

George H. Stowell Free Library Trustee Report - 2020

The title of the children's book, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst is a fitting description for 2020. It has been a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad year for our community and for our library. The COVID-19 pandemic changed our daily lives and routines and forced the library's closure on March 18. We developed safety protocols for our employees and patrons, reopened for curbside service in June, and opened for reduced library hours on July 1.

There have, however, been some not-so-terrible days. We hired Stephanie McAndrew as our new librarian when Brenda Freeland retired at the end of October. We transferred our paper card catalog records to an automated library catalog using the Koha Integrated Library System. We went "live" on August 17 when volunteers started barcoding the books, audio books, and movies from our collection and entering them into our on-line catalog. Thank you to Ginny Gage, Sandy Guest, Trish Olivier, Sharon Oszajca, Kathi Patterson, Caroline Storrs, Judy Taylor, and Martha Zoerheide. You all made it possible for library patrons to search the availability of items in our collection, place items on hold, make purchase suggestions, and even renew an overdue item – all from the safety of their homes without having to make a trip to the library to see if an item is available.

In addition, we received a donation from the Meyeette family toward our Handicap Access/Bathroom Building Fund and used \$2,500 to hire a licensed designer, Thomas Dombroski, who completed the septic system and well placement design on December 4. Our next step will be to negotiate a price for purchase of the acreage the library will need to annex from the neighboring landowner for placement of the system – 4,850 square feet or .11 acre.

We met in December of 2020 to review our 2020 expenditures and develop a budget for 2021. Our technology expenses for 2020 included several items related to automation: the purchase of a yearly Koha subscription and training, the cost to transfer the NHAIS and OverDrive records, the purchase of a computer station for the circulation desk, a computer station for patron use, barcode scanners, barcodes, and patron cards. Most of these costs were offset by a Tasker Grant, the sale of some library furniture, and donations. We ended the year with a checkbook balance of \$46.96.

Our anticipated expenses for 2021 include a payroll increase, funding for technology, library training, and postage. Our Koha costs will be \$2,500 and our OverDrive costs have increased to \$500 per year. Our estimated income for 2021 includes our end-of-the year balance, revenues from unspent 2020 payroll, interest, book fines, and the ongoing book sale in addition to our appropriation request of \$26,842.53 an amount that is \$6,159.53 more than last year's request.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Cousineau
Kathryn Patterson
Richard Scheuer