

Rolling Meadows Library

May 2024 – Executive Director’s Report

Executive Summary

Getting Oriented

May marks my first month on the job, and I am actively getting oriented with the library and the Rolling Meadows community. The staff welcomed me with a warm party, and I have spent the month meeting with department directors to learn about their departments and priorities.

In addition to getting to know the library staff, I have also been introducing myself to key city officials. I met with City Manager Rob Sabo, who gave me a tour of City Hall, introduced me to staff, and provided an overview of the city. I also had the pleasure of meeting with Mayor Lara Sanoica to learn about her vision for Rolling Meadows.

So far, everyone has been very welcoming, and I am quickly getting up to speed. (JB)



State of the City

The library has joined the Rolling Meadows Chamber of Commerce, and I plan to attend their meetings regularly to strengthen our relationship with local businesses and engage more with the community.

My first meeting was the annual State of the City 2024 event on May 16 at the Aloft Hotel. Mayor Sanoica and City Manager Rob Sabo provided updates on various city initiatives, introduced four new logos for a rebranding project seeking resident feedback, announced new businesses and restaurants, discussed the reimagining of Kirchoff Road, and reviewed the city’s tax base and financial status. This event was an excellent opportunity for me to debut myself as the new library director, meet city and business leaders, and start building valuable relationships within our community. (JB)

Strategic Planning Consultant Request for Proposals

With over 20 years since our last strategic plan, it's crucial to set the direction for the Rolling Meadows Library. Following the Planning Committee’s approval, I have put together a Request for Proposals (RFP) and sent it out to several firms for strategic planning services.

Benefits of Hiring a Consultant:

- Expertise and Experience: Consultants bring extensive knowledge and can help us avoid common mistakes.
- Fresh Perspective: An outside view can uncover opportunities and challenges we might overlook.

- Stakeholder Engagement: Consultants effectively involve staff, patrons, and community members, ensuring our plan meets everyone's needs.
- Efficient Use of Resources: Though there is a cost, it's a smart investment for better resource utilization and achieving our goals.
- Maintaining Momentum: Consultants can expedite the process, aiming for a new plan for 2025.

The Planning Committee will review the proposals once received. This step is vital for our library's future, ensuring we remain a vital community resource. (JB)

Auditor

I met with Julie, Lucia, and our auditor Paul Inserra to review the 2023 audit in preparation for its final draft and the upcoming board meeting report. Paul indicated that this audit will be straightforward and has found no red flags. Moving forward, I will take over the oversight of the audit process, relieving Lucia of this responsibility. (JB)

FOIA Audit Preparedness

A new variation of First Amendment audits, called Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) audits, is becoming more common in our area. These videographers ensure public spaces, like libraries, comply with FOIA by verifying public postings and often upload their findings online. While we have most of this information available online and upon request, it isn't centrally posted physically in the building.

In response, Kristin and Karen have developed a FOIA guide that consolidates all required information—such as our budget, organizational structure, and record retention schedule—into a central location. This guide will be posted on the bulletin board near the elevator, where we already display our meeting agendas.

Once posted, this guide will provide a convenient resource for any FOIA auditor, ensuring our compliance and making us less interesting to auditing provocateurs. (JB)

Attorney Meeting

I introduced myself to Roger Ritzman, our library attorney. I asked him to continue pressing Ameriprise for the release of the final Joyce A. Mackert bequest IRA funds. He also advised enlisting our architects for the public bidding roofing project. Mr. Ritzman will be an invaluable resource for any legal questions we may encounter. I have previously worked with him at Arlington Heights Memorial Library, where he also serves as their attorney, so I am confident in his expertise and support. (JB)

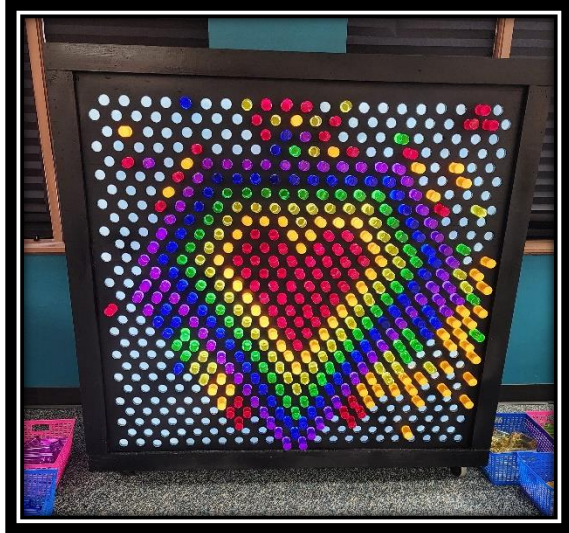
Locks on Outlets

After receiving reports of individuals sleeping outside the library premises overnight, I requested that Pete install locks on the outdoor outlets to disincentivize this behavior. These locks have now been installed. While we welcome all patrons into the library, it is important to ensure our facilities are used responsibly to avoid liability and promote safety. Restricting access to power outside the building when it is closed supports this goal. (JB)



In the Library

On the first day of the Summer Reading Challenge YS unveiled our Giant Lite Brite. Kids are really enjoying it! Thanks to Pete and his crew for making it. (LK)



In the Community

Laura, Dori, Elizabeth & Lucia represented the library at Family Services Day at the Rolling Meadows Neighborhood Resource Center. It was a beautiful day with over 1000 people in attendance. (LK)

Laura was invited to attend a Zoom meeting with the United Palatine Coalition and the Digital Equality Action Plan of Cook County. (LK)

Jennifer attended the Harper Community Information Exchange over Zoom. (JC)

Department Highlights

Youth Services

- The Summer Reading Kickoff Event was a huge success. We gave out over 580 ice cream treats to a very happy crowd.



- The Summer Reading Challenge began May 25, by the end of day 2 we had over 100 kids signed up! Updated, we now have signed up 500 kids as of June 5.
- We have added a drop in craft cart to the department so our bookcases can display books. We offer a new weekly activity for the duration of the summer reading challenge. They look great and offer an organized presentation of the activity.
- Kate held an Escape Room program that was developed with the assistance of the Middle School Advisory Board. This was a big project. Twelve kids were able to try the Escape Room while it was tested by multiple Advisory Board members. A raffle was held at Sandburg Jr. High to select students who won the prize of participating in the testing.

Readers Services

- May 4 was *Free Comic Book Day*. 140 comics were put out; 107 comics left with our patrons with *Spiderman* being the most popular.
- Two new resources have been created to promote Library collections.
Book Watch: These are novels that have recently been made into either a movie or TV series and are currently available on the streaming services. The idea is that people often like to read the book before watching the program; or vice versa, after they watch it, they may be interested to read the book that it was based on. This resource can be found on the lobby display under *Trending*.
Roku Watch: These are popular streaming TV shows or limited series that patrons frequently request, but aren't yet available on DVD. As an alternative, you can recommend they take out or put a hold on one of the library's Roku devices. This resource is located at the Readers Services Desk.
- The Teen and Adult Summer Reading program began on May 25. There were a total of 277 sign-ups in the 1st week. 92 patrons signed up before the launch party; 185 signed up at the launch party.
The following businesses were extremely charitable and donated gift cards to us this year for our adult and teen summer reading program: *Chipolte, CVS Pharmacy, Honey Berry Pancakes and Café, Jannat Restaurant, Jersey Mike's Subs, Meijer, McDonalds, Papa Saverio's Pizzeria, Pita Pita, Potbelly*, and, of course, *The Friends of the Rolling Meadows Library*. It is further significant to note that, even though these local businesses are already paying taxes to Rolling Meadows, they are still willing to go above and beyond to support our library. This is a win-win for both the library and the businesses. Such efforts are integral to building and growing our community!

Reference Services

- Nana created an excellent companion video to the Bad Art Nite event from April 10. The video showcases all 26 completed pieces of amazing Bad Art created during the evening. Since the library does not have a physical space to display these items, Nana created the video to celebrate their masterpieces in a virtual art gallery. The video is available for viewing on YouTube; this way the entire community can enjoy their outstanding creativity. Check it out!
- During the Summer Reading Kickoff, Lauren used leftover items to provide 19 seed ball kits, coloring sheets/youth gardening booklists, Illinois Extension gardening newsletters

and seeds for patrons to take home. Great program promotion and tie-in with the library's Sow, Grow & Learn offerings.

- We continue to support our local high school community by taking on two high school volunteers. They assist with pulling and shelving books, as well as department program preparation.
- We continue to plan and offer great department programming on genealogy, starting a small business, job searching, and using library databases and resources.

Special Services

- The summer newsletter was completed and mailed to area homes and businesses. There was a massive redesign of the layout and more programming content since pre-covid. Extra newsletters were ordered for in-house and outreach.
- Summer Reading Challenge t-shirts and sling bags were received. These items will be used as prizes for the Youth and Adult/Teen Summer Reading Challenge.
- Summer Reading Challenge preparation including:
 - Banners and signage
 - Youth and Adult Display cases
 - Sponsor signs
 - Prize Wheel
 - 300 Adult SRC reading logs
 - Adaptive Reading Log
 - 300 Adult Registration Cards
 - 800 Raffle Tickets
 - 400 Notepad prizes
 - 500 Youth Reading Logs
 - 800 Free ice cream coupons
- The whole department worked together during the Launch Party, including the planning, prep, set up, and manning tables. We planned a Scavenger Hunt to entice patrons to complete challenges and learn about library services inside the library during the Launch Party. Janet sat at the Program Promotion Table and promoted summer events to the families waiting in line for ice cream. Abbey and Jessica manned the Scavenger Hunt Table and had 122 complete the scavenger hunt and enter a raffle to win a gift card for a free ice cream.
- June program promotions completed including a cohesive branding redesign on all posters. July and August promotions are in-progress.
- First batch of Library of Things cards are printed and to be displayed in early June.
- Summer Storywalk panels completed and given to the RM Park District to install.



- Improved outreach handouts including, resource (Hoopla, Mango, LOTE4Kids, Udemy/GALE, Ancestry.com, Libby, Auto Repair Source, Flipster, Value Line) bookmarks for youth and adults, storytime brochures, and tech classes brochures.

Technology

- We upgraded all of our patron PCs with lock-down software to the newest version.
- We have been working on cleaning up the PAC stations to show as few wires as possible.
- The phone system automated messages have been updated.
- Public desk phones have had software updates, in some cases the phones also had to be rebuilt.
- We have upgraded from QuickBooks Premiere 2021 to QuickBooks Premiere 2024.
- We have been busy assembling Library of Things manuals and the QR codes to make them easier for patrons to access.
- JAMF, the software we use to manage the YS iPads, had an upgrade installed which makes troubleshooting the iPads from an IT side much easier and limits the down-time when issues arise.
- We will be upgrading to Sierra 6.1, overnight on June 11, to limit downtime to patrons and staff.

Circulation

- Circulation stats indicate a 13% increase over May 2023.
- Patrons are beginning to discover the Library of Things. We're starting to see checkouts on our newest items, and patrons are placing holds for things that will be available soon.
- We started giving stickers to our youngest patrons when they come to the Check Out Desk. We've seen lots of excited children!

Technical Services

- In addition to the video game consoles, we now have the following items available for checkout:
 - 4 pickleball set
 - Jenga giant
 - 2 bocce ball sets
 - putting green set
 - Washer toss game 2 cornhole sets
 - Gas leak detector
 - 4 foot level
 - Movers dolly
 - Dryer vent cleaning system
 - 2 Blu-ray DVD players
 - 2 CD players
 - 2 Bluetooth speakers
 - 2 digital projectors
 - 2 laptop/projector tripod stands
 - 2 Toniebox players
 - 2 Yoto players
 - 10 Tonie figurines
 - 2 Yoto card packs
 - Smart Drum

- Shapes puzzle
- Smart Piano keyboards
- Sarah and Wendy attended the Technical Services Networking group meeting via Zoom.
- Kate has designed adorable and informative branding labels for the Early Learning Backpacks.

Facilities

- Maintenance team constructed a giant Lite Brite display for YS.
- Patched large potholes in parking lots.
- Installed exterior outlet covers with locks.
- Mulch was laid in mid-May, and summer flowers planted.
- Made a UFO display for summer reading kick off



The Friends of the Library also had a table at the Summer Reading Kickoff Event. They were positioned near the popular ice treat line where they distributed free books, water bottles and recruited new members.



Photos from the Summer Reading Kickoff Event
Adventure Is Out There

