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Director's Report

April 18, 2023

Respectfully Submitted: Jill Dugas Hughes, Director.

Strategic Focusing, 2022-2023

Progress

Mission

The mission of the East Greenbush Community Library is to serve as a community center for lifelong learning with access to a broad range of ideas and information through traditional and emerging resources to meet the intellectual, recreational, and cultural needs of residents in a professional and friendly manner.

Core Values

RESPECT a variety of viewpoints and make them available in the interest of promoting a healthy learning environment.

ENCOURAGE library users to become comfortable using a variety of formats and instruct them in using new technologies.

ASSIST patrons in finding information they want, when they want it, in a form that is most useful.

DEVELOP partnerships to ensure that library services truly respond to the needs and desires of residents.

Fiscal Accountability and Stewardship

Ensure the Library is well supported to meet the needs of current and future generations of library users. Appropriate funding will sustain and enhance the quality of Library services, including staffing, collections, technology, programs, and the facility.

1. Migrate to QuickBooks Online

Status: In progress

- We migrated to QuickBooks Online on March 8. The reporting is still not completed. Consultants are assisting.

2. Review/Update Financial Policies and Procedures (including depreciation limits and purchasing policy thresholds)

Status: In progress

- The **MOU between the Friends and Library** was distributed to Friends for discussion/approval at April Friends board meeting.
- The General Accounting Practices and Fund Accounts Policies were started in 2022 but were not worked on this month.
- The Admin Committee will work on crafting a Reserves Policy. This has not started yet.



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- Katie, Lynne, and I met to discuss the 2024 budget process and reviewed some preliminary personnel and capital figures. We are scheduled to meet one more time on May 4, prior to the **first Budget Committee Meeting on May 15 at 7pm**. All board members are invited to attend budget committee meetings.

3. Provide monthly gift/grant reports and list of expenditures to board for review/approval.

Status: Complete

- Our 2023 budget, which includes gift/grant and reserve funds is in place. Internal codes have shifted to differentiate between restricted vs. non-restricted funds for easier reporting through QuickBooks. QuickBooks Online might require further changes- **consultants are working on the easiest solution to track all funds needed and provide the type of reports we require for fund accounting.**
- See above (1) notes re: QuickBooks Online transition and (2) notes re: Reserves Policy. Some recommendations for changes to the balance sheet/bank account set-up have been suggested by our auditor to help simplify the internal procedures which are now required with our new reporting needs. We will formalize these recommendations and they will be presented to the Admin committee for review. This will most likely occur at the same time as the Reserves Policy, which will not be addressed until the fall.
- The **2022 audit** was presented at the March 2023 board meeting and will need to be approved at this month's meeting.
- The AUD needs to be completed as soon as capacity allows.
- Molly applied for a **Stewart's Holiday Match grant** and received \$600 to pay for the entertainment at our Summer Reading Finale in August.
- Jody received a **grant for \$250 from "Poets and Writers"** to help fund author Colleen Murtagh Paratore's visit to the library.

4. Implement online donation capability.

Status: Complete

5. Upgrade to Square Registers

Status: In Progress

- Procedures have been updated and key staff have been trained. We purchased an additional drawer. The register at the reference desk will be implemented first, followed by the circulation desk. It is scheduled to launch on April 24.

6. Building Conditions Study (Added to Strategic Planning Pories for 2023)

Status: In Progress

- Hyman Hayes Associates have **completed site visits** and are finalizing documentation/preparing to present the full study. We have received a short list of major items that they strongly recommend we should include in the **2024 budget**. I plan to work on a **construction grant application** to assist with some of the costs.



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- Vendor quotes for the **Backflow Preventer project** were due to the engineering firm (GPI) on April 7. I have requested an update and hope we can engage a contractor shortly.

Center for Community Connections

Develop partnerships and build collaborations across the community to share resources, expertise, and strengthen community. Continue to provide a welcoming and responsive environment, with a user-centered staff, that supports the library's mission and meets the community's changing cultural, civic, technological, and informational needs and interests.

1. Evaluate Partnerships using Project Outcome

Status: In-Progress

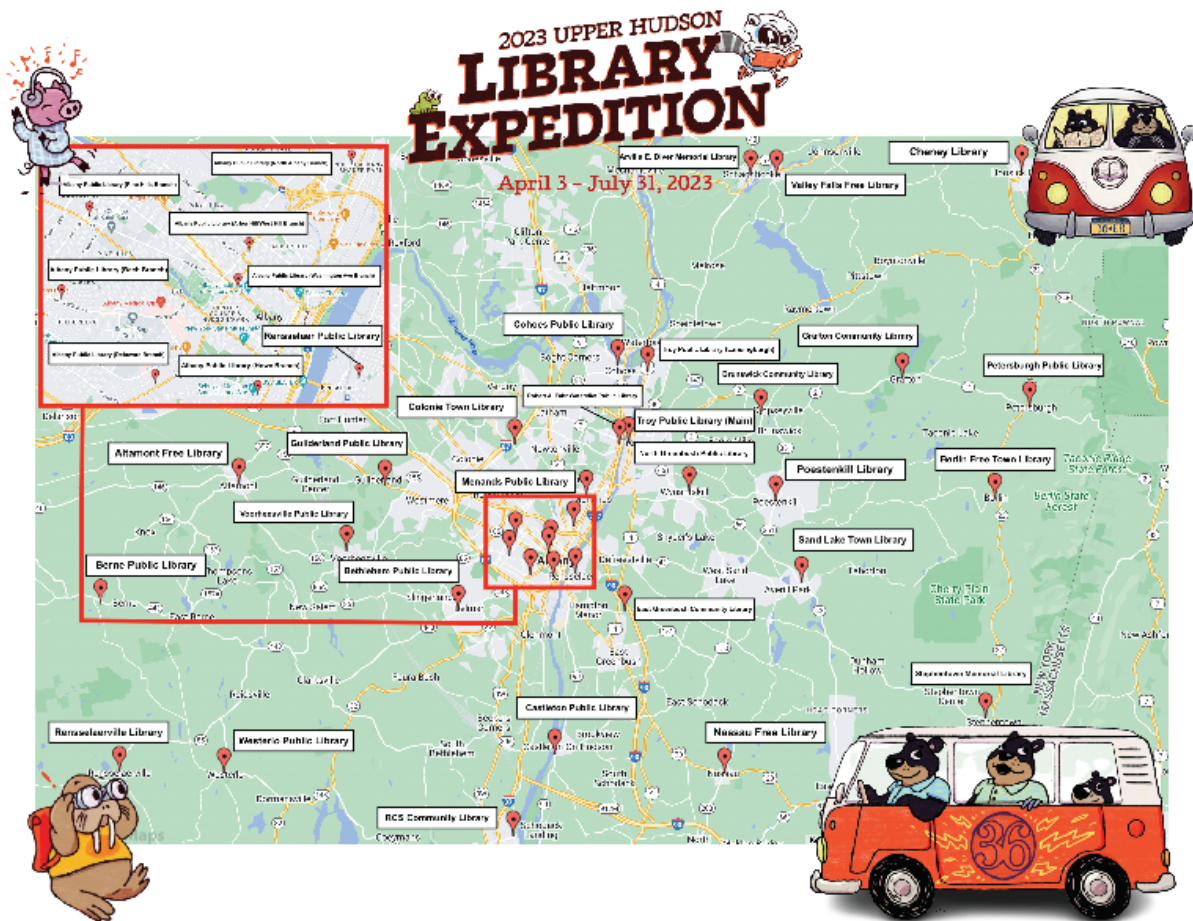
- In-depth evaluation is on hold until the fall.
- Catherine completed **Project Outcome 101** training on March 9.
- In March we partnered with the Greenbush Garden Club, Kiwanis, Upper Hudson Library System, AARP, East Greenbush Historical Society, East Greenbush Central School District, and Questar III BOCES.
- We are hosting a **tri-state Teen Librarian meetup (GOAT)** with the Upper Hudson Library System, Mohawk Valley Library System, and Southern Adirondack Library System on April 18th. There will be about 60-70 teen-loving librarians wandering around our library during the day in between workshop sessions, which will be taking place in the meeting rooms. And the best part of all, there will be real live goats here on the library lawn by the patio from about 3-5pm, that any patron or staff member can go visit! Junebug, Jezebel, and Journey the goats will be happy to meet you all!
- We participated in the **One District, One Community, One Book initiative** with the East Greenbush Central School District -- the entire district read the same book in the month of March, *The Elephant in the Room* by Holly Goldberg Sloan. Molly and Jill attended a few committee meetings, and the library was a community partner for the project. The **Children's Room had special activities all month long that supported the book** -- a scavenger hunt, an interactive window display, take & make elephant crafts, and elephant games and activities at the month's two Saturday Create and Play programs. The giant stuffed elephant Veda also visited the library for a few days, and 113 students came to take photos with her and collect a ticket to bring back to school. Molly was a guest reader for the district and read Chapter 12 out loud for their video library. The collaboration did bring a number of extra people into the library, as we advertised our related programming through the district's online parent portal, and we had record school-year participation in our monthly scavenger hunt which was related to the One District book choice. We also lent the Green Meadow after school enrichment program bins of LEGOS from our collection.



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- **“2023 Upper Hudson Library Expedition: BECOME A 36ER!”** project kicked off on April 3. The project is designed to encourage Albany and Rensselaer County residents to visit and explore multiple UHLS member libraries April-June. Special thanks to Molly who was on the planning committee along with staff from several surrounding libraries. Route guides are available, and we even have a webstore this year! https://www.uhls.org/expedition/Expedition_home.pdf. Maps are being distributed to patrons at all service desks and they are encouraged to have their maps stamped at each library they visit. Prizes are available when they reach 6, 12, 24, and 36 libraries at the following libraries: East Greenbush, Bethlehem, Brunswick, Troy and Colonie libraries. All libraries have materials for Expeditioners to start the project and to receive the first and final rewards (6 and 36 visits).



2. Prep for next Strategic Plan- Community Survey & RFP

Status: In progress

- The Community, Youth, and Staff survey deadlines have passed, and our consultants from Maxine Bleiweis & Associates are compiling data in preparation for their upcoming



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site visit (4/23-4/25). We met our target goals **(700) for community surveys**, and **(100) for youth surveys**.

- Maxine Bleiweis and Erica Byrne will facilitate the following meetings during their site visit:
 - **Community Forum**- Sunday, April 23 (2-3pm.) We will be holding this in the Community Room at the YMCA. Goal: to gather community input on how the library can meet community needs.
 - **Staff SOAR assessment** to identify strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results will be held on Monday, April 24 (9-11:15 am) during our Staff Development Day. Other **Staff Development Day** topics include IT Security (facilitated by Karrie), Book Challenges (facilitated by me), Trivia (facilitated by Jody and Selena) and Molly will run an optional Plinko game with prizes during lunch.
 - **7th Grade Focus Group**- Monday, April 24 (12:30-1:30 pm)- Goff Middle School Library; to probe more deeply into the needs and challenges facing specific key constituencies.
 - **Community Advisory Council Meeting #1 of 3**- Monday, April 24 (6:30-8:00 pm)- Multipurpose Room. Survey and Key Informant Interview information will be shared. The group will draft a community vision based on the identified aspirations, challenges, and changes needed.
 - **Business Leaders Focus Group**- Tuesday, April 25 (8:30-9:30 am)
 - **Community & Faith Based Organizations Focus Group**- Tuesday, April 25 (4:00-5:00 pm)- Multipurpose Room; to probe more deeply into the needs and challenges facing specific key constituencies.
 - **Parents & Caregivers Focus Group**- Tuesday, April 25 (6:00-7:00 pm)- Multipurpose Room; to probe more deeply into the needs and challenges facing specific key constituencies.
 - **Board/Friends SOAR assessment**- Tuesday, April 25 (7:30-9:00 pm)- Multipurpose Room, to identify strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results.
 - **Staff Interviews** will be conducted at various times during the site visit to discuss their hopes and expectations of the process, as well as to gather initial information on current workflow and service methodologies.
- The **Work Group** will begin meeting on May 10 with the following topics and staff assignments in between:
 - Meeting #1 (Wednesday, May 10 (10:30-11:30 am)- Hurr Room/Remote); **Review of initial assessment report**. At this first meeting, there will be time for introductions and team building, as well as a conversation about the initial assessment results.



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- Work group assignment: review service priorities.
- Meeting #2 (Wednesday, May 17 (10:30-11:30 am)- Hurr Room/Remote); **Selection of service priorities.** Library service priorities are what the library does, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet specific community needs. At this meeting, we will discuss a number of service priorities and begin a process of selecting those that are most relevant to the library's ability to address community needs. *Note: **The Community Advisory Council** will have their second meeting on Monday, May 22 (6:30-8:00 pm)- Hurr Room/Remote, prior to the next Work group meeting.*
 - Work group assignment: finalize service priority selection.
- Meeting #3 (Thursday, May 25 (10:00-11:00 am)- Hurr Room/Remote); **Develop goals.** With feedback from the Community Advisory Council, service priorities will be made actionable by writing them in the form of goals that spell out what will change for the community when the library succeeds. The goals are written so that what the library does is in alignment with its vision and mission and are flexible enough to guide the library through the unexpected – which we all know now to expect! The consultants will also introduce drafting objectives.
 - Work group assignment: begin to draft objectives for each goal.
- Meeting #4 (Thursday, June 1 (10:00-11:00 am)- Hurr Room/Remote); **Determine objectives and measurements.** The draft objectives will be reviewed and discussed to be sure that they are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. We will also plan for the upcoming staff meeting.
 - Work group assignment: create presentations for a staff meeting.
- In-between meetings four and five, **the library director and Work Group will facilitate a staff meeting full staff meeting** (Monday, June 5 (6:00-8:00 pm) in the Multipurpose Room) that presents the final selected service priorities, goals, and objectives, and encourages staff to think creatively about what activities will be most effective to enable the library to achieve its goals.
- Meeting #5- (Wednesday, June 14 (10:30-11:30 am)- Hurr Room/Remote); **Review activities and discuss foundational strategies.** By looking at the proposed activities across goals that came out of the staff meeting, foundational strategies – such as staff development, marketing, or space planning – will be identified, allowing the library to understand what key issues need to be addressed for the plan to be successful.
 - Work group assignment: think about how current roles may need to be re-aligned and re-imagined.



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- **The Strategic Plan will be presented to the library board** at a joint Services/Admin Committee meeting on Monday, September 11 (6:30-8:00 pm)- Meeting Rooms A-B/Remote.
- **Strategic Plan Adoption by Library Board-** The final plan will be placed on the Board Meeting agenda for consideration on Tuesday, September 19 at the September Library Board Meeting (7pm).
- The Community Advisory Council will meet on Thursday, October 5 (6:30-8:00 pm)- Hurr/Remote to **review the Adopted Strategic Plan.**
- Staff Development Day #2 will be held on Monday, October 9 where the Director/Work Group will **share the Adopted Strategic Pan with staff.**

3. Little Free Library on Rail Trail

Status: In progress

- Installation complete.
- A formal process should be identified for book replenishment. As discussed at the Board Racial Equity Training, we hope to intentionally fill the libraries with diverse titles. Ideally, we will **partner with the Friends to further develop this project.**
- No progress was made this month.

4. Work with Town to implement story-walk at Town Park

Status: Not completed.

- No progress was made this month.

5. 24/7 Used Book Donations

Status: Not Completed

- Work with Friends to provide 24/7 possibility at library for library used book donations was halted. An opportunity to purchase a book return bin from another library was presented, and the Friends agreed to purchase. After further investigation, they determined that they were no longer interested (2022).
- The **Friends are coordinating the sale of the book return bin.** The bin is still housed outside the library at this time.
- The Friends of the Library are holding a **Spring Booksale** at the library, April 21-23.

Operational Excellence and Culture of Learning/Growth

Continually evaluate internal processes, and invest in technology and human capital to eliminate, improve, or create new processes for driving organizational success. Embrace a culture of proactive and rapid problem solving, creativity, and innovation in the workplace to maximize staff productivity, morale, accountability, and trust.

1. Compensations Study updated organizational chart/job descriptions.

Status: In progress

- Applications for the new **Administrative Assistant position** are due May 1 and interviews will be scheduled as soon as possible in the hopes that we can have someone



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in place this spring. We decided not to use an outside search firm and are handling the hire in-house.

- The **back-office and drive-thru window renovation project** is in progress. Furniture was ordered March 3. We are working with the furniture consultant to assist with electrical/data reconfiguration needs to share with an electrician. We still don't have an installation date, but originally it was estimated 6-8 weeks from the order. The project will require a short shut-down (TBD) of drive-thru window services, and use of staff cubicles (TBD.)
- New **health insurance contribution rates** were presented to the Admin Committee at their April 3 meeting and were recommended for full board approval at this month's meeting.

2. **Organizational chart changes which allow more flexibility, reduced duplication, growth opportunities, & increased trust**

Status: In progress

- Two of our long-time **Department Heads in Youth Services and Digital Services will be leaving in May** for new opportunities. We are extremely happy for them, but the timing of both positions at once will be a challenge. As always, I know I can count on our staff to rally, and Molly and Karrie are both working hard to proactively leave us in a good spot for the next few months.
- We had just planned to **post two new positions** (currently unfilled) in the Adult and Circulation departments. Several **other open positions** which have not been filled since COVID combined with these new openings present a **unique opportunity to evaluate and possibly change our staffing model to meet changing needs**. Molly joined the library in 2003, and Karrie in 2006 and their responsibilities have shifted significantly over the past 17-20 years.
- As a result, we are undergoing a rapid **organizational assessment** and will decide shortly which direction we will take: Make decisions for new hires quickly, allowing us a smoother transition (especially with summer reading so close) or implement a two-step plan which would allow us to temporarily meet needs until the strategic planning process is complete and staffing priorities will be clarified. I have met with Molly, Karrie, Marion, and Catherine to discuss and will be meeting with Maxine on Monday. This is a **priority decision** that will have significant organizational impact. It needs to happen quickly, and thoughtfully.
- An **intern** from SUNY Albany library school will be joining the Adult Services department from May-August. We are looking forward to welcoming Samantha Christensen-Tripi as our next intern.

3. **Review/update policy/procedures**

Status: In progress



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- Finish updating staff manual with input from staff manual committee- a 2023 priority. We subscribed to an HR dynamic staff manual template. 64% of the data required has been entered into the template. In addition to the template (including required NYS and Federal employment regulations), we have library specific information that needs to be included. This continues to be a project that I am working on as time allows. New Staff IT guidelines were reviewed by the Services committee at the April 3 meeting and recommended for approval and inclusion in the Staff Manual. This document will be presented to the board for full consideration this month.
- Work to continue to review/update internal and external policies; remove procedures from policies and post all approved policies to website; and document/update standard operating procedures continued this month.
- In addition to the Staff IT Guidelines, two other cyber security documents were presented to the Services Committee at their April 3 meeting: IT Incident Response Plan, and Information Security Policy. They are recommending approval of the Information Security Policy (this would replace the previously drafted Security Awareness Training and Testing draft policy) by the full board this month. The IT Incident Response Plan is an internal document and does not require full board approval. Staff will undergo additional cyber security training, at our Staff Development Day (April 24) where the new policies and procedures will be shared.
- As soon as QuickBooks Desktop is officially removed from our staff network, we can proceed with applying for a more extensive Cyber Insurance Policy.

Lifelong Curiosity, Imagination, and Learning

Provide access to materials, programs, technology, and services that empower the community to succeed in educational, professional, and personal interests. Patrons will be supported in their creative pursuits.

- 1. Prioritize staff and financial resources toward mission critical programming (ex: Summer/Winter Reading programs, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, Book Bundles, Readers Advisory, etc.). Host 20 programs monthly per department.**

Status: In-progress

- In March, the library sponsored 24 programs for adults with 367 participants; 40 programs for children with 2,560 attendees, and 9 programs for teens with 67 teen participants.

March 2023 YS PROGRAMMING	Date	Age	# Participants
100 Books Before Graduation (off-site)	March	teens	1
1000 Books Before Kindergarten (off-site)	March	kids	60
500 Books Before Middle School (off-site)	March	kids	23
Anime Club	3/1/2023	teens	7



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Anime Club	3/15/2023	teens	8
Anime Club	3/29/2023	teens	7
Be a Good Friend Display/activity	March	Kids	97
Book Bundles (off-site)	March	kids	15
Book Bundles (off-site)	March	teens	2
Charlie Take & Make Craft (off-site)	March	kids	113
Create & Play	3/11/2023	kids	49
Create & Play	3/25/2023	kids	21
Elephant Scavenger Hunt	March	kids	503
Elmer Elephant Take & Make Craft (off-site)	3/13/2023	kids	105
Create & Play	3/11/2023		
Find Veda	March	kids	113
Friday Thing	3/3/2023	teens	7
Friday Thing	3/10/2023	teens	8
Friday Thing	3/24/2023	teens	5
Hand Elephant Take & Make Craft (off-site)	3/20/2023	kids	78
Heart Elephant Take & Make Craft (off-site)	3/6/2023	kids	70
K-2 Crew	3/9/2023	kids	14
K-2 Crew	3/16/2023	kids	4
K-2 Crew	3/23/2023	kids	14
K-2 Crew	3/30/2023	kids	18
Music Together 10am	3/27/2023	kids	35
Music Together 11am	3/27/2023	kids	19
Out of the Box Game Night	3/31/2023	teens	16
Preschool Storytime	3/7/2023	kids	25
Preschool Storytime	3/21/2023	kids	27
Preschool Storytime	3/28/2023	kids	32
St. Patrick's Day Fun	3/17/2023	kids	37
Storytime	3/1/2023	kids	53
Storytime	3/2/2023	kids	46
Storytime	3/3/2023	kids	66
Storytime	3/7/2023	kids	73
Storytime	3/8/2023	kids	63
Storytime	3/17/2023	kids	76
Storytime	3/28/2023	kids	53
Storytime	3/29/2023	kids	47
Storytime	3/30/2023	kids	39
Storytime	3/31/2023	kids	68
Storytime	3/9/2023	kids	63
Storytime	3/10/2023	kids	78
Storytime	3/16/2023	kids	43



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Storytime	3/21/2023	kids	63
Storytime	3/22/2023	kids	64
Storytime	3/23/2023	kids	53
Storytime	3/24/2023	kids	70
MARCH TOTALS (YOUTH)		50 Programs	2,627 Attendees

MARCH 2023 ADULT PROGRAMMING	Date	Age	# Participants
ENL: English as a New Language	3/2/2023	Adult	2
ENL: English as a New Language	3/7/2023	Adult	2
ENL: English as a New Language	3/9/2023	Adult	2
ENL: English as a New Language	3/16/2023	Adult	3
ENL: English as a New Language	3/21/2023	Adult	2
ENL: English as a New Language	3/23/2023	Adult	3
PM Book Discussion	3/15/2023	Adult	7
GGC: Sharpening & Maintaining Garden Tools	3/7/2023	Adult	20
Historical Society: History of The Ilium Club	3/12/2023	Adult	30
AARP Smart Driver Course	3/13/2023	Adult	26
Monday Morning Book Discussion	3/20/2023	Adult	13
3rd Thursday Movie-On the Basis of Sex	3/16/2023	Adult	24
Adult Craft-The Zen of Watercolors	3/19/2023	Adult	14
St. Patrick's Day Movie-"Sing Street"	3/23/2023	Adult	9
An Afternoon with Drank The Gold	3/26/2023	Adult	42
Tech Tuesday: Organizing Your Files	2/28/2023	Adult	6
The First Ladies as Style Icons	3/10/2023	Adult	18
Reach More Members Using Two Marketing Tools: Part 2 - Online Calendar	3/8/2023	Adult	0
Taking Control of Email and Your Sanity: Gmail and Outlook	3/22/2023	Adult	3
Wednesday Night Book Chat	3/1/2023	Adult	31
Wednesday Night Book Chat	3/8/2023	Adult	32
Wednesday Night Book Chat	3/15/2023	Adult	30
Wednesday Night Book Chat	3/22/2023	Adult	25
Wednesday Night Book Chat	3/29/2023	Adult	23
March Totals (ADULT)		24 Programs	367 Attendees

2. Extend/change hours when needed.

Status: In Progress

- Periodically, we investigated demand for extending/changing available hours of service. The **next change will take place in September** and unless the strategic planning process indicates something dramatically different, we plan to extend morning hours Monday-



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Thursday, and evening hours on Monday. We have identified staffing needs for these hours and will hire/train to be open 9-8 Monday-Thursday, 10-6 on Friday, 10-5 Saturday, 1-5 Sunday beginning the day after Labor Day.

3. Restore In-Person Services “Trusted Community Hub” while balancing safety for staff and patrons (one-on-one and group technology assistance appointments/classes, indoor story times, meeting room reservation services for community groups)

Status: In progress

- **Community Meetings:** 22 meetings; 362 attendees (Meeting Room use- not including the HURR room.)
- **Hurr Education Center** was used 24 times by 49 people.
- Teen usage of the library remains steady, with 152 teens in the **Teen Area** during the 21 days it was staffed in March.
- We had our first **after-hours teen event** since 2020 on Friday evening, March 31st, and 16 tweens and teens took part in Out of the Box Game Night. The program featured giant versions of popular games like Connect 4, Uno, Jenga, and Hungry Hungry Hippos. The program was coordinated by our library school student intern, Whitney, who will be with us another month.
- This year’s **Summer Reading Challenge** will be "Read off the Beaten Path." Jody and Heather co-designed staff t shirts this year which will match the theme. Planning is in full swing in the youth and adult departments!

4. Continue to restore print materials budgets and work to meet increased digital demand within tight materials budgets (Advantage plan- OverDrive, hoopla, databases, Hot off the Press, etc.)

Status: In progress

- March **adult displays:** Women’s History Month, Daisy Jones and the Six tie-in, Irish American Heritage, Gardening, Spring Reads
- March **children’s room displays:** Women's History Month, Transgender Day of Visibility
- Lauren has begun consolidating our music CD collection, which is slowly phasing out.

5. Add video/digital meeting capabilities to A/B & Hurr Rooms

Status: Complete (February 2023)

6. Expand art gallery to M/P Room

Status: Complete

- The gallery art system has been installed, and the Exhibits policy was amended on February 13, 2023, to reflect changes. We hope to have new exhibitors in the space in May.

7. Electric dividing door A/B

Status: Complete

- Replaced manual dividing door with electric divider door in Meeting Rooms A/B (NYS Construction Grant Funds) in 2022.



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Trends that may affect the strategic plans in future years....

- Continued demand for physical and digital collections
- Social services direct service needs have increased, and funding/social services capacity decreased, creating new/heightened burdens on library staff
- Demand for more one-on-one service
- Demographic changes- ethnic, racial, social, and economic
- Continuing digital divide and net neutrality
- Growing need for public gathering spaces
- Growth in off-site delivery of service and presence
- Increased civic engagement and community participation and need for neutral place
- Increased major capital improvements required as building ages
- Increased physical facility and cyber security concerns
- Library of Things
- Hot off the Press
- Schodack contract
- Surrounding community funding for their libraries, leading to greater usage and demand on EGRN taxpayers
- Potential rise in book bans and censorship
- Need to reduce carbon footprint
- Industry-wide shortage of library career candidates