**Director’s Report**

**Prepared by Donita Ward:  January 6, 2025**

**Attachments: posted to website**

* Agenda
* Statistics & Digital Statistics
* Balance Sheet
* Profit and Loss Report

**Budget Adjustment Requests and Financial Items for Approval:**

* None at this time

**Finance & Administration**

Sales tax income closed out 2024 at just over 2.5M. The election was completed without incident. We canvassed the results and are ready for the oaths of office. In all, Wells Branch had a very good turnout this year. Quarterly tasks were completed including journaling the training hours for employees and computing / filing sales tax for the print station.

A hanging project on the administrative side of things relates to retirement accounts for previous employees. The library matches funds, and those matched funds vest over 4 years. Our account has split and been transferred to another group through the years, making three different systems. Karen managed to determine what previous staff had money sitting in accounts and contacted them. Any funds that were not vested were surrendered to a library forfeiture account, which we will cash out and get refunded once the last employee account is settled. In the process, we were able to correct the company’s records for an employee they listed as deceased, so all is well.

**Operations**

Circulation is strong. Our patrons borrowed 185385 items in 2024. We did 164 notaries, helped 121 people on the computers, and answered 2981 reference questions. Folks printed about 30,000 pages here and used the public computers for 5342 sessions. All said, we had 73746 people through the door.

We are totally out of space in the kids’ room. Without a shoehorn or a Tardis, we cannot fit any more kids graphic novels or picture books into our shelving, and we already weeded to standard. I’ve asked Library Interiors to quote me for an additional GN shelving unit on casters to match the two we purchased a couple of years ago. That will not solve our picture book situation, though. The only place we can add shelving is where the toy area currently sits, which could cause an uprising of epic proportion. We could move kids’ media out of the children’s room into the adult media area, but that could also be problematic.

October 2024 inventory was Adult Fiction. We found 9119 out of 9169 items for a loss rate of less than 1%. January inventory will be media, which is the more complicated and arduous inventory as it includes checking every box to be sure the correct items are inside and not simply making sure the boxes are on the shelf.

Generally, our inventory schedule is Media in January, Adult NonFiction in April, Kids in August and Adult Fiction in October. It looks like we will be at least partially inaccessible in October. I want to combine the Adult Fiction and Non Fiction inventories into August and scan kids in April (before summer reading). This should give us time to do the staff meeting at the April inventory and the October inventory closure can be used for back work.

There was a huge number of order cancellations, most of which were backorders at the end of the year. We are reordering those and continuing with regular material orders but emphasizing alternative formats and digital items as much as possible.

Last month, we added binge boxes and activity passes to the collection. We have admission for families to the Wildflower Center and to the THinkery available to reserve in Apollo. Binge Boxes are sets of movies that go together with a theme- best of John Hughes, Marvel Mania, Mission Impossible, Horror Party, etc. We are also transitioning some of the materials purchased for STEAM programming into circulating kits. This year, people will be able to check out snap circuits, keva blocks, marble maze, and other items that are otherwise fallow. We are also looking to make some of the adult craft lab items into circulating kits.

ERead Texas is all set up and we are waiting on instructions from TSLAC for accessibility to launch.

**Internal Affairs**

Demco is giving a materials repair course at the Georgetown Library later this month. Two librarians and two assistant managers will be attending this free workshop. Then those folks can train the rest of the staff who are interested.

On January 31, the Library Districts Discussion Group will meet at Westbank library for the semi-annual gathering. The main topic this time will be construction and renovation project updates and lessons.

Volunteer hours drop over the holiday season. We had nearly 100 hours in October and were down to 56 for December, so there is more shelving for staff to try to catch up each shift. We hope to get that number back up when past the visiting and flu season.

The Texas Workforce Commission has annual training for employers. It’s rather intense, but good information. The nearest offering this year (before anticipated construction) is Victoria in June. I don’t love the idea of travelling during Summer Reading, but it’s not long and it’s not out of contact range. I can drive to Victoria in less than 3 hours.

I completed all of the end of year reviews and goal setting with all 14 employees last quarter. Their 2025 goals were distributed. In case anyone is curious, this is our structure. The three librarians (Katrina, Leslie and Nick) and the admin (Karen) check in with me each month. Then, each of the librarians has three staff who they sit down with monthly. That way, everyone has a designated space to speak and catch anything that needs to addressing every month. I have midyear and end of year meetings with everyone who does not meet with me monthly.

Donita- Library Director- Checks in with Abbie

Karen- Office Manager

Katrina- Operations Librarian

Michelle- Assistant Manager (Volunteer Services)

Anastacia- Library Assistant

Marissa- Library Assistant

Leslie- Adult Services Librarian

Julia- Assistant Manager (Programs)

Lauren- Assistant Manager (Outreach)

Lenna- Library Assistant

Nick- Youth Services Librarian

Kaitlyn- Assistant Manager (Teens)

Elisa- Assistant Manager (Tech Services)

Mayela- Library Assistant

Open Enrollment for our insurance with Texas Municipal League was completed in November. Everyone participating has verified receipt of the new identification cards.

Victoria left us in December (got married and moved out of state). Mayela switched schedules and took Victoria’s hours, so we had to hire for Mayela’s position. Anastacia started in early December and was fully trained and ready before Victoria’s last day, making the transition smoother than we had any right to hope for over the holidays.

Per trustee suggestion, we had a staff holiday party with food and fluffy critters. I offered up things like Dave and Busters, Pioneer Farms Pumpkin Fest, and the Trail of Lights. Staff wanted tiny tails, so I did tiny tails. Almost everyone came and many brought their families. Volunteer appreciation was not as well attended, but that means Michelle can individually deliver the special cups we ordered to eligible folks.

**Technology**

We are contracted with Technology For Education (TFE) to have a professional visit each inventory for high level technology work. While we can usually handle everything in house, having someone familiar with our setup is necessary for emergencies and continuity.

Katrina added 5 more mobile hotspots to our rotation last quarter. They are very popular and we still (sometimes) have none available. She also replaced the two self-check computer stations and both catalog computers as they were running an unsupported version of Windows.

January inventory will be the day for our new LDS (library document station) installation. They station we have was installed in 2017 and has come out of support for various peripherals. The new one will (drumroll, please) accept card payments!!! This means we have to set up accounts through Regions with Elavon for card acceptance, so I expect some hiccups, but we are moving towards ending that particular pain point for our patrons.

**Facilities**

We got rid of the stage (donated to the school). It was rather gross beneath it once we disassembled it and took it out, but otherwise nobody has mentioned the loss. We needed the space and I think the room looks better without it.

The fancy light fixture on the median was somehow damaged beyond repair. We had it taken out by the electrician to cap the power. We had to replace the timers for the exterior building lights and the parking lot lights. Having done that and some further trouble shooting, we cannot find the short that is stopping the walkway lights from operating. It is likely underground wiring that is damaged. However, the other lighting is working properly, so I’ve determined to let that wait until construction as they may have been up for replacement anyway. There have been various HVAC and plumbing adventures and repairs, but nothing terribly exciting or concerning.

We posted the Request for Qualifications in November to accept proposals through December 2. The pre-submission meeting was on November 7th for interested parties to ask for any necessary clarifications and the interpretations document from those questions was posted on November 14th. On December 2 we had a meeting (virtual) to open and accept bids and three were submitted.

We got bids from TruBilt, Fransen Pittman, and Muckleroy & Falls. All three have the necessary qualifications for the project, so we scheduled interviews on December 17th. The three contenders came to the library and made presentations for the library director, Board President and our architect. They also submitted financial bidding, which we opened after the presentations. We selected a favorite and are in negotiation. We hope to have a construction manager in place for the Page Turn meeting on January 15th. I also hope to be able to host another public meeting or open house type event about the renovation in February as part of Love Your Library month.

**Programs & Outreach**

The WBNA Art Faire generally happens in September. It is entirely possible that the library and/or parking lot may be unavailable at that time. Margaret Sufke came to speak to me about it and she may request a date in Spring instead this year, but she is approaching the MUD first about using the rec center.

The DIY program has been challenging ever since pandemic with our numbers just not justifying costs. Space is limited, so we have a ticketing system, then people don’t show up. It’s incredibly frustrating. It’s also difficult in that the program expert cannot find last minute coverage and life is such that she does miss without advance notice. With these things in mind, we’ve transitioned that program towards a simpler craft kit system on Wednesdays and are reintroducing Open Hours as Sunday Crafternoon.

Holiday programs were wonderfully attended this year. Nick added a Grinch program (Whooville Extravaganza) that was as popular as Polar Express. We had a double Polar Express complete with Santa, per usual. Katrina and Leslie both did end of year craft blowout programs that adults really enjoyed. We had a storyteller for adults who performed A Christmas Carol. While he was good, it wasn’t as popular as one would hope for the cost. That one we probably won’t repeat.

I collect total costs (time and supplies) and attendance for each program throughout the year. These are aggregated into spreadsheets by age group and this lets me gather averages.

Adult programs (not the Craft Lab) average cost is $10.59 per person. Big winners are bad art, paint and pour, cross stitch, and tiny books. Basically, our patrons love simple or unskilled crafting. While the most expensive per attendee tends to be the resume classes or computer tutorials, the biggest costs without as much return were origami, sumi e, and the RPG painting programs. The adult craft LAB, despite using almost no new materials, still cost $17.35 per person to attend. Woodburning and Granny Squares were the most popular classes.

Little Kid programs (storytimes) are always going to be the biggest bang for the buck. Our average cost is $1.01per attendee and we have eleven programs a week. Big Kid programs average cost $7.27 per person. Biggest successes are new programs as almost anything has great turnout for the first 5-8 sessions, then it fades. Wacky Science and Writing Club did the best at retaining interest. Big costs in this category without return are kids yoga and young Rembrandts. Teen programs cost about $8.11 per attendee. Teens love painting and tiny tails. They are not into specific classes like juggling or even crafting.

Family and cultural programming cost about $9 per attendee. Cowboy Ken, the Reptile Guy and the Ukulele program were effective despite performer cost. Staci Gray and Lucas Miller are loved, but too expensive for the attendance. Our biggest winners here were staff delivered programs like Lunar New Year crafts, WHooville, Polar Express, and the Kids New Year Countdown. Our flops were Elizabeth Kahura, Christmas Carol, and the Eclipse Programming.

Passive programming has been a big hit this year. We spend about $3.54 per participant. Best engagement was the ‘this or that’ board, but folks also really enjoyed debating the villainy breakdown. Scavenger hunts did not do as well.