**Director’s Report**

**Prepared by Donita Ward:  June 12, 2025**

**Attachments: posted to website**

* Agenda
* Statistics & Digital Statistics
* Balance Sheet
* Profit and Loss Report
* HDL Report concerning sales tax trends
* Minutes from May meeting

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

* None at this time

**Finance & Administration**

Sales tax income is strong again. In June, our deposit was up more than 40% from the June 2024 deposit. This brings our year to date income (Jan-June 2025) to an overall 17.5% increase from last year (Jan-June 2024).

Per the last board meeting, I set up direct vendor payments for Library Interiors of Texas, Fransen Pittman Construction, and 720 design to come from our Texpool account. I also developed an authorization form requiring two trustee signatures to prompt the payment. Once I confirmed each recipient was properly set up in the system (sent a test $1 payment and waiting to hear that they’d received it), we were ready to use the system. In June, we made payments to Fransen Pittman and 720 design using the new system.

I have run the Profit and Loss Report and the Balance Sheet from QuickBooks. Those reports are posted on the website along with the sales tax snapshot from HDL. I sent a breakdown of all renovation costs to date, including paid and encumbered amounts, to the treasurer.

The 2025 Legislative Session ended in June. Many of the proposed bills that would have been problematic for library services did not go through. They did pass SB412 eliminating affirmative defense for librarians as related to materials that could be harmful to minors. They also put through legislation regarding notary services that, once interpreted, could mean that the library can no longer reasonably offer the service. There were other bills passed that relate to postings and cybersecurity that we can implement without any major change or disruption to public services. Most of the more invasive and difficult legislation was aimed at school libraries instead of public.

**Operations**

Circulation is picking up over the summer, per usual. The newest addition to our Library of Things is book bags. I noticed that sometimes people select more items than they have hands to carry. We also had some book bags with the library logo leftover from promotions gone by. These bags are now barcoded and available for patrons to check out with their books.

Weeding is going strong. Nonfiction video had minimal usage, and that collection is much smaller now. Over the summer, we are finishing up the adult fiction section. Most of the collections have already been completed.

Inventory in August will be a double hit- adult fiction and nonfiction. We will also (hopefully) be putting the new servers into use on that closure day. Shelving installation could affect the work days for closure if supply chain issues cause significant delays in the steel shelves beyond what we anticipated.

**Internal Affairs**

The search for an Assistant Director is going well. I got the job description finalized and posted mid May and have had several decent applicants. Thus far I have interviewed one and have two more interviews scheduled. Because we have opened applications to those not currently living in the Austin area, there could be additional delays for the best applicant to start work. The staff here have really stepped up to make everything continue to run smoothly even though we are all shouldering additional tasks and responsibilities.

One of the most frequently mentioned pain points for staff, current and former, is coverage. Our library has a rather unique staffing situation in that everyone here must be here at their assigned specific time for operations to go smoothly, and everyone who knows how to do the things we need to do is already on the schedule. We do not have a pool of substitutes like a school, or a set of extra people that can be moved about like a city library system might. If one person is off, other people have to work more to balance it.

I want to solicit a pool of potential temporary workers who would NOT be employees, but independent contract workers paid by the day (similar to our yoga instructor or baby signs teacher) as needed with no benefits or regular schedule. They would complete the beanstack training and an interview/orientation. That would give them the skills to sit a desk, thus freeing up remaining employees to do the more complicated tasks.

Volunteers fluctuate quite dramatically over the summer as students become available during the day, the library gets busier, and everyone tries to go on vacation. The next appreciation event is going to be in September involving pizza and a craft.

With renovation meetings and walkthroughs becoming more frequent, I have decided not to attend as many offsite meetings as I generally would. I will probably be going to the NSDA (National Special District Association) Forum in July. This is a new association for Texas and could have valuable information. Also, it is local and inexpensive, so there is no great loss if I am called back to the building. The Association of Rural and Small Libraries has an annual conference that is out of state, making it more of a financial and time commitment. However, it is one of the most valuable resources offered annually. The conference is entirely for small public libraries, making almost every session relevant. This year’s event is in September in Albuquerque.

**Technology**

I scheduled TFE to come out for server upgrades and replacement on the day of inventory closure August 28th, assuming everything we’ve ordered arrives on time. We currently run two separate virtual servers, one for the patron side of things and one for the staff/administrative side. The software to access those cloud based systems is out of support. After some research, it is more costly to switch software than to get entirely new systems (which come with warranties), so we are opting for the latter.

The patron computers, documents station, and card reader are all working well. We have recently experienced a rash of unreturned hotspots and may need to purchase more replacements. If we do, we should be able to transfer the service from the missing devices to new ones. Also in need of an update/replacement is the staff computer at the information desk. It accesses both servers and the print station, so needs to be a more robust device.

**Facilities**

Fransen Pittman sent an expert to diagnose our walkway lighting and replacement will be part of the renovation. We also have two AC units that are not running properly. Both are low on coolant, indicating a probable leak. One of them (unit 3) is slated for replacement during renovation, so we will move that timeline forward rather than spend the money to leak check and repair and recharge. We have scheduled more diagnostics for the other (unit 8). Unit 8 is a 5 ton Lennox that would cost over $12K to replace.

The Wildlife Certification was completed and signage has been placed. Look under the turkscap for the adorable little watering dish I ordered. We have had lovely response from the Wells Branch Wild group and the neighborhood.

Replacement shelving has been delayed, but we are still hoping to get installation done in August. I’m working with library managers to solidify our plans to keep services running without access to the stacks for the 1-2 weeks it takes to deliver, assemble and install the new shelving, transfer the collection from old to new shelving, and deconstruct and remove the existing shelves.

**Programs**

Summer reading in full swing and programs are energetic. The trend for attendance is consistent. Kids programs, especially crafty or storytime, have folks lined up out the door. Adult programs are hit and miss, but this month’s resume workshop had 8 people- which is more than double any previous resume offering. The First Friday cultural programs have been a big push this year, but families remain more interested in parties. A family concert (sitar, dance, etc) costs about $400 and brings in 20-45 people. A Bluey or Star Wars party costs under $100 and brings in 75+ attendees.

June and July are crazy program heavy for summer reading. In August, as we do every year, we will drop the afterschool age programming and restart with new offerings in September. Adult programs and storytime programs will stay on schedule through the year and are consistent, but storytime attendance bumps in the summers. We have full regular programming planned for September and are still working out some details for special programming in October through January when the meeting rooms are unavailable.

Passive programming and asynchronous programming will be heavily featured during the transitions. We have been reviewing our back pocket plans from COVID and Julia is developing some super fun ideas. Some programs will be unchanged (storytimes and kids programs can just all happen in the storytime room). Some will have to be offered back to back the way we do with Polar Express since adult craft programs will be happening in the Reading Room and it’s smaller than the usual space. A new offering we have that will be featured during temporary closures is our storywalk. Nick and Kaitlyn put it out last week and the kids really enjoyed walking through the story.