9/4.
- Clean up after August's Storm Isaias took a few days. No damage was reported.
- Called Health/Inspections department to report the trash receptacle on Main Street at the crosswalk is overflowing and was not emptied by Casella 8/10.
- Bicycle part from the FixIt Station on Main Street has been taken again. Replacement installed. Dero provided a complimentary replacement part for the pump for the FixIt Station in the late spring, as it has been vandalized again.
- Reviewing camera coverage on Main Street. Quote requested from American Alarms (on state bid list)
- The urns on Main Street were planted by the Southbridge Garden Club and the Improvements Committee of the Business Partnership and staff planted sunflowers at the north entrance, from the parking lot.
- Menard's Glass installed three tempered glass sneeze guards at the service desks 6/22.
- Elevator Maintenance Service calibrated the elevator 6/24. Elevator annual inspection applied for.
- Air filters were replaced by the DPW 6/25 and 9/14.
- Elevator door failed to open 6/29. Some foam had gotten caught in the track and was removed. Normal operation has resumed.
- Hand sanitizer and disinfectant/towel has been placed in strategic places throughout the building.
- DPW has removed the Master Fire Box from the Foster Street entrance. Assistance was received from the Fire Department on 6/30 and 7/1.
- DPW removed the damaged curbing and asphalt in the parking lot area at foot of staircase, and installed a new asphalt ramp. They installed a granite base for the bench on the east side of the building 6/17.
- DPW installed new signage on the lower level bathroom doors, re-installed a sink and a toilet in two separate bathrooms, and some other small projects.
- The door to the mid-1700s Mynott clock had swollen and the DPW sanded the area where it was catching. DPW staff checked on the Ammidown portrait that has moved slightly and restored its position.
- Fire system inspection by Wel-Design conducted 6/18. Passed.
- Fire Department attended along with American Alarm during the removal of the Master Fire Box that was disconnected. The DPW removed the Gamewell Box #98 from Foster Street.
- The Heart Mosaic created by Stephanie Cyr as a tribute to the essential workers during the pandemic, has been installed by DPW. The frame was made by Nick's Woodwork from quarter sawn oak salvaged from the American Optical Company.
- Batteries replaced in the silent alarm fobs 7/7

- State inspection of the boilers conducted 7/7
- Elevator car failed to respond to call for service. Technician replaced the door relay on one side and replaced the other one as part of the monthly maintenance check 7/8

Children's Room

- The Children's Librarian returned from furlough 6/22 and worked with senior staff on planning and adapting to the current circumstances.
- Last day to submit reading logs for Summer Reading 9/4. Prize winners were drawn and notified 9/9. Due to COVID-19, Summer Reading participation figures are low, a trend throughout the state.
- *Story Times with Ms. Liz* is recorded by Southbridge Cable TV – 3 stories per week
- New books being selected and ordered on regular monthly cycle
- Crafty Wednesdays – *Grab and Go* is proving popular with families who are still reluctant to enter the building
- Managing the returns of materials, ensuring that a minimum of 72 hours in quarantine, wiping each item with disinfectant and checking the items in.
- Changing window display and
- Prepare new displays and making daily changes for 'window shopping' Remove the Summer Reading displays and refile books in the collection.

Collection Development

- New book orders have been processed, cataloged and ready for checkout.
- Weeding and developing new collection
- DVD inventory project has started 8/27
- Buffing of the music CD collections is underway, using the VenMill machine. Approximately, half the collection is now completed.
- Re-arranged and increased the shelving space in the YA Graphics and YA Fiction to allow for growth 8/25.
- The Reference Collection has been systematically evaluated and many of the items have been re-located in the Non Fiction collection to facilitate browsing and access.
- Reference section has been downsized and reorganized to showcase other collections in this prime space of the library. Increasingly, state and federal agencies are publishing their resources online and can be easily accessed, free of charge and accessible to all.
- The reduced 'footprint' has facilitated the showcasing of the Local History collection in a featured location.
- The Director and the Adult Services Librarian reviewed and updated the author/series choices for the "Automatically Yours" selection plan the library has with Baker and Taylor.
- Overdrive Advantage Plus items (eBooks and eAudioO are accessible in the JEL version of the CWMARS catalog

- Cataloging all items in the Library of Things (LoT) and creating an inventory for promotion of the collection.

COVID-19

- The library closed to the public from Monday, March 16th at 8 pm., due to the pandemic. Curbside service commenced 6/9. Initially, we offered Monday-Friday 10 am-4pm service and since 7/27 the service is Monday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm. The service is becoming increasingly busy, as more people learn about the service and are comfortable with borrowing materials. All staff is assisting with Curbside service.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services, together with OCLC, Inc. and Battelle, are continuing collaboration on the REALM Project where extensive laboratory testing is being conducted on library materials. The reports are available online. The library is closely following the information and implementing the results as part of our process.
- Battelle's second results show that SARS-CoV-2 virus was not detectable on the materials after three days of quarantine. Staff accesses the materials on day 4 and wipes the covers of materials with disinfectant and then checks the items in. Books and other materials are returned by the patron directly to the Book Drop on the rear of the building - to avoid contamination.
- RFQ for additional cleaning service closed and M&I Carpet Cleaning was the sole bidder. Service was not activated until we opened to the public 9/8.
- On Tuesday, September 8th, the library re-opened for limited browsing.
 - Up to 30 minutes in the library to browse in the New Books area
 - Books that are browsed are requested to be placed on a nearby cart for quarantine and cleaning by library staff.
 - Access to 3 computers, Copier/Scanner/Printer
 - No chairs except for the 3 computers
 - One family at a time in the Children's Room
 - Curbside Service will continue
 - All patrons will wear masks
 - Access to one public bathroom on the first floor
 - Cleaning will be done by custodian throughout the day and in the evenings M&I will go through the building
 - Returned items are placed in the outside drop box and quarantined for 3 days. Staff check the items in and wipe the covers with disinfectant. Patrons will see the item still checked out on their card for 4 days.
 - No donations can be accepted at this time due to space limitations and quarantine
 - Nintendo Switch games are now available for loan and the catalog has been updated. These are one of our most popular items.
- Proposed at Trustees Meeting 9/23 to expand the access to the stacks on the first floor as it will not have any significant increase on the scope of the cleaning.
 - Access to fiction, large type, young adult collections

- Access to more 2 computers in YA area
- Increase time on computer use to 60 minutes per patron
- Access to microfilm reader printer for research
- Cleaning will be done by custodian throughout the day and in the evenings M&I (M-Th.) will go through the building
- Hoping to open Thursday evenings. Limitation currently due to 4 staff positions vacant.
- Program scheduled 10/22 with Loren Ghiglione who will present his new book "Genus Americanus — Hitting the Road in Search of America's Identity".
- It is hoped to gradually start scheduling the LCC funded programs that have been deferred due to COVID closing

Staff has experienced three separate interactions, since re-opening, where patrons were refusing or reluctant to wear face covering. In one case, even with some polite discussion, the patron continued to 'wear' the mask on his chin.

Friends of JEL

- Due to COVID-19, the Friends have had to cancel all fundraising efforts, including the annual booksale and the June Artful Friends event.
- No meetings of FOJEL have taken place since the library closed.
- No donations of books can be accepted due to concerns for safe handling of materials and space limitations. Notice posted on the book drop.
- The Friends have reported 75 members for the ARIS report.

Grants

- Grantees approved in the 2020 Local Cultural Council (LCC) round of awards by the Southbridge Cultural Council have been getting in touch to re-schedule their programs. Regular contact with the Southbridge Cultural Council representative regarding the Local Cultural Council grants awarded to presenters. The library was the host site and we are trying to figure out ways of hosting the programs and meeting the state's COVID-19 guidelines.
- Gift of \$100 from Paul and Dawn Pettinelli
- Gift of \$50 from Marie Ada Crosbie.
- SCORE has donated \$250 to the library in recognition of the services that the library provides to its local members.

Interlibrary Loan

- The network-wide resource sharing service resumed on Monday 6/29. The first delivery had 13 bins and there were 8 bins outward bound.
- Comcat resumed service on Monday September 21, permitting access to materials in libraries across the state.

Meetings

- Area library directors have met regularly online to discuss topics of mutual interest, mostly about COVID-19 and how curbside service and moving towards reopening and access to services was working out for our respective libraries.
- Participated in CWMARS Library Directors meeting 7/15
- Met with Town Manager and HR Specialist to discuss resumption of service and staffing 6/24
- Town Manager, CFO, Health Director and Health Dept Assistant visited the library to review the building readiness for patrons, in anticipation of Phase 3 guidelines from the Governor's Reopening Committee on 6/25.
- Met with Holly Christo of Literacy Volunteers of Central MA to update her on the progress towards opening and the limitations of Phase 3 Reopening

Outreach

- The 2020 Summer Reading theme was "Imagine Your Story". Staff created terrariums as living organisms. Fairy gardens were created too to inspire young patrons.
- Responded to a telephone survey from National Grid 9/9, where we reported experiencing issues with the elevators, computer and electronics after power outages.
- Library Director did a promotion on the library opening, recorded by SCTV. Adult Services Librarian has been offering some thematically linked poetry, produced by SCTV staff.
- Preparations are underway for Banned Books Week (September) that celebrates intellectual freedom and challenges censorship.
- Contacted YOU Inc and reviewed the community services the agency has to offer with the program manager there to have a better understanding of resources available 8/26
- Worcester Public Library has joined the many libraries now no longer charging fines to patrons for returning materials late.
- WCAC's Fuel Assistance in-person program is suspended but staff is contactable via telephone and applications can be processed.
- Staff is posting regularly to Facebook and the website to provide the community with some resources and hopefully interesting material. The eNewsletter is sent monthly.
- Keeping in touch with the Tuesday *Knitting with Sonya* group via posts on Facebook *You Keep Me in Stitches*. Posting some of the projects that have been completed.
- The HiSet program offered by Webster Dudley Schools for the past two years at the library is moving to the YMCA as the program is expanding.
- Staff launched the Silver Screen Bundles where the book and movie are combined in a bundle with a bag of microwave popcorn. Patrons were excited to take up this option.
- A call went out from the Department of Corrections to libraries across the state asking for donations of reading material for those incarcerated. JEL was able to provide some donations of paperback books. It was a good opportunity for the library to connect with the education department there.

Programming

- During the month of September, the library celebrates *Hispanic Heritage Month*. The digital exhibit from *Arte Latino New England* (ALNE) is receiving attention on Facebook.
- Stephanie Cyr, Adult Services Librarian read a May Sarton poem recorded for YouTube by SCTV.
- Displays promoting:
 - Library Card Sign Up month (September) and featuring our new online sign up service are in place.
 - Movie/book/popcorn checkout.
 - Back To School

Activated a digital application for a library card. Patrons complete the application online and ID is verified when the patron arrives to curbside for pick up. Timely, as September is Library Card Sign Up Month.

- August's show, "Arts & Crafts by the DiBonaventura Family," features work of local and regional members of the DiBonaventura family, with artworks ranging in date from 1922 through the present. The geographic reach for this digital exhibit has been extensive, as the large numbers of family members share the JEL's posts. Posts have been shared in Italy, so even our Facebook friends in Europe can enjoy the varied artworks on display. On average, the posts have reached 685 viewers per day, since debuting on August 3.
- In July, the library hosted an online exhibit of Lauria Tiberii's paintings. Two paintings sold during the show.
- In June the Adult Services Librarian has selected some items from the archive and been posting to Facebook and local history group. Lots of positive feedback.
- Gaming area known as "the warp zone" has been created with a large format screen and will be used by players for the Nintendo Switch games (when permitted).
- Due to the pandemic, all public programs were suspended on March 16.

Safety and Security

- 9/17 staff noticed the small sign on the exterior table was broken. Camera footage was checked and at 2:34 pm an individual walked up broke the sign, ripped off the duct tape that was securing it to the table, balled up the tape and threw it back over his shoulder as he was walking away.

School Department

- The 21st Century program is being offered remotely this semester.
- School Department has set up an information table outside the library for students and parents to have a place to present their questions and concerns. They plan on doing this a few times over the next summer

Staff

- The remainder of the furloughed staff returned to work 9/8.
- There are four vacant positions – total of 87.5 hours which limits the scope of what we can offer for services:

- S-5 Circ. Assistant/Tech. Processing 37.5 hpw
- S-5 Circ. Assistant 30 hpw
- Library Aide 10 hpw
- Library Page 10 hpw
- Staff member called out Monday 9/21 with COVID like symptoms. Tested negative and will return to work 9/22.
- 10 hpw Staff member in Children's out sick 9/15 and anticipated to be out until 9/28.
- Circulation Supervisor returned from furlough 6/8 to assist with Curbside Delivery.
- Children's Librarian and Circulation Assistant returned from furlough 6/22
- Position advertised S-5 Tech Processing/Circulation Assistant, vacancy created due to retirement. Interview process suspended until new administration in place.
- Staff have been encouraged to take vacation time since the restriction has been lifted. Many staff are long term employees and have a considerable of leave to take.
- Staff are continuing to maintain social distancing and sanitize work areas and equipment.
- Mail delivery has resumed now that the library is open to the public.
- Three staff participated in the trivia quiz at 7 pm on 5/22 organized by Central MA Library Advocates.

Summer Reading

- Summer Reading began on July 1st. All the details of the recommended reading for the area schools have been posted to the JEL website. The School Department has been promoting registering for the JEL Summer Reading program and to access books through the library. Registration is open to all with a category for Children, Teens and Adults. Some attractive incentives were offered – gift cards to local business such as Big Bunny, Hog Heaven, Thai Orchid. Reading logs were due 9/8. Winners were announced 9/9.

Tax Abatement

- The program has been suspended since March 16th when the library closed. All five personnel have more than 10 hours worked. The Senior Center Director has been updated.

Technology

- CWMARS has been contacted about issues using the Mobile Print App. The vendor has been contacted. There is a bug in the system that will be addressed with the next upgrade in September. Mobile Print has been restored 8/6
- Keyboard protectors for all computers are now in place
- Called Verizon to re-open the ticket MAAF 331-319 on the 5426 line. Established that it is a telephone system issue and have contacted ADVSI. Still working on diagnosing the issue.
- American Alarm reviewed the camera access on Main Street. Quote requested 8/12
- C/WMARS hardware system upgrade 8/12. No issues reported.

- Issue with Cashier module of MUNIS/TylerTech has been resolved and library staff now has access
- C/WMARS staff upgraded the Envisionware software with new interface 6/16
- Staff were given a demonstration on the Self-Checkout station and its operation by Stephanie, Adult Services Librarian. Instructions have been created for the patrons. This new feature is in keeping with trends in other retail stores and should be popular with patrons.
- Experienced issue with the scanning function of the printer relating to the connectivity and C/WMARS worked on this 6/30. Resolved.

Training

- Circ Staff member has been trained and working on MUNIS system.
- Staff has a detailed procedure for *Safe Handling of Materials* to review with staff. Also the REALM reports are being followed. As staff return to work from furlough, they are provided training in the new protocols in place.
- COSTEP MA: Hurricane Season 2020 Readiness Webinar, sponsored by the MA Board of Library Commissioners and National Weather Service on 6/16
- Participated in the Social Law Library webinar “Handling Patron Legal Questions during the Pandemic” 7/7
- During the closure period, staff regularly took online training offered by MIIA and through library organizations.

Trustees

- No meeting scheduled for July and August. Online meeting conducted September 22, 2020 via Go To Meeting and posted on JEL website.
- Trustee meeting scheduled for 9/22 online.