

October 25th, 2021

Annual Board of Trustees Meeting

Directors Report encompassing November 2020 - October 2021

As I look back on this last year at Maxwell, one thing stood out to me: how much we accomplished during a pandemic. Last November, we were only open for appointment-based browsing/curbside pickup, and some computer and meeting room use. We were cleaning after every single patron. The downtown libraries were only open for curbside. Then, in January, cases increased, and we went back to curbside only. In March and April, staff were able to get vaccinated (currently we await eligibility for our boosters). Appointments went away last May, but we still had occupancy concerns. We went from a week's quarantine on all returned materials to none! Now, almost one year later, we are open regular hours, with no appointments needed. We still offer curbside pickup and are still wearing masks. The downtown libraries are open regularly, although they are still experiencing staffing issues. I believe we've accomplished operating the library as successfully as possible, during a challenging time for all of us.

During the last year, we've also seen significant changes in our staff. We will have a few retirements soon, but by the beginning of November, we will have welcomed a total of 3 new staff members. We also hired 3 substitute clerks. All year, as a staff, we've had regular meetings individually and together. This has helped increase our communication and customer service. Staff participated in webinars and training on mental health, programming, and Ryan Dowd's Librarians Guide to Homelessness. Upcoming, we will be participating in Leap training to learn our new interface for our Integrated Library System.

We migrated our website over to a new host, the Syracuse Design Group. Paychex was upgraded to enable tracking of employee sick, vacation, and personal time. Pete facilitated the completion of our physical inventory. The steeple room was cleaned out and organized, and the entire basement was too! We agreed as a consortium to fund Overdrive Digital Magazines. We received a grant for our Sensory Garden, which will be completed in the spring.

Library committees including Fundraising, Buildings & Grounds, and Strategic Planning had an amazing year. The Fundraising committee put together a monthly list of ideas, held a very popular Tree of Gift Cards Drawing, Easter Basket Drawing, and bottle drive, while the annual appeal generated more money for the library than any year, I found record for (back to 2012). The B&G committee had a building inspector come to Maxwell to help with our future planning, investigated possible areas outside the building to hold larger programs, and assisted in the application we submitted for a Construction Grant. Our strategic plan was also completed and implemented. We continue to check in with our plan to ensure we complete the set goals.

I personally chaired the Member Council (MC), which meets every other month, and I will continue to do so. The MC consists of OCPL member library staff, managers, and directors, and exists to make recommendations to the system for implementation. I participated in the formation of the NYLA Friends Council, enabling Librarians and Friends members to share ideas, suggestions, and any issues. I also joined the MOU committee, then chaired it, and

finished the OCPL MOU, along with other member directors, and board members from our system. I continue to be Vice President of the Suburban Library Directors, which meets every other month as well.

We've begun to coordinate programs with the Fairmount Library. Their director and board president met with us a few times to start planning. We visited the farmers market together over the summer, collaborated on our Summer Reading Programs, and most recently, co-hosted a children's educational event with the fire department.

Together, with the board, we have completed and implemented numerous new library policies including Confidentiality, Collection Development, Request for Reconsideration, Meeting Room Use, Circulation, and the Infectious Disease Prevention Plan. We've also updated our Employee Handbook and Bylaws. Continuing to review and update these policies will strengthen Maxwell, while making it safer and enjoyable for all.

Melissa has taken over Miss Sally's story times, which went from Facebook to in person just recently. She had a much better attended Summer Reading Program, with both in person programs and virtual. She is also seeing great success with 'take and make' children's and teen crafts.

Ongoing is our audit with Grossman St. Amour, as well as the placement of a historical marker outside the building with the Camillus Historical Society. We are also continually donating books to Fairmount Gardens in conjunction with the Friends. Work with the Friends of Maxwell has gone very well this year. They've helped us purchase a new TV for the Community Room, and pumpkins for our upcoming family program.

Programming at Maxwell had an interesting year. We went from offering zoom only book discussions, card making, story times, and lectures to slowly starting small in person events. We've welcomed back artists into our Community Room. Max Packs and 'take and make' were very popular. Summer Reading for both adults and youths was well received and appreciated by our community. Wellness Wins 2021 programming included meditation, fitness, and bullet journaling classes. We partnered with people directly from our community to offer these. Financial workshops for teens were well attended, and I believe we will offer these again in the spring. Out of the box programming included a chocolate chip taste test, the winter reading challenge, and a walk on National Take a Hike Day. In May, staff held a book sale in our parking lot during the Mile Long Sale. Between the Lines book club and the card and craft making classes have transitioned back to in person. Lastly, we partnered with the Everson Museum to offer a family pass for checkout.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the staff for their work this past year. We've had our fair share of challenges (masks, a pandemic, patrons suffering with mental health issues, saying goodbye to long time staff members as well as welcoming new ones). Our staff at Maxwell has handled all this with grace, humility, and comradery. Thank you for supporting each other, and for caring about our library. I'm hopeful for a great 2022.

**Fun statistics for Oct 1 2020 - Sept 30, 2021:**

Circulation: 59,461 items out the door

Reference questions: 3,863 people helped

New patrons: 174 given a library card

Computer assistance: 521

Technology help: 542

Children's programs: 162

Children's program attendance: 3,940

Adult programs: 80

Adult program attendance: 1,150

Hoopla downloads: 3,264

OverDrive/Libby downloads: 16,222

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Ali