

**DEARBORN PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING**  
Henry Ford Centennial Library - Room 111  
Wednesday, November 13, 2024  
**Proposed**

**Commissioners:**

- Chairperson Marcel Pultorak - Present
- Vice Chair Dr. Ryan Lazar - Present
- Secretary/Treasurer Jihan Jawad - Present
- Zeinab Alhashemi - Present
- Haya Bacharouch - Present
- Gerilyn Biggs - Present
- Ali Dagher - Present
- Dr. Cheryl Hawkins - Present

**Library Administration:**

- Library Director Betty Adams - Present
- Assistant Director of Technical Services Mark Hancock - Present
- Assistant Director of Programs & Services Rebecca Hermen - Present
- Assistant Director of Operations Patty Podzikowski - Present
- Office Assistant III Daniel Smith - Present

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:06PM.

**II. Approval of Minutes - October 9, 2024 meeting**

Minutes approved as submitted.

**III. Department Reports**

**A. Library Foundation**

Assistant Director Podzikowski reported that their first Halloween fundraiser on the HFCL mezzanine was a success, and they are planning to repeat the event in 2025.

They are planning to mail out their community appeal in between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**B. Director's Report**

Please see Director Adams' report in full on page 5.

**a. Budget Report**

The commission discussed the frequency in which the budget should be discussed. Chairperson Pultorak determined that a quarterly report would be sufficient, and any unexpected or otherwise problematic items should be reported as they arise.

**b. Annual Report**

The administration will email it to the commission once it is complete, and notify once it is available to the public.

**C. Historical Museum**

Assistant Curator Matthew Graff and Historical Commission Chair Mary Bugeia were in attendance on behalf of the Historical Museum. Graff reported that Museum staff have been researching the Saving America's Treasures grant to address several issues with the facilities, particularly the Commandant's Quarters. He reported that the Museum has \$55K set aside to pursue this grant, and requested an additional \$5,000 from the Library fund balance. He further reported that the Museum Guild had authorized \$90K, for a total of \$150K, and the federal government would match it.

The group further discussed the quotes given for the various building projects. Graff explained that contingencies were built into the award.

- Motion to approve funding from the Library made by Commissioner Dagher, second by Commissioner Alhashemi. Motion carried.

**IV. Old Business**

**A. Esper Branch Review - Rehabilitation Proposal**

Mayor Abdullah Hammoud was in attendance with a proposal to remodel and repurpose Esper Branch to serve as a STEAM center. The Redford Township District Library was cited as an example.

The mayor proposed that part of the funding would come from a public safety grant to improve a stretch of Warren Avenue; \$1 million of the \$5 million award would be dedicated to Esper Branch. Part of the funding would come from the Library fund balance, and reallocated funds from other projects. The total cost is estimated at \$4 million.

Mayor Hammoud reported that the rehabilitation of Esper Branch is intended to last 25 years, and would address existing HVAC and roofing issues. The project could begin as early as spring 2025 and would take about 18 months.

Director Adams expressed concern for staffing levels, and difficulties in getting more staff approved. An additional two staff members plus a full-time branch manager would be required, according to the proposal's recommendation of six

dedicated staff. Commissioner Bacharouch noted that STEAM center activities are often parent-led.

- Motion to approve the proposal made by Commissioner Dagher, second by Commissioner Bacharouch. Motion carried.

## V. New Business

### A. Rates & Fees FY2026

The administration proposed to lower the rates of black & white and color prints to match that of other area libraries. Director Adams noted that this decision was heavily influenced by patron requests.

- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Dagher, second by Vice Chair Lazar. Motion carried.

### B. Commissioners Onboarding

Commissioners Bacharouch and Hawkins were welcomed to the board. The group discussed their role as a commission and autonomy levels in respect to governance.

### C. Strategic Plan Preview

The commission previewed the most recent Library Strategic Plan.

### D. Bryant Projects

The commission discussed the landscaping project at Bryant, and the addition of a rain garden to the property. They discussed the cost of upkeep and where responsibility for upkeep lies. Director Adams informed the commission that it is being worked out with the vendors.

- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Dagher, second by Commissioner Biggs. Motion approved.

### E. Library Legal Representation

Director Adams discussed the possibility of retaining outside legal counsel to determine the Library's financial and infrastructural responsibilities. The commission urged Adams to make a query and consult with internal counsel. The group may consider external counsel in the future.

## VI. Comments

The Meeting Rooms Policy and the Privacy Policy will be reviewed and discussed at a later meeting.

The commission proposed changing the format of future meetings to address action items first, and discuss information items after. The Director's Report may be shared with the commission ahead of time.

- Motion to approve made by Commissioner Dagher, second by Vice Chair Lazar.  
Motion carried.

**VII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:20PM

# Dearborn Public Library

## Director's Report



*Bryant Branch  
Library  
participating in  
Wicked Windows  
Contest.*

Presented at the Library Commission Meeting

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Betty Adams, Library Director

## Patron Feedback Highlights

### Positive Experiences & Praise:

- Patrons express appreciation for available resources, such as printing the *Detroit News* and digitized *Dearborn Guide* archives.
- Numerous compliments on staff assistance, particularly with young children and families; patrons value evening storytime options.
- Regular praise for cleanliness, maintenance, and the welcoming environment of the library, with specific mentions of admiration from frequent library visitors.
- Kudos noted for successful school outreach, with high library card ownership among students.

### Suggestions & Requests:

- Requests for whiteboards in individual study rooms have increased.
- Patrons requested a more explicit logout confirmation on computers for added security.
- A patron with low vision requested brighter elevator lighting for better visibility of floor numbers.
- Interest in future events with Michael LoPresto and recurring children's programs (e.g., potions program).

### General Inquiries:

- Questions about whiteboards, graphing calculator as available for checkout, and children's Arabic book collection location were noted.

## Admin & Departmental Updates

- SAM.gov - Museum & Library
  - Paycom
  - Salina MoU
  - ACCESS Program
  - Bryant Landscape
  - Job Description Re-evaluation
  - Bryant 100 Year Anniversary
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- MLA Leadership Academy Completed by Rebecca Hermen
  - MLA Annual Conference 4 staff attended
    - a. Jesse Blume presented a Crime Scene Misinformation Program
  - New Feedback Form
    - a. Centralized system for patron feedback and purchase suggestions.
    - b. Paper forms and online feedback options available.
  - BookLetters Replacement
    - a. Transitioning digital newsletters to a new format; catalog-linked booklists will be introduced.

## New legislation: Freedom to Read Act

On Thursday, November 7, new legislation to safeguard library materials from censorship and protect the right to read was introduced in the Michigan House of Representatives. The Freedom to Read Act legislation, tie-barred House Bills [6034](#) and [6035](#), was introduced by Michigan State Representatives Veronica Paiz (D-Harper Woods) and Carol Glanville (D-Walker) and referred to the Committee on Government Operations.

The Freedom to Read Act legislation enshrines various protections that are rooted in transparency, including:

1. A library must have a board-approved policy in effect that complies with the act setting forth standards for the selection and removal of materials.
2. Public library directors will have the final say in selecting and removing materials in a library's collection.
3. The individual requesting the removal of material must certify that they live in the library service area and that they have actually read, listened to or viewed that material themselves.
4. The reason or basis for a request for reconsideration cannot be made based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, height, weight, familial status, or marital status of the author or subject matter, OR unless the material has been adjudicated to be obscene or otherwise unprotected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
5. The Michigan Attorney General may compel the public library to adopt a policy and the attorney general, a resident of the public library's legal service area, or the public library's contracted service area may commence a civil action to prevent the public library from unlawful removal of material.

# Budget Review - Capital Projects - Current

## Henry Ford Centennial Library:

- *HFCL Electrical Upgrades Phase I* - \$51,263.00
- *HFCL Auditorium Renovation* - \$25,755.00
- *HFCL Carpet Repair/Replacement* - \$48,836.00
- *HFCL West Side Garden Remodel* - \$69,000.00
- *HFCL Mezzanine Electrical Improvement* - \$75,000.00
- *HFCL West Side Automated Blinds* - \$50,000.00
- *HFCL Additional Individual Study Room* - \$70,800.00
- *HFCL Sound Management System* - \$50,000.00
- *HFCL Underground Cable Project* - \$0.50
- *HFCL Window Re-Tinting* - \$80,000.00
- *HFCL Replacement Electrical Circuit Breaker* - \$35,000.00
- *HFCL NW Restroom* - \$38,000.00
- *HFCL Elevator Panel Replacement* - \$37,800.00

**Total HFCL:** \$631,454.50

## Esper:

- *Esper Lamp Replacement Phase II* - \$30,000.00
- *Esper HVAC Rooftop Replacement* - \$36,750.00
- *Esper Soffits & Sill Repair* - \$27,650.00
- *Esper Library Renovation* - \$347,325.00
- *Esper Roof* - \$200,000.00

**Total Esper:** \$641,725.00

## Bryant:

- *Library Security Cameras (Bryant Remaining)* - \$80,029.00
- *Bryant Library Carpeting 2nd Floor* - \$60,000.00
- *Bryant Branch (Internal) Lighting* - \$64,000.00
- *Bryant Slate Roof Repair* - \$40,000.00
- *Bryant Renovation Kitchen Restoration* - \$45,000.00
- *Bryant Garden Hub Landscape* - \$749,043.00

**Total Bryant:** \$1,038,072.00

## Unassigned/System-Wide:

- *Ceiling Tile/Wall Repairs* - \$12,458.00
- *Sign Replacement/Wayfinding* - \$100,000.00
- *Library Space Study* - \$100,000.00
- *External & Internal Doors* - \$30,134.00
- *Libraries Repair & Maintenance Reserve* - \$80,544.00
- *Library Painting* - \$141,375.00
- *Library Bottle Filling Station Fountains* - \$66,000.00
- *Remote Locker* - \$200,000.00
- *Integrated Library Enhancements* - \$220,455.00

**Total Unassigned/System-Wide:** \$950,966.00

## Museum:

- *Commandant Quarters Steps - Museum* - \$55,000.00
- *CQ Porch Renovation - Museum* - \$38,076.00
- *McFadden Ross Museum* - \$208.00
- *Museum Office/Storage Repair* - \$7,797.00
- *Historic Museum Fire Alarm Replacement* - \$2,970.00

**Total Museum:** \$104,051.00

# Annual Report - Discussion

| Investment                  |                       | \$7,318,283  |                    |  |  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|--|--|
| Type                        | Usage for Fiscal Year | Average Cost | Total Value        |  |  |
| Fiction Books Borrowed      | 128,916               | \$30         | \$3,867,480        |  |  |
| Non-fiction Books Borrowed  | 42,619                | \$30         | \$1,278,570        |  |  |
| Audiobooks Borrowed         | 1,044                 | \$50         | \$52,200           |  |  |
| EBooks Downloaded           | 75,213                | \$15         | \$1,128,195        |  |  |
| Movies Borrowed             | 38,716                | \$30         | \$1,161,480        |  |  |
| Music Borrowed              | 13,018                | \$20         | \$260,360          |  |  |
| Videogames Borrowed         | 2,482                 | \$40         | \$99,280           |  |  |
| Book Club Kits Borrowed     | 213                   | \$300        | \$63,900           |  |  |
| Magazines Borrowed          | 2,852                 | \$5          | \$14,260           |  |  |
| WiFi Hotspots               | 544                   | \$115        | \$62,560           |  |  |
| Meeting Room Use (per hour) | 436                   | \$51         | \$22,236           |  |  |
| Program Attendance          | 20,451                | \$15         | \$306,765          |  |  |
| Computer Usage (per hour)   | 28,489                | \$27         | \$769,203          |  |  |
| Sparklab, D-Lab             | 651                   | \$150        | \$97,650           |  |  |
| <b>Total Value Added</b>    |                       |              | <b>\$9,184,139</b> |  |  |
| <b>Return On Investment</b> |                       |              | <b>125.50%</b>     |  |  |

## Circulation Department

**Circulation Growth:** Patron visits up 40% across branches. Digital content usage rising: Overdrive Magazines +38%, Kanopy +31%.

### Staffing & Training:

- New Office Support Staff: Jeremy Pilkington, already making a positive impact.
- Continuous page training; promotion in staff leading to hiring new talent.

### Projects & Improvements:

- Automatic Renewals successfully implemented; positive patron feedback.
- Desk Combination Initiative: Ongoing efforts to optimize workflow.
- Library Card Application Simplification: Underway to improve user experience.

### Future Focus:

- Regular reports on cash handling and staffing responsibilities.
- Preparing for smooth scheduling into the holiday season.
- Enhanced, user-friendly library card application anticipated soon.



*Jaber, Security at Esper Branch  
Library testing bubble kits!*

## Processing Department Overview

- **Item Management:**
  - Items received: 761, Added to system: 637, Total on shelves: 443.
- **MeLCat Activity:**
  - Items loaned: 743, Borrowed: 566, Total circulated: 1,309.
- **Ordering & Training:**
  - New Youth Services selector trained in ordering processes.
  - Improved material flow through Processing.

## ELL Conversation Circle Success

- **Enhanced Attendance:** New schedule increasing accessibility for community.
- **Community Impact:** Positive feedback from new attendees.



*Bryant Branch Library Display Case for October.*

## Bryant Branch

### Community Engagement:

- Small book sale: \$47.90 raised for Friends of the Library Dearborn (FOLD).
- Participated in Wicked Windows Halloween Display contest.
- 325-350 attendees for Downtown Dearborn Trick-or-Treat event on Oct 26.
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### Storytimes:

- **Alpha Stories:** Mondays at 11 AM (3 sessions) – 54 attendees
- **Evening Storytime:** Tuesdays at 6 PM (4 sessions) – 77 attendees

### Craft Activities (5 sessions; total: 175 completed crafts):

- Leaf Wreaths (10/3): 31 participants
- Pumpkin Lanterns (10/10): 34 participants
- Halloween Puppets (10/17): 30 participants
- Spiderwebs (10/24): 42 participants
- Flapping Bats (10/31): 38 participants

### Special Events:

- **Read with Wally** (10/29): 1 session, 14 attendees
- **Halloween Family Dance Party** (10/30): 1 session, 28 attendees



*Wally visits with young readers at Bryant Branch Library, October 29.*

## Esper Branch

- **Staffing Adjustments:**
  - Library Assistant departure; coverage by rotating full-time staff.
- **Facility Updates:**
  - Mayor's visit, building inspection by Public Building Administrator.
  - Landscaping and flowerbeds were trimmed and mulched put down.
  - 84 people used the building study rooms
- **Service Success:**
  - Immigration paperwork scanning assistance provided.
  - Finance audit with no irregularities.
- **Community Programs & Attendance:**
  - **Communi-tree (Scariest Monster Competition):** 8 entries.
  - **Take & Make Kits Distributed:** 50
  - **Read & Feed Program:** 1 participant
  - **Storytelling Guidelines & Dungeons & Dragons Sessions:** 8 participants
  - **LEGO Club:** 43 participants
  - **Craft Tables Utilization:** 113 participants

## Youth Department Highlights

- **Staff Update:**
  - Meghan Strapec joins Youth Services as OS III, strengthening our team.
- **Storytime & Special Events:**
  - **Halloween Trick-or-Treating:** Storytime patrons enjoyed trick-or-treating within the library.
  - **Great Apple Crunch Day:** Children celebrated with stories, a height comparison to an apple stack, and a simultaneous “apple chomp.”
  - **Election Day Activities:** Children voted for their favorite books (Dog vs. Cat), with Dog books narrowly winning.
- **Author Events:**
  - Local author Reda Taleb presented her newest picture book. Children received self-care packets, and the event concluded with book signings and sales.

## Youth Engagement & Planning Initiatives

- **Educational & Community Outreach:**
  - **Salina Intermediate Visit:** All 6th graders toured the library, learned about resources, and enjoyed a scavenger hunt on Nov 1.
  - **Science Program:** Kid Chemist led a “Spooky Science” workshop in October.
- **Facilities & Program Usage:**
  - **Computer Access:** High demand on 11/12 led to overflow to Adult Services.
  - **High Weekend Engagement:** Tables and learning toys (Legos, puzzles, Alphabet Fishing Game) heavily used, appreciated by patrons.
- **Future Planning:**
  - Initial preparations underway for the **2025 Summer Reading Challenge**.
  - Youth Services staff reorganized storage to maximize space efficiency.

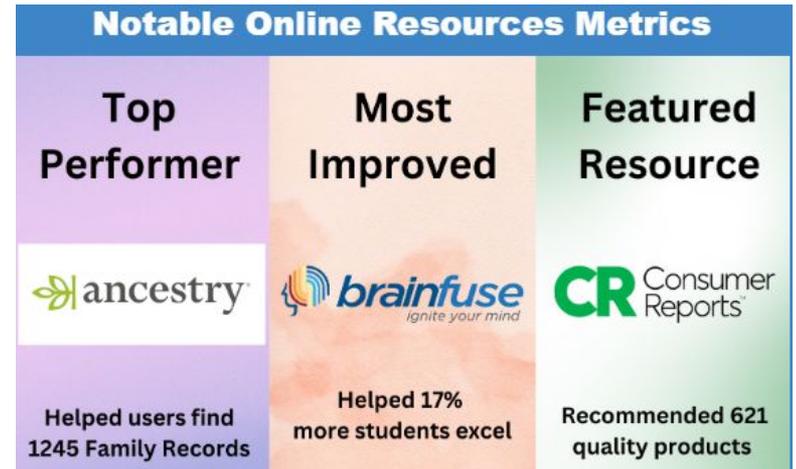


*Firefighter Jen hosting a storytime for Henry Ford Centennial Library families.*

## Automation Highlights

- **Digital Service Requests:**
  - Drop-off: 23, In-Person: 29
  - Video: 116, Audio: 42
  - Scans: 128
  - **Total Requests:** 338
- **Website Engagement (Google Analytics):**
  - Active Users: 14,000 | Pageviews: 30,000
  - 28% referrals via search engines.
  - **Top Three Pages:**
    - #1 Calendar
    - #2 About Us
    - #3 Library Card Information
- **Resource Upgrades:**
  - Successfully upgraded authentication for **Libby/Overdrive** and **Kanopy** to enhance security.
- **Book List Management:**
  - Transition to Syndetics Unbound for improved book lists, purchase suggestions, and emailed flyers.
- **Staffnet & Paycom:**
  - Ongoing updates for internal systems to ensure accurate data for staff use.

- **Traffic Counters:**
  - **Second Floor Security Gates:** 13,094 visitors recorded.
- **Public Computer Sessions:**
  - HFCL: 1,960 sessions
  - Bryant: 307 sessions
  - Esper: 582 sessions
  - **Total Computer Sessions:** 2,849



## Museum Highlights

- **Fall Festival (October 11):**
  - Attendance: 200 participants enjoyed local food, beverages, music, and entertainment.
  - **Silent Auction:** Organized by Dearborn Historical Commission member Mariya Fogarasi, raising significant funds through sponsorships and donations.
- **Trick or Treat Event (October 12):**
  - Record-Breaking Attendance: 400 attendees, setting a new record for Halloween events.
- **Dearborn Historical Society Lecture (November 6):**
  - Topic: Henry Ford's Village Industry, drawing a strong audience.
- **Historic Toll Gate Marker Restoration:**
  - **Location:** Westbound Michigan Avenue near Evergreen Road.
  - **Restoration Efforts:** Museum staff and volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours to repair wood, repaint, install hooks, and restore masonry around the marker.
  - **Community Impact:**
    - Social Media Success: Post reached thousands, with hundreds of likes and shares.
    - Media Coverage: The Mayor visited for photos, joined by CDTV and local newspapers.
    - **Team:** Led by Museum staff Tyler Moll and volunteer Tom Saroglia.

## Museum Collections & New Additions

- **Oral History Addition:**
  - Interview with 100-year-old Dearborn resident Frances Chronicle, now part of the Museum's collection, preserving her life story.
- **3D Model Initiative:**
  - New 3D-printed model of the Commandant's Quarters in production, available as both ornaments and magnets.
  - Continues the Museum's tradition of creating tangible historical keepsakes for the community.

## Upcoming Events:

- November 13th - **Indigenous Life in Dearborn** (20th Century) Lecture at the Ross House, 7pm
- November 16th - **Porcelain Artists Sale**, 10AM-3PM at the Ross House
- December 4th - Dearborn Historical Society Lecture on the **History of the Automotive Hall of Fame** - at the Ross House, 7pm
- December 7th - **Victorian Tea and Open House** at the Commandant's Quarters 1pm

# Thank you!



*Adult Services outreach showcasing coasters and other coffee-themed creations made in the Henry Ford Centennial SparkLab.*