



Annual President's Report for FY 2020  
May 2020 to April 2021

Library Board of Trustees

Committee Chairs of the standing committees prepare annual reports which outline their specific activities for the year; Building & Grounds, Finance, Personnel, Policy, and Technology.

Two new Trustees, Jason and Diana, were appointed by Mayor Pecaro in May 2020.

Trustee Name	Email	Term Expiration
Nora Loredó	treasurer@highwoodlibrary.org	May-23
Jason Muelver	<a href="mailto:trustee6@highwoodlibrary.org">trustee6@highwoodlibrary.org</a>	May-23
Diana Guerrero	<a href="mailto:trustee3@highwoodlibrary.org">trustee3@highwoodlibrary.org</a>	May-23
Lucy Hospodarsky	president@highwoodlibrary.org	May-22
Bertha Chavez	trustee1@highwoodlibrary.org	May-22
Barbara Cizek	trustee5@highwoodlibrary.org	May-22
Catherine Regalado	secretary@highwoodlibrary.org	May-21
Janell Cleland	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@highwoodlibrary.org">vicepresident@highwoodlibrary.org</a>	May-21
Pat Lenzini	trustee4@highwoodlibrary.org	May-21

Winner of the IMLS's Gold Medal National Award

U.S. Representative Brad Schneider nominated the library for the Institute for Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS) prestigious Gold Medal award. Every year, the IMLS selects 6 libraries and 6 museums who demonstrate significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. Executive Director Carmen Patlan completed the comprehensive application and successfully demonstrated how the library's programming was making a difference in the lives of individuals, families, and the community. This year, the IMLS only selected 3 libraries and 3 museums and announced the winners on May 18<sup>th</sup>. This award is the ultimate recognition for libraries and a much sought-after prize. The award comes with a \$10,000 grant towards programming.

Financial Summary and Fundraising for Programming

Highlights are presented below. For more details, refer to the Finance Annual Report.

On the revenue side, property tax collections fell a bit short of the tax levy, but only by .3% (\$800), and we received the expected Per Capita Grant from the Illinois State Library. Because of the pandemic, we budgeted a more modest amount of our share of the Personal Property Replacement Tax, and ended up receiving almost \$950 more than budgeted. Other budgeted sources of revenue fell short due to the pandemic closure (e.g. Fines and Photocopier fees).

Carmen was able to secure approximately \$252,000 in grant funds for mostly programming, with the exception of the grants for the learning pods and the retrofitting of the garage to accommodate the food pantry program.

The estimate of the surplus funds for the year is about \$10,000. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of the library, we were underspent mostly in our materials and personnel & benefits categories. This surplus will roll over into FY22, and will be used to move the hourly wage of staff into a more competitive range.

The Reserve Account and Capital Improvement fund balances at IMET remained untouched with balances of approximately \$20,000 and \$3,600 respectively.



#### Tax Levy for FY22

In October, we prepared the tax levy budget for FY22, and got city council approval for our requested amount of \$292,500 (same amount as FY21).

#### Strategic Plan and a Focus on the Building Renovation

Carmen and the team continued to follow the strategic plan roadmap. In addition to programming and services, this year's new focus was the building renovation. A \$2M project budget had been developed in FY21 and submitted as part of the Illinois State Construction Challenge Grant.

#### Illinois State Construction Challenge Grant Award

We were awarded this grant, which pays 35% of the \$2M building project budget, with the stipulation that the library would raise the remaining \$1.3M by June 2021. If the monies are raised, the state would payout the grant.

#### Capital Campaign for Literacy and Transformation and Meeting our Campaign Goal

With the grant deadline looming, in late fall, the Friends of the Highwood Public Library formed a Capital Campaign Committee to begin the fundraising efforts for the needed \$1.3M in order to secure the state grant. Carmen and the President served on the committee. Carmen and Friends President Andy Hamilton were instrumental in the success of meeting the campaign goal, having already made connections and nurtured relationships with key donors. Andy is chair of the committee and worked tirelessly alongside Carmen to secure several key donors. Two others, Prue Beidler (Lake Forest) and Bruce Boyd (Highland Park) helped Carmen and Andy make connections with potential donors, which was also a key factor. In little over 6 months, we reached our goal, which was an unbelievable accomplishment, especially given the challenges of the pandemic.

#### Programming & Services

Carmen and her team continued to offer programming and services during the library closure, which for this fiscal year, was from May until July 7<sup>th</sup>, then again from November 9 through February 8. The library offered on-line programming and curbside service, along with new COVID-19 focused events. Carmen partnered with Lake County to host several testing events, and then with Walgreens to host several vaccine events. The Director's Annual report contains detailed information on the other offerings.

#### Personnel Items and Outside Contractors

Carmen completed the annual evaluations for staff, who are all doing exceptional work. Staff are enthusiastic, hard-working, passionate, innovative, and always friendly and customer focused. Carmen leads by example and has developed an amazing staff.

We continue our relationship with our IT consultant. The marketing consultant has moved on, and we are now shifting that role in house.

The library created an intern position for the first time ever, and this resource assisted and contributed in many ways.

#### Operations

Carmen and her staff continue to enlist the support of volunteers to better execute literacy focused programs such as Learning Partners, homework help and more.

#### Building and Grounds

See the Committee's annual report.



### Community and City Outreach

Carmen continued to strengthen the partnerships already secured with community organizations, the two school districts, and potential private donors, and continues to make new connections. Her networking and outreach helped secure grants for programming, the learning pods and more. She is well-known throughout Lake County, serving on several committees, and also within the Highwood/Highland Park community.

The library's website has been overhauled and most parts are also now in Spanish. Staff stay active on FaceBook and other social media.

On several occasions, Carmen and the President have attended City Council meetings and shared updates to the City Manager via email, for inclusion in his weekly Manager's report. Carmen, Mayor Charlie Pecaro, and the Board President created a video for the campaign, shot inside the library. Having the Mayor participate in the video gave a good perspective of how important a library is to a community.

### Friends of the Highwood Public Library

The Friends' board is very active, and especially this year, with the focus on the Capital Campaign. The Capital Campaign Committee will continue to meet in FY22 as we embark on a public phase awareness campaign for the project, and to begin a second campaign for sustainability and succession.