

Director's Report – Clarence Public Library
February 26, 2024

Financial

The financial statements are in the board packets. This week, we received the 2023 Return to system calculation and invoice for the Clarence Library based upon the 2023 Annual Operating Financial Statement. This year's Return to System is \$4,090.66.

The Return to system calculation summarizes the total incoming revenues (including any funds the Clarence Library received during the year from the system) and the total direct expenditures for our Library. Our Return to system is the difference between our total incoming revenues and total direct expenditures. It is important to note that as a CHR Library (Centralized Human Resources), the System is paying salaries and benefits that are supported in part by our locally collected operating revenues. Basically, the System pays this cost in advance and a large part of the Return to System payment is to reimburse the System for these expenses. These figures do not include "Local" (formerly known as Private) transactions (i.e. book sale proceeds/purchases, fundraising, etc.).

On January 29, CFO Emily Patronik sent us a paper copy of the B&ECPL Board Resolution 2023-42 implementing the contract extension provision, and our 2023 budget schedules based upon this resolution. (Note- the 2023 contract contains an automatic extension provision that extends the current contract into 2024. The extension will be in force until final 2024 contracts are adopted, although not to extend past July 31, 2024. Budget amounts are based upon the 2024 System budget as adopted on December 21, 2023. (Note: 2024 Page wages are adjusted to reflect the 12/31/2023 New York State minimum wage \$1.00 per hour increase (to \$15.00 per hour), while Senior Page wages are increased by \$1.00 per hour (to \$16.00 per hour).

Payroll Report – The latest Payroll Report and "System Paid" Budget Analysis was sent by Tracy Palicki on February 14. Our payroll report (pp 26 – end of the year) showed a projected ending balance of \$8,007.42. Most of this overage was in the clerk-typist line due to the fact that our clerk typist was out for four months. And, as of 12/31/2023 our System Paid Budget Analysis showed a bottom line total of \$8,559.62. We were under budget on part-time wages, as well as utilities (natural gas and electricity).

January 2024 Statistics

JANUARY 2024 MONTHLY REPORT

Circulation, Patron Count, and Programming Summary

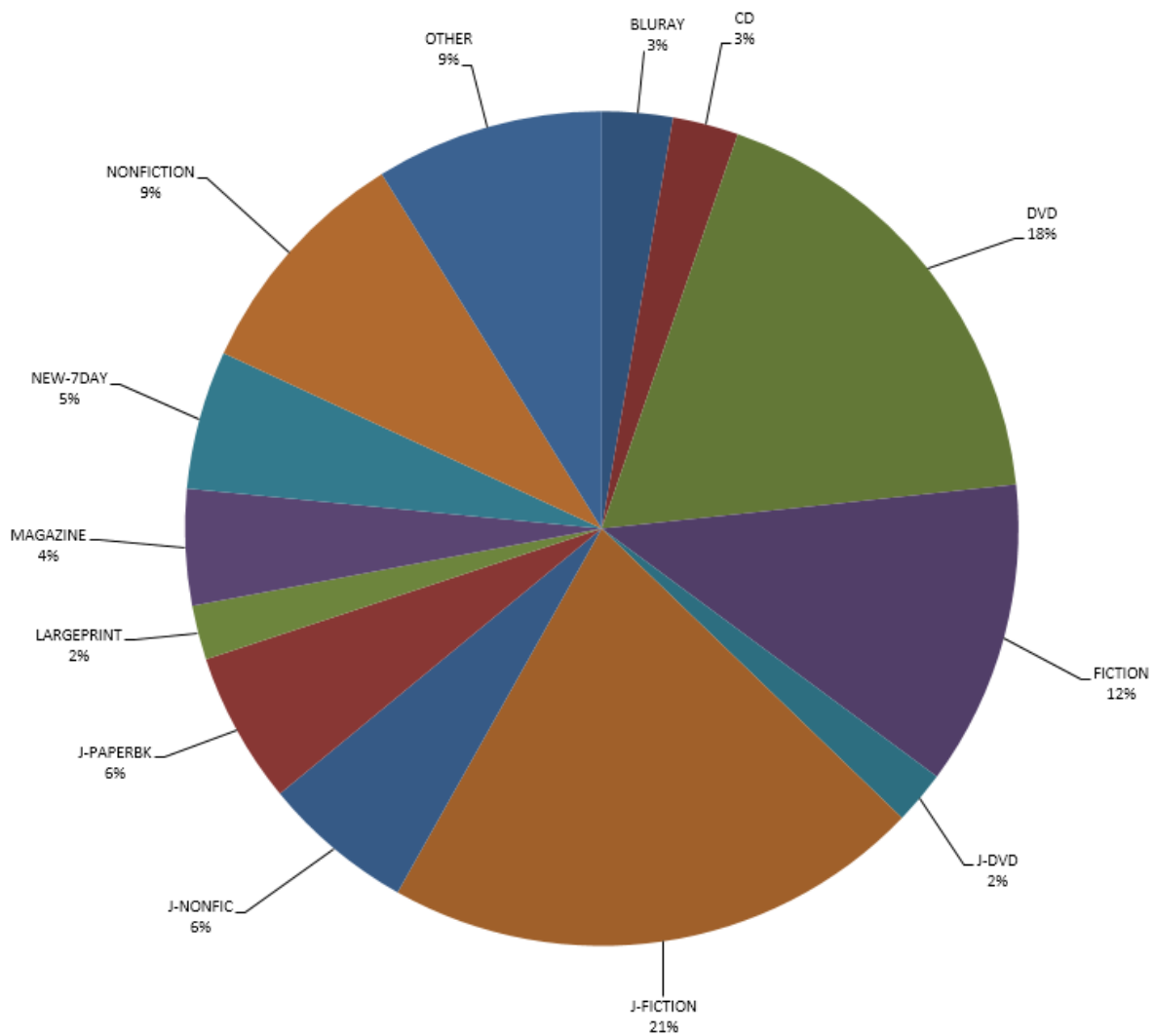
Circulation

January 2024 Circulation:	18,734
January 2023 Circulation:	20,230
	-7.4% percent change
January-January 2024	18,734
January-January 2023	20,230
	1.7% percent change

- Maximum circulation this month was 994 on January 20th.
- Maximum Circulation in 2024 was 994 on January 20th.
- Maximum Circulation in 2023 was 1,723 on August 5th.
- Average Circulation per day was 679.
- Clarence was ranked 7th in circulation overall for January 2024.

Clarence was ranked 8th in circulation overall for January 2023

Branch	January 2024 Circulation Rank
1. Audubon	32,512
2. Clearfield	27,315
3. Kenmore	24,715
4. Orchard Park	23,805
5. Julia Boyer Reinstein	22,689
6. Central	20,788
7. Clarence	18,734



Library Visits

January 2024 Visitor Count	5,516
January 2023 Visitor Count	5,620
	-1.9% percent change
January-January 2024	5,516
January-January 2023	5,620
	-1.9% percent change

- Maximum Visitor Count in January 2024 was 325 on the 24th.
- Maximum in one day in 2023 was 486 on June 27th.
- The average number of visits per day in January 2024 was 224.
- Clarence was ranked 11th for Library Visits in January 2024.
- Clarence was ranked 10th for Library Visits in January 2024.

Branch	January 2024 Library Visits
1. Central	23,169
2. Orchard Park	10,261
3. Clearfield	9,192
4. Audubon	9,014
5. West Seneca	8,038
6. Kenmore	7,984
7. Julia Boyer Reinstein	7,365
8. Hamburg	6,773
9. Lancaster	6,070
10. Merriweather	5,900
11. Clarence	5,516

Public Access Computer Sessions

January 2024	382
January 2023	392
	-2.6%

WIFI

January 2024	1,438
January 2023	1,294
	11.1% percent change

Clarence Public Library Programming

January 2024

In Library programs:	Programs	Attendance
For children 5 & under	9	196
For children 6-12	1	30
For teens		
Intergenerational	2	38
For Adults	1	18

In Library One-on-One Programs:	Programs	Attendance
For children 5 & under	1	1
For children 6-12	20	20
For teens		
Intergenerational		
For Adults	32	32

Meeting Room Use: 21

Outreach: 60

Seed Library: 397

Note: The weather contributed to the cancellation of some programs and lower attendance numbers in others.

Items of Note:

- January's circulation was down 7.4%. Part of this was due to the weather and fact that we closed early on January 17 and were closed entirely on January 18. We did lose power during the snow event but it did come back on by the time we re-opened on January 19. Our phone service (Spectrum), however, was out for several days. After the storm, the boiler failed ("flame failure") and we had to call in the Parks Department to get the boiler started again. Because it was so cold in the library, we purchased three space heaters which were paid for by the Friends.
- The Parks Department was in on January 30 to replace ceiling tiles in the library that had been damaged in December due to pipe leaks in the ceiling.
- Despite the bad weather, we still had several well-attended programs in January, including Kidding Around Yoga, Children's Makery (Crafts), and Miss Sarah's Story Time and Read & Play. As noted, we had 9 programs for children 5 and under in January with a total attendance of 196. Our *Study in Sherlock* group had an attendance of 12 in January.
- Groups using the library's meeting room in January included Clarence Contemporary Club and Clarence Contemporary Club Book Club, Clarence Book Review Club, Senior

Center Card Playing Group, Euchre Card Playing Group, Homeschool Group Meeting, ASD Social Group (Clarence Family Support Center), Garden Friends of Clarence, Alzheimer's Association (Healthy Living for your Brain and Body), Happy Bookers Book Club, Women of Waterford Book Group, WNY Armenian Community, Waterford HOA, the American Needlepoint Guild, Clarence Youth Foundation and the Jane Austen Society.

- Librarian Sarah McLean-Plunkett and Senior Page Karen Augello attended Winter Fest. The Clarence Library had a table there where we provided information about the library as well as the upcoming eclipse, did an eclipse activity and gave out eclipse glasses. Approximately 60 people visited our table that day.
- Since October, we have handed out thousands of eclipse glasses and several hundred COVID test kits. Recently, we have been giving out approximately 200-300 pairs of eclipse glasses per week!
- Since mid-January, we have been also giving out the AARP Tax packets to those who have appointments to get their taxes done through the free AARP Tax Service.
- I was notified this week that the Clarence Library received a \$500 grant from the Clarence Youth Foundation to purchase books to give away to children at our Dia Celebration on April 20. Sarah and I will be at the March 9th International Day of Sharing sponsored by the Clarence Youth Foundation. We will be helping kids make Friendship bracelets and will be promoting our Dia event. ALA notified me this week that they created a web page on their site for our event. It can be found at the following link:
<https://www.ala.org/alsc/initiatives/dia/clarence-library-ny>
- Library Construction Grant Update:
 - From Andrew Wiede (coordinator of the Library Construction Aid program for the Library System) - *The year you submit an application for the NYS Library Construction Aid program would be considered the first year of the timeline. This timeline would run from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2030. Any funds related to the project expended after July 1 are eligible for construction aid reimbursement.*
 - On February 22, I met with Tim Lavocat to go over some preliminary information about applying for the grant. The study that was done last year gave Tim the information he needed to know about the library's HVAC system. At this point, it is known that this project will be very significant, but, at this time, it is a work in progress. Tim will know more next month when he meets here with a mechanical engineer. In the meantime, he asked me to find out what the maximum award could be for the Library Construction grant. We will be meeting again next month.
 - I composed two emails to Andrew Wiede with my questions and here are his responses:

Email Response #1: Thank you for your questions. In regards to the aid allocation for our system, you are correct. We usually receive some communication with the confirmed totals for B&ECPL sometime in May. I have not heard any update on the allocation for this round of application, FY 25. For reference, the appropriation for Buffalo-Erie last year came to

\$1,554,184 and has stayed consistent over the last handful of years. At this point, I have no reason to think the award will be reduced.

There is no set maximum ward allocation, although funds are limited by total availability and, as you mentioned, how many other applications the system receives. If the aid requests from our libraries exceeds our allocation, then the requests are reduced proportionally. As Clarence does not meet the threshold as an “economically distressed” community, your application would be eligible for up to 50% in aid of the total project cost.

If this is a project you plan on submitting this year, I would recommend getting ahead of the game by engaging the Town as well as your Board in discussions for possible sources of local match funding and support (as you indicated, HVAC work is pricey). Having those requirements in hand could make the process a little smoother come application time this summer.

Email Response #2: Monica, yes, you are correct. Since Clarence is only eligible for a 50% aid award, the remaining 50% will need to be covered with other sources of funding. One of the requirements of the application is to provide “proof of available funds.” These funds can include checking and savings accounts, CD’s, municipal Capital funds, etc. Keep in mind that SAM Grant Funds may not be used, although it doesn’t sound like you were considering that.

The library can demonstrate its ability to pay the remaining share by attaching bank or account statements that, when totaled with the aid, equal or exceed the amount to cover the total cost of the project. The library Board President or Treasurer can also submit a letter on library letterhead that states funds are available to cover the cost of the project, minus the award. You will have to specify the source of the funds in the application.

(I clarified with Andrew that since the town of Clarence owns the building, they would be handling all of the bonds, capital funds, etc. The Town Board would be the entity that would verify, by resolution, the ability to pay for the project and the Library Board would support this resolution with its own resolution to move forward with the grant application).

Andrew also gave the rundown of how the program essentially works:

- *Award funds- money received from the state as part of the construction aid program*
- *Match funds- money supplies by the library (Town) to cover the difference between the total project cost and the amount of award funds from the state.*

- *Award funds + match funds = Total Project Cost*
 - *The library proposes a project and receives a quote from the contractor for the work (i.e. \$150,000 HVAC replacement)*
 - *Based on the guidelines, Clarence is eligible for up to 50 % in aid for the project (\$75,000 in aid)*
 - *The library (Town) would be responsible for covering at least the other half of the project and these funds have to be accounted for in the application (\$75,000 in matching funds)*

My simple recommendation is that you start thinking now about where those matching funds will come from.

Staff notes:

Senior Page James Lester resigned effective 2/17, as he obtained a full-time job. Page Meredith Baron, who in library school working toward her MLS, was promoted to Senior Page to fill this vacancy.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monica Mooney
Director – Clarence Public Library