

Hopkinton Town Library
REPORT FROM LIBRARY DIRECTOR
September 23, 2020

Library Staff: Library staff are well-engaged and our processes for maintaining a safe environment for them and library visitors seems to be working. In consultation with the staff, we have begun to have volunteers (one at a time) back in the building on days when we are closed to the public to work on shelving and book repair. Volunteers were offered the option of coming back and most jumped at the opportunity.

Finance: We are on target with the budget. With 33% of the year remaining, we have used 57% of our budget. We have had a variety of expenses covered with the federal Covid grant received by town (all extra cleaning supplies, door stoppers for front doors etc.) We are cautiously beginning the process of developing 2021 budgets and recommendations for the Capital Improvement Plan.

We have still not received the checks from the interest on town trust funds (due in March of the year). I have been told that it is “in process.”

Library Services: Since we met last we have lengthened curbside pickup from 10 to 5 Tuesday through Friday and on Saturdays from 10:00 to 1pm. We are now open as planned on Tuesday and Friday for four hours staggered from 10 to noon and 3 to 5 to allow for clean up. Saturday hours from 10-1pm began last week. Usage has been slow but steady and we have not yet reached our fifteen person maximum capacity at any one time. Visitors have been very happy to be back in the building and completely compliant with guidelines. Reservations and walk-ins are divided equally. Staff debriefed on how this process is going today and decided that we should continue on our current course for another two weeks noting that to date there has not been a demand or need to expand the hours. We are also monitoring local infection rates given the fact that the schools are open. Many patrons are still opting to do curbside pickup, which is great. Our statewide Inter-Library Loan program started running again last week.

We are having an increasing number of requests for the use of our community rooms. I put out a poll to the NH public library listserv and got 40 responses as follows: Community Rooms are

NOT open to the public	27
OPEN to the public with restrictions including size of group, mask wearing	5
HOPE to open this Fall	5
OPEN during library hours for computer use or reading	3

The trustees should discuss. The Slusser Center will not be opening up for any public use, with the agreement of the Select Board.

Programs: The Summer Reading Program (SRP) “Imagine Your Story” was totally virtual this summer. It’s difficult to draw any conclusions from this pandemic year, but we learned many lessons on how to provide a strong level of service. Books and crafts and other activities were available for curbside pickup throughout the summer and all programs that had been scheduled (music, puppet shows etc) were offered virtually. Attendance at the virtual programs was below expectations, perhaps due to “zoom fatigue.” Leigh recorded storytimes that people could tune into and we were available by phone and email for questions. We are applying what we learned as we develop programming moving forward. One challenge is that by the end of

the program over seventy book/craft “packs” remained without pick up, which was frustrating because of the labor involved in assembling the packs.

SRP	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Registrants	171	179	207	228	151	173	122 session one and 121 session two
Volunteers	25	29	27	15	17	12*	9
Books Read	1952	1857	4540*	2307	2552	1897	5685!!
			*First Year of 1000 Bks Before K			*Deliberate plan to give fewer volunteers more hours	

Our book group discussions are taking place monthly via Zoom and have a small but loyal following. We hosted a virtual “living history” program with Sheryl Faye playing Susan B. Anthony in celebration of the passage of the 19th amount giving women the right to vote (September 20th at 4pm). Twenty six people signed in to watch the event and we had seven at the Q and A. Goal Two 1k

Building: Chris Wardell will undertake the re-staining of the building exterior this Fall. He had hoped to get to this in September, but says he won’t get to it until October, in which case weather is more of a factor with the staining.

ENE, the library’s HVAC company replacing our filters with MERV 13 air filters in August. The outside air flow through the building was also increased. Air is being circulated in the building 9x/hour and outside air is being circulated through 2x/hour in addition. We have been assured that this puts us in a very strong position on air quality.

Darragh Madden from Irish Electric and Justin LaCombe and I met to discuss how the lighting in the stacks can be improved. Since the post lightning strike improvements were made to our lighting, we have been made aware of dark spots in the stacks. We expect a proposal for this upgrade shortly.

Goal 2 1a

Planning and Policy: Library Strategic Plan to be reviewed. We will also begin the process of reviewing library policies again and updating the personnel manual.

Community Relations: We hosted the Supervisors of the Checklist yesterday. They were at the library from ten to noon with voter registration information. They also gave us handouts to distribute.

Respectfully submitted, Donna Dunlop