

We're thinking spring! The contracts for the landscaping at Northside and Kingston have been drawn up and we're in process (again) of requesting quotes for Main's landscaping projects. Weather has played a factor, of course, but we're hoping to see progress soon.

Bookworm and summer planning is in full swing and the Friends are planning their annual April booksale during National Library Week. Most of us are looking forward to nicer days!

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **1. Patron book challenges:**

You may remember that last year the Harwood Institute out of Bethesda, Maryland asked us to participate in a national conversation about the state of civility in the country. The final report is slated to be released in mid-February and last week Erin Lyons and I sat in on a virtual call to discuss the findings and to hear about the institute's plans for rolling out the information.

Not to spoil the report's conclusion, but the institute found that our country is more divided than ever. However, it also found a desire to have meaningful conversations about things that impact our communities.

There were a couple of takeaways that I specifically found useful in regards to the current book challenges we're facing:

- Know what you stand for, but allow others to talk about what matters to them.
- Don't let anger or passion own the debate. Engage productively, not just for the sake of process, but to make connections.

It's easy for me, as a professional librarian concerned about free and unfettered access to all information, to take a book challenge as a personal challenge. I've got to step back and allow others to express their own frustrations and concerns. If I want acceptance, I need to accept others. It may sound obvious, but I think we all need that reminder once and a while.

That said, Rich Harwood, the institutes' founder, also advised us to pay attention to the larger narrative of what's happening. What's the end game? I absolutely support the right of parents to make decisions about what their children

read and check out, but I don't support allowing another parent to dictate what my own children can have access to.

I've provided scanned copies of all the documents pertaining to the formal challenges for your information. The initial complaints were reviewed by me and my decisions (along with supporting book reviews and other information) were made known to the patron(s) and board.

Per Public Services policy 2.5, Reconsideration of a Work, the patron then has the right to appeal my decision to the board. The board then provides a written decision to the patron(s) about whether the title(s) will be removed from the collection. It is be up to the board to determine if you want to nominate someone to write an opinion or if you want to draft a response as a committee of the whole. The board's decision is final.

## **2. Personnel Committee Report**

The Personal Committee met on January 25 with me and Kelly Smith, HR Manager. Kelly and I wanted to review updates and changes to the HR policies and to share re-formatted job descriptions. A summary of the policy changes has been provided for full-board approval.

## **3. Accept resignation of Morgan Alexander, effective 1/28/2022**

Morgan hasn't been with us very long, but he was offered a temporary, full-time position in his field of IT and couldn't pass up the opportunity or experience. His position has been posted and we've already received a handful of promising resumes.

## **4. Approve a Maintenance Assistant position**

This has been an on-going conversation since before Rick Edler and Nan Clary retired last year. Now that the new Fiscal Officer and Facilities Manager, have had a chance to settle in, we've been discussing it again.

In short, the library "hires out" a lot of jobs that could easily be completed in house by the right person. This position would operate as a "handyman" (or woman!) helping us catch up on deferred maintenance and perform basic tasks involving plumbing, painting, vehicle repair, landscaping, troubleshooting, etc. As you know, currently the department has a manager, one custodian who focuses on Main, the Annex, and Northside, and one delivery driver who does light cleaning at all of the other 6 library locations. With nine libraries, eleven buildings, and a fleet of five library vehicles, we need an additional set of hands.

We've prepared a job description for your approval. The position would be full-time, benefitted and fall in pay band C, Coordinators and Assistants.

#### 5. Approve re-hiring temporary Youth Services Clerk for Bookworm

Prior to the pandemic, we had hired the same temporary summer help, Tiffany Graves, for several years. Tiffany is a local teacher who has spent her summers with us since at least 2014. She is available and interested in working this summer to help the youth services team return to a somewhat-normal Bookworm program series. She would be scheduled on average 25 per week for 3 months at \$12 per hour.

#### 6. Nonrenewal of lease with ASPIRE for north end of the annex

The library has an annual lease with ASPIRE for them to use the north end of the annex. As library staff and services have grown, we've started thinking about other ways we could use that space. It includes a large open classroom on the west side and several offices on the east side. ASPIRE (part of Pickaway/Ross Career and Technology Center) pays \$600 per month in rent; the library covers all utility and maintenance expenses.

The space is in need of updates and repairs. We budgeted this year for new ceiling tiles, but the windows and carpet (all original to Central School) are really worn and in bad shape, too. At the time of the initial lease agreement it probably made sense to allow ABLE to use the space. Now, however, I think the library could benefit from having additional room for our growing Outreach department and possibly other projects/initiatives.

If we inform PRCTC now that we won't be renewing the lease, that would give them nearly four months to find an alternative space. We could also revert to a month-to-month if needed until they find a new location. I have, when they've asked if we have more rooms they could rent, recommended that they reach out to the city schools about potential space at Mt. Logan. They've apparently outgrown the space.

#### 7. Adjourn