



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION DEPARTMENT REPORT

TO: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

FROM: Laura Blaker

DATE OF MEETING: March 4, 2024

ITEM TITLE: Department Report – Library



One Book Indee

Our One Book Indee community read project is well underway. We have had the author visit, estate planning, dementia simulation, and prom dress swap. The upcoming events are primarily food and game related with apple pie, craft beer, cribbage, and pretzels all playing a role. As of today, we have two copies of the book available without anyone on

our waiting list, so the demand is starting to level out as people read the book and pass it on. This project is an effective way to connect and engage community as well encouraging reading and discovery.

Community Kiosk

A new community kiosk is now part of the library with a former counter space having been transformed into a resource center with community news and information, highlighted books and events, an art center, and an online catalog for searching the collection. Non-profit organizations are welcome to submit slides for a monthly current events and news slideshow. Groups have started to share their slides, and we will continue to work with them, offering classes about how to make the slides. This moves us towards our goals of meeting informational needs and strengthening partnerships within the community. We appreciate the Buchanan County Community Foundation, the Independence Public Library Foundation, and the Friends of the Library for making this possible.



Little Free Libraries & Vandalism

You have probably heard that several of our Little Free Libraries have been vandalized. Three of the libraries were vandalized over the weekend of Feb. 24-25. I've been talking to our stewards, the volunteers who keep them stocked with books, and will be talking to the library board about where to go from here. I will not have any answers before the work session, but there is an ongoing discussion about the libraries in regard to vandalism and upkeep.

Change in Hours Begins in April

As we work to help the city with budget constraints while doing our best to maintain services, the library board has decided to reduce hours thirty minutes at the beginning of each day, opening at 10 am Mondays through Saturdays. To start reducing costs right away, this will begin April 1. Story Times will also be moved back thirty minutes, being offered at 10 am on Thursday mornings. We will publicize this to get the word out to the public.

With the same goal of reducing expenses, the library is changing our holiday hours. We are hoping these will begin April 1, and the plan is to close Veterans' Day, Presidents' Day, and Good Friday in addition to the holidays the library and City have normally observed.



1000 Books Before Kindergarten

We had another graduation ceremony for 1000 Books Before Kindergarten the beginning of February and now have a total of 13 graduates. The graduates are honored with a bag that says, "I Read 1000 Books," photos of their progress, and a certificate. Treats and balloons add a festive touch to the occasion. Unfortunately, several of our little readers were sick and unable to attend, but they have the option of attending the next graduation ceremony in August. We are able to offer this program thanks to the Buchanan County Community Foundation.