

**Albert Wisner Public Library**  
**Director's Report**  
Lisa Laico  
**July 23, 2024**

**Building & Grounds**

- The new diner booths were installed on Wednesday, June 26. They are very popular! To encourage patrons to use them respectfully, we have provided all-natural cleaning spray and tri-fold paper towels to wipe down the tables after snacking. Assemblyman Karl Brabenec, who has allocated \$20,000 toward the cost of the booths, will be at the Library on Thursday, July 25 to see them. We will take photos and issue a press release thanking him.
- At this Board meeting, there will be a motion regarding approval of AWPL's application for NYS Construction Aid for the DIRTT rooms. As part of the application, we must submit an assurance both to the State and to RCLS attesting to the Library's intention to complete the project and to the Library's ability to fund it. The application is due to Stephen Hoefer at RCLS on August 1. He will review and provide edits to be incorporated. Once he is satisfied with the application, it will move forward to NYSED, and from there to DASNY (Dormitory Authority of the State of NY) for final approval. If approved, the Library is eligible for reimbursement of 50% of the project cost.
- I have asked Butler, Rowland, Mays (BRM) to conduct a building maintenance audit for our ongoing budgeting and planning purposes. There are some "big-ticket" items that we need to plan on replacing in the coming few years. Steve Rowland of BRM will spend 1-2 days at AWPL conducting the review and subsequently will produce a report detailing the priorities, recommended timing and estimated costs. As of this writing, this audit has yet to be scheduled (Steve Rowland just returned from vacation) but I hope to have it scheduled soon and conducted within the next month.
- I will be meeting with our insurance agent, Sara Werling of Acrisure Insurance (formerly Seely & Durland) on Wednesday, July 24 regarding the September 15 renewal of the Library's commercial insurance policy. She advises that the proposed premium increase for 2024-2025 is "not bad."
- As a requirement of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative certification program, we had a building energy study conducted under the auspices of NYSERDA. The resulting 40-page report, while comprehensive, did not identify any new or major areas for improvement. However, it did

indicate that the geothermal heat pumps are approaching the end of their useful lives and that more energy-efficient replacement heat pumps now exist. I will be certain to discuss this further with Steve Rowland. New heat pumps are *roughly* \$25,000 each, not including labor for installation, and the Library's system has 17 heat pumps.

### **RCLS**

- Formal training on the new ILS, Koha, is now complete. Most staff members trained in person at RCLS; two attended a live webinar training instead. Part-time staff were compensated for any time beyond their regularly-scheduled hours. Our in-house "firstliners," (Jody, Billie and Michele) have also been conducting mini-refresher sessions with staff. Everyone has access to a test server where they can practice using Koha. We are heavily publicizing the "shutdown weekend" (Thursday, August 1 at 4pm through Sunday, August 4) to alert patrons that during that time, most online tasks will not be possible (searching the catalog, placing holds, checking in items, etc.) Patrons will be able to check out items, but we will have only one computer dedicated to that. The due date for all materials originally due during the "shutdown weekend" has been extended to August 6 system-wide, and no late fines will accrue, even if the "owning" library still charges fines. Also: a friendly reminder that with the Board's approval at the June 2024 meeting, we will delay opening the Library until 12:00 on Monday, August 5 (the Koha "go-live" date) to facilitate a smooth launch in-house.

### **Personnel**

- Annual staff performance reviews are complete. Salary increases are effective with the 7/7-7/20 pay period (the first full pay period of the new fiscal year) and will appear in paychecks of 7/26. Both Julie Drago and Jeff Straub were appointed earlier this month to the position of Library Assistant (Children's Services), following successful scores on the Civil Service exam and placement on the Civil Service certified list for that position. Until now, both Julie and Jeff were appointed only provisionally; now they are on required probation, after which they may be appointed permanently.

### **Dedication to Honor Lou Marquet**

- Warwick property developer Lou Marquet, who donated the McFarland Drive property for the new Library building and was a longtime Library supporter, passed away this past March. He was an active member of the **National Town Builders Association (NTBA)**. The President of NTBA called me recently with a proposal for the group to make a donation to AWPL in Lou's memory. They welcome our suggestions. We should discuss this at the Board meeting.