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## *Director's Report*

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March 2020

### **Personnel**

The status of the hiring process to fill staff vacancies is: the interview process for the PT CRC Clerk is pending the re-opening of the Library; a PT Teen Services Information Specialist and PT Circulation Clerk were were scheduled to start training on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

In keeping with the agreement between the Library and the Staff Association, the joint labor-management Health Advisory Committee met by teleconference for the NLSA to share their preference for health insurance plan options. The Library collected health insurance plan preference from Administration staff who are currently covered by the plan, and it appears that we have a consensus so we expect to be able to move forward with making a selection that will appeal to the majority of affected staff and work within the planned budget. We are now working on finding a 3<sup>rd</sup> party Health Reimbursement Account administrator that provides better service to covered employees.

### **Facilities**

Short-term storm water management was addressed on the south side of the library property abutting the Berea Church and Art Café. Further work needs to be done to implement a longer term solution of diverting storm water to prevent the flooding of the garden staircase. In addition, plumbing and electrical work needed to maintain exterior grounds has not been completed as requested.

We met with the building alarm company vendor to express concern about the numerous service calls they performed without satisfactory resolution of our issues. They offered a plan to migrate to a cellular phone based solution that will prevent the communications failure messages we have been experiencing since mid-February. We asked them to provide further documentation on the system profile so that we know how the alarms are configured for the various rooms in the buildings. Work did not get completed due to the emergency closure of the building. The arming and disarming of the building continue to function, and the beeps that were bothering staff are not an issue since they are not in the building.

The Bridge entrance automatic opener for mobility impaired patron use broke early in the month and has not yet been repaired.

Greenpoint Maintenance Service provided disinfecting and deep cleaning services throughout the building.

### **Meetings**

During the month, I met multiple times with library directors from Rockland County and Ramapo Catskill Library System as we shared information, collaborated on ideas for policies and services, and coordinated plans for responding to the COVID-19 emergency. When in-person discussions were no longer advisable, we began to meet through teleconferencing. I also attended a teleconference of the

Visit Nyack Board meeting to learn about the impacts of the health crisis on community businesses and plans.

### **Information Technology**

Sharon Alfano discovered on March 24<sup>th</sup> that the Time Clock System was not operating, which forced her to prepare payroll manually. Lou Moreno worked on several options to restore the system to operational status, but in reviewing the situation with the vendor, we learned that the system is too out of date to successfully restore it. Sharon and I are working on reviewing various vendor options to replace the system. In the meantime, we have had to create an alternate time accounting form and procedure for staff to use in the interim.

### **COVID-19 Emergency Actions**

I worked with the Board and with staff to prepare and respond to the rapidly evolving conditions resulting from the Coronavirus Pandemic. On March 11, 2020, after reaching out to Montefiore Nyack Hospital for guidance, Dr. Tony Matejicka, Chief Medical Officer, advised that we limit public engagement opportunities at the library and to begin to practice “social distancing”. I took the decision to cancel all programs through the end of the month. On Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, in consultation with the Board of Trustees’ Executive Committee, I announced an “emergency closing” of the library for the weekend of March 14 and 15 while we waited for further updates from local and state governments regarding how organizations with public services should proceed. We planned a Special Board Meeting by teleconference for Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm, where I recommended that the Library be closed through March 31<sup>st</sup>. At the Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board agreed to meet again the following week to review the status of the emergency and to decide whether staff could be allowed to safely return to the library building. At the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Special Meeting, I recommended that the Board consider closing the building “Until Further Notice”

Prior to the closing of the building on March 14<sup>th</sup>, I directed staff to prepare for the issues facing us with the community health crisis. This preparation work included purchasing cleaning and safety supplies, as well as considering how the library staff might continue to provide library services to the public ‘beyond the walls’. In addition, the Reference Department staff assisted with the timely update of communications to the public through the website and through our social media channels.

Once we closed the building to the public and to staff, I began the transition of operations and services to a virtual environment. Work in this area included identifying technology to support communications with the staff, the Board and the public, and guiding staff discussions regarding options for providing services. I conducted two teleconference meetings for staff to hear an update about our plans and to provide them a connection opportunity. Through an extremely challenging final two weeks of the month, I continued to be amazed and to take pride in the work of a number of our key staff including Aldona Pilmanis, Tracy Dunstan, Rosemary Farrell, Georgia Grandstaff, Lou Moreno, Mike Grella, Sharon Alfano and Anne Shaw. They have gone beyond the call in adapting their work lives with intelligence, commitment and grace. They have contacted patrons and presenters to inform them of our new landscape; they have collaborated to develop innovative solutions to the challenges we face, and they have persevered in their dedication to public service in this time of crisis. In addition, many other staff have been very responsive and have made great suggestions and contributions to our efforts to re-think our services. We have asked staff to spend time training when they are not working on assigned projects or tasks, and the LibGuide developed by Kat Sullivan is a great tool to guide their efforts. I plan to keep staff busy working on reimagining public services and to pursue staff development, which I

believe will move us through this period of uncertainty and stress. We will deploy the resources we have to serve our community and to provide them information and access to much needed forms of refreshment and renewal. The Nyack Library survived the 1918 Pandemic, and I am certain it will survive this one too.