

Library Director's Report – August 19 – September 5, 2013

Capital Budget Request

I submitted the Library's five year capital budget request to the Town Finance Department on August 29. Two project requests from last year's capital budget, the roof and rear stairs at the Branch Library, were listed for FY 2015. The estimated costs are \$25,000 and \$22,000 respectively. The Department of Public Works made repairs to the Branch Library back stairs in August. Library Custodian John Riordan and I met with Todd Korchin DPW Head to review the situation and the minor work done while temporary makes us confident that they are safe for public use.

Dedication Ceremonies

Mary Beth Persons and I met to discuss the plans for the September 15 dedication ceremonies. Invitations have been mailed and the list of speakers is set. The refreshments, special programs and the ribbon cutting details are in process. The Friends of the Library will help with refreshments and also have a book sale on the second floor after the speeches. The Library will be fully staffed that afternoon and we will provide regular services during the two hours.

Main Library Use

Patron use of the Main Library was again very strong in August. Twenty-six thousand plus people visited the Library, which is more than twice the number for a normal month. The total was much lower than July, but this is typical given the heavy vacation season during the latter half of August. Preliminary circulation numbers indicate another busy month, but August totals may not surpass the numbers in 2009 and 2010. In August of those years we had a significant increase, ten percent plus, over prior years due to the economic recession. Reference questions, study and meeting use were all high. It is apparent that with user visits surpassing circulation increases, people are using the library for study, programs, meetings, and Internet access. Our desire to make the library a destination for a variety of activities seems to be successful.

Town Committees

The Municipal Facilities Task Force met in August and a list of possible locations for new or expanded public safety facilities was reviewed. Two meetings are tentatively scheduled for October. The first meeting of the Human Services Function Group will be held at the Main Library on September 4. I will present a summary of the reports from this group at the Town Department Heads meeting on September 6.

Annual Goals

Public Services Department Heads are working on their goals for this fiscal year. The primary focus will be to introduce the public to the new building and its services. We will also purchase new materials to support Westwood students with titles that reflect the public school curriculum.

Sixth Grade Visits

We are working with our counterparts at the Thurston Middle School to arrange this year's visits by the sixth grade students. The class will be divided in two and each will come to the Main Library on a Thursday morning. Library staff, public and school, along with teachers and support staff will give the students an orientation to our services. Last year's visit was cancelled due to project construction.

Permanent Building Committee

The Permanent Building Committee met on August to approve project invoices. Project Manager John Sayre-Scibona gave the PBC an update on overall progress. The next meeting is scheduled for September 11.

Project Update

Progress on finalizing the lighting and shade systems has been disappointing. More work is needed to ensure the lights are utilized efficiently and a small of shades are not operating according to schedule. The sub-contractors have not given these items the time needed to correct the problems. John Sayre-Scibona has given them notice that the work needs to be completed promptly.

The contractor working for Bruce and Barbara MacDonald installed the wooden fence just off the north side of the library property line as per agreement. Yardworks, the project landscaper, has almost finished construction of the shed and dumpster enclosure. They will be back early this month to re-seed the lawn and treat the weeds.

Three memorial benches have been installed in the Children's Garden area. Library staff will use this outside area for story hour activities. A memorial marker is on order for a tree in the courtyard circle.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Viti,
Library Director