August 2023 Directors Report

Staffing
After over a decade here, IT Admin and Circulation Associate Adam Pober will be leaving Plainsboro Free Public Library. Adam was instrumental in the RFID implementation project, website maintenance, and a lot of patron and staff facing technical support. Adam will be the new Head of Electronic Resources at the Old Bridge Public Library. We wish him all the best!

Mid Year Check Up
As I did last year, curious as to the impacts of COVID on library use, I decided to look at the first six months of statistics and compare them to last year - and add in 2019 for a reference point.

Traffic Comparison

2023 Traffic
2022 Traffic
2019 Traffic
As can be seen, 2023 circulation is slightly below last year and still far below 2019 levels, while traffic has bounced back significantly but still sees a gap. I am concerned that this may be in part due to our decreased book budgets this year.

**YES Project Award Update**
We have received notice that the signed contract from M&M Construction is in the mail at the time of this writing, and now await its arrival as well as a preliminary project schedule. This will be forwarded to the Board as soon as it is available.

**YES Project Pre-Construction Planning**
After a survey of libraries with Foundations, the most common approach used by libraries performing capital upgrades or construction without direct municipal support is a dedicated project account into which Foundation funds are deposited and from which expenses are then tracked and reported. To this end, the Library will set up a YES Project checking account to which the current state funds and dedicated Library capital funds can be moved via Board motion in future.

Internally we are working on a continuity of service plan and checklist of tasks for cleaning out the 3rd Floor and services during demolition.

**Friends of the Library Meeting**
On July 27th, Assistant Director of Public Services Maureen Langley and I met with the Friends of the Library to discuss increasing Friends membership, clearing out the Book Sale Room for
the YES Project, and a funding request to expand the Museum Pass Program and other library initiatives. We look forward to future meetings with the Friends as the group is re-energized now that COVID is behind us and the public is back in the library. As a result of the meeting, the Friends agreed to fund $7200 in Sunday hours staffing, as well as additional passes to the Guggenheim and MOMA museums. Additionally, a passive book sale table will return by the Info Desk, as well as an Annual Big Book Sale in the Community Room. This will help clear out the Book Sale Room in preparation for its use as a mini Youth Services Department during YES construction.

Summer Learning Challenge

Thus far we’re seeing our best adult participation ever, along with increased children’s participation over last year. Events are filling quickly, and social media posts are getting higher traction this summer as we promote a more personalized “human interest” posting approach as
opposed to notifying the public of upcoming events to register for. Kudos to the Public Services team and Marketing and Publicity Associate Ishva Mehta for their hard work this year!

Respectfully Submitted,

Darren Miguez

Meetings
7/17/2023 Darren Miguez and Nick Olimpaito met with Cary Spiegel and M&M Construction to discuss the YES Project
7/27/2023 Maureen Langley met with Tara Miller from Recreation and Shannon Martain from Community Education to coordinate quarterly programming efforts
7/27/2023 Darren Miguez and Maureen Langley met with the Friends of the Library

Connect 2 Community
7/12/2023 Liz Palena read to about 30 kids at a Recreation Camp
7/18/2023 Sew Yeng Chong read to 20 kids at a Pre-K Camp

Professional Development
7/7/2023 Darren Miguez attended MEL JIF Risk Management training
7/21/2023 Sew Yeng Chong attended “AI and Machine Learning: Transforming the Modern Campus and Library”