

Director's Report to the Board of Agents

Silas Bronson Library

December 20, 2022

Raechel Guest, Director

FY24 Budget

Our budget request to the City is due on January 4. Mary Jane is reviewing all expenses to create an accurate projection of anticipated expenses for our operations. We do not anticipate any increases to our municipal operating appropriation.

For Capital Improvements, we are now looking at requesting \$121,595 for the cyclical replacement of staff and public computers, network infrastructure, and printers; this is three years' worth of replacement costs, since we have not received any funding from the City for this routine expense in the past two years. The City's Capital Budget still specifies that the Bronson Endowment will be used to purchase this equipment.

Normally we replace 20% of all computers (both staff and public), as well as 20% of our network infrastructure equipment each year. We do this to maintain a 5 Year Life-Cycle Replacement Plan since computers not only become obsolete (and unable to run "then-current" software) but both the computers and network equipment begin to have hardware failures at an accelerated rate and are out of warranty after two or three years. Without any funding from either the City or the Bronson Fund, we are unable to keep up with this cyclical replacement.

While there are some grant programs for public library computers, they are highly competitive, cannot be counted on for annual support, and are unlikely to be available for staff computers. Additionally, the library does not have a grant specialist on staff to actively pursue and manage grants at the level required for what is essentially a routine operational expense.

Staffing Levels

We have made progress in filling our vacancies. We have hired a Maintainer 1, an Admin 1, and a Page. We are still short two Admin 1s and three Librarian 2s. We hope to see a list of candidates for the Librarian 2 positions very soon.

With the arrival of a new Admin 1, we were able to transfer an experienced Admin 1 to the Director's Office, bringing us back up to full staffing in that office.

We were authorized to offer overtime to white collar employees to help with shift coverage. We have needed to use this several times to keep our public service desks staffed.

Gary Bach, Librarian 4, has announced his retirement after thirty-seven years with the Silas Bronson Library. His last day will be March 29.

Elevator

The passenger elevator stopped working on October 7. KONE Inc., the City's new elevator service company, sent a technician the same day. The problem was diagnosed as a "damaged starter." The total estimated repair cost is \$5,369. We are still waiting for the replacement starter to arrive. KONE sent a technician to the library on December 6 to confirm the part number for the part that needs replacement.

Elevator Replacement Project

The grant contract for replacing the passenger elevator has been finalized and information has been forwarded to the Waterbury Development Corporation (WDC). We have until November 25, 2023 to sign with a contractor. The deadline for completing the project and submitting all grant payment requests is May 25, 2027.

WDC is in the process of finalizing the bid packet, with input from the State Library to ensure that we are in compliance with the grant requirements. At some point in the process, a Building Committee will be formed to oversee the project. The State Library requires that the Committee include myself and at least one member of the library's Board of Agents.

Parking Lots

The parking lot downtown reopened on December 8. The parking lot at Bunker Hill received a fresh coat of pavement in November, thanks to the City Engineering Department when they finished installing new sidewalks on Aurora Street.

Genealogy Donation

We have received quotes for genealogical resources which would be paid for by the \$2,500 anonymous donation for genealogy at the library. There are two databases which would be very beneficial for anyone doing genealogy research. Both would be additions to our existing Newsbank subscription, which includes our online access to the Rep-Am as well as thousands of current newspapers.

The first database is an add-on module called Black Lives in America, although it is not specific to that topic. The module includes more than four hundred titles from the 1700s, more than five thousand titles from the 1800s, and more than six hundred titles from the early 1900s. I had an opportunity to test the database, and I was able to find an enormous wealth of genealogical information both locally and nationally. If you are familiar with GenealogyBank.com, a database for individual subscriptions, this pretty much the same content, as they are both owned by Newsbank. This is essentially the library edition of GenealogyBank (Newsbank offers two themed modules for library subscriptions; Black Lives in America is the larger one). The database currently costs \$1,580 per year. In future years, our City budget should be able to cover this cost.

The second database is called Early American Newspapers Series 18. This is also offered by Newsbank. This database is smaller, but it includes titles that I have not seen anywhere else. Among those titles is the Waterbury American from its first issue in 1844 through 1876. While we have it on microfilm, the database has the advantage of allowing keyword searches, which can't be done on microfilm. This would be of particular help when patrons ask for information from this time period (we recently had two patrons asking for information from the late 1850s, which would require searching the newspaper for answers). There are two purchase options for this database. The first is an annual subscription of \$900. The second is to purchase perpetual access (we would own the content) for \$3,661. After year two, there would be an annual access fee of one percent (\$37 per year).

I recommend subscribing to Black Lives in America and purchasing perpetual access to Early American NewsPapers Series 18. The total cost is \$5,241, of which \$2,500 would be covered by the genealogy donation, and the remainder by our City budget (our subscription to physical magazines is approximately \$3,000 less than budgeted).

If the Board prefers to do the annual subscription instead of perpetual access to the Early American Newspaper Series 18, the total cost for both databases would be \$2,480.

Bibliomation

After we resubmitted the contract paperwork to Corp Counsel in early October, they informed us in mid-November that some of the paperwork needed to be redone, and that additional information needed to be provided. It typically takes a long time hear back from Corp Counsel whenever we have any questions or submit information about this contract, which has contributed to the delay. We resubmitted one more time all of the paperwork on December 5. We hope that it will go to the Board of Aldermen in early January.

Mobile Library

We continue to attend community events, community centers, and public schools. On October 29, we attended Neighborhood Housing Services' Housing Expo at Fulton Park, where we made 28 library cards and distributed various items about the library to the public.

We returned to the Hopeville Community Center on November 9 to distribute five library cards made in October.

On November 14, the Mobile Library participated in "Reading Night" at Walsh Elementary School. During this event we were able to make one library card, renew one card, and hand out the Fall 2022 issue of Books & Happenings. The school wants us to return again in December.

We visited the Willow Plaza Community Center on November 17 for their afterschool program, making four library cards (one replacement and three new) and handing out library card applications for kids to take home to their parents.

On the afternoon of Saturday, November 19, the Mobile Library attended a pre-Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner at the Police Activity League on 64 Division Street. Again, we were able to make four library cards (three new and one replacement) and hand out our promotional material.

November 29 saw us at the Naugatuck Valley Community College Library where we made three library cards and handed out the latest issue copies of Books & Happenings. NVCC has invited us to return in March 2023.

The Willow Plaza Community Center had us back on December 1 where we made five library cards for seniors (three new and two replacement). As always, there was interest in the crochet club with two crochet animals on display at our table.

Two city elementary schools are interested in having the Mobile Library come for a visit: Bucks Hill and Bunker Hill. Currently this is in the planning stages with a target date of early 2023.

Home Deliveries (October 14-November 15)

Number of Deliveries: 10

Number of Items Delivered: 45

Home Deliveries (November 16-December 14)

Number of Deliveries: 14

Number of Items Delivered: 31

Circulation Division

October Statistical Reports: Main Library

Total Collection Size: 266,864
Total Items Added to Collection: 899
Total Physical Items Circulated: 7,669
Total Circulation In-House: 397
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 1,503
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 299

Total Active Patrons: 43,816
Total Expired Patrons: 432
Total Patrons Added: 179

October Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill

Total Collection Size: 11,249
Total Items Added to Collection: 42
Total Physical Items Circulated: 575
Total Circulation In-House: 0
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 112
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 250

Total Active Patrons: 1,409
Total Expired Patrons: 21
Total Patrons Added: 5

November Statistical Reports: Main Library

Total Collection Size: 266,597
Total Items Added to Collection: 533
Total Physical Items Circulated: 6,957
Total Circulation In-House: 289
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 1,345
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 342

Total Active Patrons: 43,839
Total Expired Patrons: 503
Total Patrons Added: 94

November Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill

Total Collection Size: 11,144
Total Items Added to Collection: 29
Total Physical Items Circulated: 561
Total Circulation In-House: 0
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 76
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 214

Total Active Patrons: 1,411
Total Expired Patrons: 22
Total Patrons Added: 3

OverDrive Circulation: October

Audiobooks: 495

Adult: 880

Ebooks: 591

Teen/YA: 97

Total Checkouts: 1,086

Children: 109

OverDrive Circulation: November

Audiobooks: 465

Adult: 823

Ebooks: 594

Teen/YA: 102

Total Checkouts: 1,059

Children: 13

Museum Pass Use – October

Pass	Pass Type	Number Reserved	Checked Out	No Shows
Beardsley Zoo	Pick Up/Return	2	1	1
Children’s Museum/Roaring Brook Nature Center	Print from Home	1	1	0
EverWonder Children’s Museum	Print from Home	1	1	0
KidsPlay Children’s Museum	Print from Home	1	1	0
Mattatuck Museum Art and History Center	Print from Home	4	4	0
New Britain Museum of American Art	Print from Home	3	3	0
Old Sturbridge Village	Print from Home	1	1	0

Museum Pass Use – November

Pass	Pass Type	Number Reserved	Checked Out	No Shows
Beardsley Zoo	Pick Up/Return	2	1	1
KidsPlay Children’s Museum	Print from Home	2	2	0
Mattatuck Museum Art and History Center	Print from Home	1	1	0
Mystic Seaport	Print from Home	1	1	0
Old Sturbridge Village	Print from Home	1	1	0

Online Presence: October & November

Facebook Followers	as of 12/2/2022: 2,824
Facebook Reach	October 1 – October 31: 12,518
Facebook Reach	November 1 – November 30: 7,297
Instagram Followers	as of 12/2/2022: 1,054
Instagram Reach	October 1 – October 31: 696
Instagram Reach	November 1 – November 30: 296
Bronson Teens Instagram Followers	as of 12/2/2022: 323
Twitter Followers	as of 12/2/2022: 494
Twitter Impressions	October 1 – October 31: 1,799
Twitter Impressions	November 1 – November 30: 1,753
Wowbrary Active Subscriptions	as of 12/2/2022: 88
Wowbrary Webpages Viewed	October 1 – October 31: 394
Wowbrary Webpages Viewed	November 1 – November 30: 423
Wowbrary Clickthroughs to Catalog	October 1 – October 31: 114
Wowbrary Clickthroughs to Catalog	November 1 – November 30: 58

Website Visitors	October 1 – October 31: 1,613
Website Visitors	November 1 – November 30: 1,456
Website Sessions	October 1 – October 31: 2,418
Website Sessions	November 1 – November 30: 2,144
Website Pageviews	October 1 – October 31: 4,509
Website Pageviews	November 1 – November 30: 3,852

Most Visited Website Pages (October 1 – October 31):

Home Page: 2,271	How to Get a Card: 79	Teen/YA: 24
Programs: 320	eBooks: 52	Geekdom: 22
Research: 182	Hall of Fame: 65	Computer Classes: 20
How to Find Books: 140	Digital: 65	Board of Agents: 17
Bunker Hill Branch: 136	Borrowing Questions: 61	Requests: 15
Ask A Librarian: 134	Newsletters: 50	Friends: 14
Genealogy/Local Hist.: 119	Home Delivery: 43	Business Resources: 11
Calendar: 112	Program Registration: 36	Directions: 8
Children's Division: 106	Book Sale: 35	Book a Librarian: 7
About Us: 105	Library History: 27	GovDocs: 6
Museum Passes: 80	New Movies: 25	

Most Visited Website Pages (November 1 – November 30):

Home Page: 1,906	Calendar: 71	Friends: 20
Programs: 239	Library History: 71	Geekdom: 18
Research: 191	Borrowing Questions: 61	Program Registration: 18
Bunker Hill Branch: 139	eBooks: 54	New Movies: 15
Ask A Librarian: 121	How to Get a Card: 52	Board of Agents: 11
Genealogy/Local Hist.: 100	Newsletters: 48	Business Resources: 7
About Us: 99	Hall of Fame: 23	Meeting Rooms: 7
Museum Passes: 86	Teen/YA: 31	GovDocs: 7
Digital: 84	Book Sale: 30	Directions: 5
How to Find Books: 83	Home Delivery: 27	Book a Librarian: 3
Children's Division: 71	Computer Classes: 23	Requests: 3