

OWLS Director Report

May 20, 2021 OWLS Board of Trustees Meeting

OWLS and COVID-19

OWLS staff may now work at the office any time during library open hours, and staff who are vaccinated are no longer required to wear masks or socially distance in the office. Most staff continue to work from home most of the time. Sorting has moved out of APL's meeting rooms and back into the OWLS office.

Staff Retirement

Office Assistant Julie Weyenberg has announced her retirement from OWLS effective June 4th. Julie has worked at OWLS for more than 12 years. We will miss Julie's friendly presence in the office and wish her the best in her next chapter.

Danielle Kramer, currently one of our sorting subs, will step into the regular afternoon sorting position in June.

Libraries and COVID-19

OWLS hosts monthly online Directors Chats, and I hold weekly online office hours. Library service levels are under the control of local library boards, so service levels vary based on local conditions. OWLS member libraries report service levels as follows (as of 5/10/21):

- Closed: 0 libraries
- Curbside only: 0 libraries
- Open doors; limited service, restricted access: 6 libraries (BCL, CPL, HPL, LIT, SCA, SEY)
- Browsing/lingering permitted with greater access: 11 libraries (APL, FPL, IVL, KAU, KIM, MAN, MAR, NLP, SHI, WAU, WEY)
- Fully restored: 0 libraries

OWLS Facility

The Facilities Committee met on April 23rd. They continue to refine our strategic direction which prioritizes finding space outside of the new Appleton Public Library which could serve as a regional delivery service hub and could be shared with NFLS staff in the future. Our priorities have been defined as follows:

1. Fiber connectivity – high bandwidth, affordable build-out to Badgernet
2. Cost effective – every scenario likely costs more than current
 - a. Adequate/Not fancy/Class B
3. Collaborative opportunities/space sharing
4. Flexibility for future needs
 - a. Must have space for IT, delivery/sorting, printing, supplies
 - b. Must have some office space, but plan for hybrid work model

- c. Large meeting space optional - The committee recommends evaluating the cost of meeting space against the cost of mileage reimbursement for off-site meetings.

The committee authorized me to pursue a relationship with a tenant broker for our facilities search.

The committee agreed that the following budget assumptions are reasonable for an initial 2022 budget draft: double total facilities costs to \$60,000; assume flat state funding; moving costs will be charged to the fund balance.