

**Albert Wisner Public Library**  
**Director's Report**  
Lisa Laico  
**June 24, 2025**

**Building & Grounds**

- Ashley Mechanical, Encon and Thermal Environment Sales (TES, the manufacturer's rep for our brand of heat pumps) met at the Library on Tuesday, 6/3 for a comprehensive walk-through of each of our geothermal heat pumps. The narrative portion of their (collective) report, shared already with the Board's building committee, is included with your meeting materials. Upon receipt, I immediately forwarded the report to both Paul Mays and David Layton. (You will recall that David Layton is the engineer from Sage Engineering whom Paul introduced to us to do a comprehensive assessment.) David is incorporating the TES/Encon/Ashley report findings into his own assessments, which I hope to receive soon. As of this writing, I have messages in to both Paul and David to discuss immediate steps, in advance of David's final report. I also have quotes from Ashley Mechanical to replace two, or all four, of the heat pumps that are either inoperable or too expensive to be worth repairing.

**Sugar Loaf Double-Taxation Issue**

- I anticipate that the Chester, NY Town Board will soon pass a resolution to ask the AWPL Board of Trustees to dissolve AWPL's charter as a school district library and re-charter the library as a Special Legislative District Library with boundaries that *exclude* the Sugar Loaf properties that currently fall within the Warwick Valley Central School District. I am gathering information and will share it with you at the meeting. Included in your meeting materials is a comparison of the four different types of public libraries chartered by New York State, as compiled by the State Library.

**Employee Dental Insurance Renewal**

- The Aetna employee dental insurance plan is up for renewal on July 15. Benefits Administrator Susan Perry provided a comparison of the plans for which she was able to obtain quotes; please see the spreadsheet in your meeting materials. It appears that although the premium increase is substantial, our existing plan offers the best value. I budgeted a 10% premium increase in the FY '25-'26 operating budget, and fortunately, the renewal quote is just a bit lower than that.

**Policies**

- At the risk of driving you crazy, I am repeating below from last month's Director's Report, the highlights of the revised Employee Manual that need to be addressed, and either approved or revised, at this meeting. In the May meeting, we covered a lot of ground with the quorum of Trustees present, but need to re-visit these points with the full Board to ensure both that we iron out open issues, and that the Board is comfortable approving the new manual to go into effect on July 1.

I don't think we need a separate motion to adopt each new policy. If all policies are approved by the Board as written, one motion will suffice. But if there are revisions you would like to make to a given policy, that policy will have to be handled separately.

- Vacation leave: full-time paraprofessionals will begin accruing 20 days' vacation at hire. This eliminates the discrepancy in PTO between full-time staff members who have a Master's in Library Science, and those who do not. **The Board already approved this at the April 2025 meeting.**
- Paid Personal Time for Part-Time Staff: I propose adding 3 paid personal days for part-time staff, just as all full-time staff already have. **The Board should decide at this meeting (yes/no.)**
- Additional Paid Prenatal Sick Time: for private employers, this is mandatory as of January 2025. It provides 20 additional hours of paid sick time to attend prenatal or fertility-related medical appointments, only to the employee who is pregnant or seeking to become pregnant; that is, the extra paid hours are not for an employee who is the spouse. AWPL is not obligated to provide this benefit, but I hope you will consider supporting it. **The Board should decide at this meeting (yes/no.)**
- Paid Family Leave: paid family leave (PFL) has been added to the manual, per the attorney's recommendation that the Board add it as a no-cost benefit for all employees. PFL is considered the companion to paid disability leave. Disability is for the employee's illness/injury; PFL is for the employee to care for a family member. Both provide a degree of income continuity (roughly 67%, subject to a cap) while the employee is dealing with these circumstances. NOTE: individual employees cannot opt out; PFL applies to everyone in the organization - it's all-or-nothing. Acrisure/Sara Werling's updated *estimate* for the PFL premium is \$3,398/year, and she expects it would increase "a few percent" per year. Technically, the Library could provide PFL and the staff could pay a certain percentage of the premium (such as with health insurance). However, I suggest that either the Library offer PFL and pay the entire premium, or simply not offer it. While

PFL applies to most employers in NYS, AWPL is not required to provide it. **The Board should decide at this meeting (yes/no.)**

- Jury Duty: this section now indicates that the Library will pay the employee's salary for the entire duration of their jury duty service, and not require the employee to use paid time off to complete their service. **The Board already approved this at the April 2025 meeting.**
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA): newly-added to the manual by the attorney. The Library is subject to this law and must provide FMLA. **Since this is not optional, I don't think the Board needs to approve it; it will simply be part of the approved manual.**
- Employee Disability Accommodations Policy: Appendix B: newly-added to the manual by the attorney to ensure AWPL compliance with ADA guidelines. **The Board should approve at this meeting.**
- Medication, Drug and Alcohol Policy: our previous policy has been rewritten by the attorney to bring it into compliance with current law and best practices. **The Board should approve at this meeting.**
- Conflict of Interest Policy: Appendix C: the attorney recommends replacing our existing policy with the one in Appendix C, on pages 34-38. **I sent a reminder about this to the Board earlier this month. Included with your meeting materials is a document that compares the existing policy with the proposed new one, helpfully prepared by Mark Damia with a little help from his favorite tech tool, ChatGPT. Mark cross-checked its accuracy before sharing it.**
- Lactation Policy: Appendix H: newly-added to the manual by the attorney. **The Board should decide at this meeting (yes/no).**

## **Personnel**

- Teresa Vela-Hayes has canvassed the certified Library Assistant – Children's list for a replacement for Judy Pedersen. Because the canvass returned only two interested candidates, that rendered the list "invalid" and thus allowed her also to advertise the position to the general public. This yielded an excellent candidate with many years of experience within RCLS. As of this writing, Teresa is checking the candidate's references and hopes to make an offer this week.

- In late May, Teresa Vela-Hayes completed her Master's degree in Library & Information Science (following the School Media track) and has already leveraged it to obtain her NYS Public Librarian Certification. She will now take the Civil Service Librarian 1 training and experience exam, so that I may appoint her formally to a full-time competitive Librarian 1 position. Now, including Teresa, AWPL has 9 certified Librarians on staff – 6 full-time, 3 part-time, plus one staff member pursuing a Library Science degree.
- Diane Rivas has accepted my offer of a full-time position and will move into that role on August 1 after devoting a portion of the summer to spending time with family.

### **Lou Marquet Tribute at AWPL**

- The Lou Marquet collection is complete. The Kindles are available for circulation and the books donated from Lou's private collection are catalogued, processed with a newly-designed spine label denoting the special collection, and on the shelves. I will announce the collection in a coming e-newsletter, now that it's complete. Meanwhile, I await an update from one of Lou's former colleagues about the status of the boulder with plaque that will be placed near the front entrance of the building.

### **AWPL Foundation 2025-2026**

- The annual meeting of the AWPL Foundation's Board of Governors took place on Wednesday, June 11, 2025. Enclosed with your meeting materials please find a spreadsheet detailing what Glenn and Susan Dickes have agreed to support in FY '25-'26 with reimbursements to the Library from the Foundation. The Board will need to approve a motion at this meeting to incorporate these expenditures and reimbursements into the fiscal year's operating budget.

### **USA 250<sup>th</sup>**

- Staff members and I met on Friday, June 13 to begin discussions of special programming for the USA 250th celebration. Lots of interesting ideas came forward. I will be meeting with the directors of the Florida and Greenwood Lake libraries to discuss possible collaboration among the three libraries on one or more initiatives. Our planning team will regroup on July 11 to discuss findings and progress. If you have any ideas, they're most welcome – please share them with me!