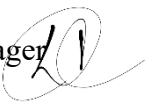


MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager 
DATE: January 5, 2024
SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

The following information includes follow up from general items that were discussed at previous Council meetings as well as updates of a general nature from the departments or agencies. The items are organized by department and are intended to provide information on activities currently being undertaken by the Town's departments and those matters that are upcoming. Not all departments will be represented in each Report.

Finance

- The Town's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Fiscal Year 2023 has been completed, audited and distributed. The full Report, including the auditors' letter, has been provided to the Town Council and the Board of Finance and is posted on the Town website here: <https://www.easthamptonct.gov/finance/files/2022-2023-audit>.

Library

- Calendar year 2023 was another great year for the Library. Circulation, including both physical and digital items, surpassed 103,000 for the year and people made more than 58,000 visits to the library. Programs at the library attracted nearly 20,000 participants. More information is included in the Monthly Director's Report, which is attached to this Report.
- This year's "New Year's at Noon" program was the biggest ever, with 130 participants. It once again featured magician and comedian Ed Popielarczyk, a craft, and the big balloon drop at noon.
- Head of Circulation and Technical Services Samuel Bolton, along with one of our Public Service Associates, began hosting regular drop-in technology help sessions this week. Patrons can bring their own devices and get assistance with a wide range of questions, including accessing eBooks and audiobooks from the Library's digital collection.

Police Department

- On December 9, 2023, the Police Department held its Annual Stuff a Cruiser Toy Drive event at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church on East High St. The event was so successful this year that a trailer was used to transport the toys back to the Department. In addition to the toys, over \$1,100 in cash donations were received from the very generous residents

and businesses owners in town. The toys were turned over to Youth & Family Services to be distributed to families and the donations were converted to gift cards to hand out to families in need that may have older children.

- The prescription drug take back box in the lobby of the Department continues to be a huge success. In 2023, users deposited 296 pounds of prescription and other medications that were properly destroyed, eliminating the possibility that they could be misused by family members or improperly disposed. Since 2018, with help from the East Hampton Prevention Partnership who purchased the box, over 1,570 pounds of medications have been collected. The box can be accessed during normal business hours of the Department in the main Police Department lobby.
- During the month of December, the Department responded to two drug overdoses, one involving a 27 year old male and the other a 16 year old female. The male was administered one dose of Narcan by a family member and the female was administered two doses of Narcan by a friend. Fortunately, both survived.

Public Works

- In the week leading up to Christmas, crews from Public Works responded to a severe icing condition on Lakewood Rd. There were multiple factors contributing to this situation, the largest being two major rain events within one week of each other followed by freezing temperatures. These conditions caused a significant amount runoff to come off the adjacent hills through the properties on the west side of the road and out onto the road in multiple locations where it froze. This created a hazardous condition. The issue was further exacerbated by the condition of the road, which allowed the runoff water to sheet flow across the road instead of remaining in the gutters where icing is mitigated, and its impact is minimized. Staff corrected this issue by milling new "gutters" into the road in select locations to keep the water to the side of the road so it would enter the storm drains. While this operation drastically improved the situation there, it is a temporary fix, and a larger project is expected to be undertaken there this summer to correct these issues.
- Over the past few weeks, crews have also spent a great deal of time on cleanup from the rainstorm events. These activities have included repairing gravel roads, cleaning drainage inlets and outlets of debris, and removing fallen tree debris from roadsides.
- The grounds maintenance division has spent a significant amount of time clearing brush and invasive plant species at Sears Park and along the fence lines at the High School. These efforts will continue over the next few weeks as weather permits.

- The Towns Engineering consultant B&L has completed survey work on Long Hill as well as the fieldwork for a drainage system replacement in Main Street. Both of these projects are to analyze and design new storm water drainage systems to be installed in preparation for these roads to be repaved.

Recreation

- On December 11, Shawn Mullen was appointed to the position of Recreation Director. Shawn has been the Program Coordinator within the department for the last 18 years and is looking forward to his new role within the department. Currently, vacant positions of Office Assistant and Program Coordinator will be posted in the next several weeks to return the department to a full staff.
- Recreational Youth Basketball is set to start on Saturday January 6. Teams have been formed and schedules are being coordinated for the rest of the season now. This program has a record high number of players in the grade 1-3 levels and the staff and teams are looking forward to the start of the season.
- After School programming is running very well and the turnout for programs in general has been great. Programs for the remainder of the school year have been scheduled and are posted to the website for registration. Staff is beginning the planning process for summer activities and expects to have a full schedule of offerings soon.
- The Department is finishing the reporting process for the 319 Lake and Watershed Grant process and is planning out the last steps of these projects. This includes a construction report detailing the completed watershed improvements associated with the grant, as well as a public education and outreach program planned for early spring. Staff is working closely with the Conservation and Lake Commission and Limnologist Benjamin Burpee of GZA on a plan for the next year of lake treatments, as well as a strategy to combat Hydrilla (an invasive species) which was recently found in Lake Pocotopaug.

Youth and Family Services

- The Department thanks the Police Department and the community for the continued support of the Stuff-A-Cruiser event. Staff put together gift bundles for families in need of some extra support over the holiday season. Staff also extends its gratitude to the East Hampton families who, each year, reach out to the Department to offer direct support for other local families in need.

- The Prevention Coordinator attended an Opioid Settlement Workshop in early December and continues to plan projects and activities that can be supported with settlement funds received by the Town.
- In the new year, the Prevention Coordinator will be working with the middle school in an effort to develop a prevention club at the school with the goal of extending the messages of drug and alcohol use prevention and overall wellness more deeply.
- Using funds from the Department's Enhancement Grant, the Department provided \$600 for the East Hampton Middle School to support two dances the school will put on for students. The Enhancement Grant is received from the Department of Children and Families and is designed to provide youth with positive programming and events throughout the year. Materials used to run groups in the school as well as after school programs at Town Hall or the Library are funded through this grant.
- Youth and Family Services Director, Lauren Incognito, has resigned her position to accept a position with the State. Her last day with the Town, after just over four years of service, will be February 2.

Town Manager/Other

- The Town Manager continues to pursue actions related to the Town's potential purchase of 11 Skinner Street for a fire station. A number of meetings and conversations have occurred with the owner regarding conditions at the property, needs related to environmental matters, and costs related to build-out of the property for Town purposes. Staff is developing a draft Purchase and Sale Agreement that will be used to formalize the Town's interest in the acquisition and to outline the process for final approval of the purchase, which is ultimately to be considered by the electors at a Town Meeting.
- Staff is finalizing the Request for Proposals related to the Village Center Sidewalk and Streetscape Project, which is expected to be released in the next several weeks. Council will be asked to consider a contract award in the spring and construction will likely be timed to occur in the summer after mid-July.

DC

cc: Management Staff

December 2023

Monthly Report

At a glance:

This section contains a brief summary of the most important information.

- The Library partnered with Parks and Recreation to host this year's Jingle Bell Parade on December 8. 202 community members were in attendance.
- The renovation of the Library's kitchen, which was funded by money received from the Connecticut State Library for materials that circulated through inter-library loan, has been completed and includes a larger, more functional sink and updated cabinetry for better storage.
- New furniture intended to make the teen space more welcoming and comfortable has been ordered. The shifting of shelving to make the area more conducive to teens spending time in the space should happen soon.

Strategic Plan Actions Update

This section contains information about new programs, services, collections, or initiatives directly relating to the Strategic Plan.

- Circulation, including both physical and digital items, surpassed 103,000 borrows for calendar year 2023! *(Welcoming & Vibrant) (Informative & Collaborative)*
- This year's New Year's at Noon program was the biggest ever, with 130 participants. It once again featured magician and comedian Ed Popielarczyk, a craft, and the big balloon drop at noon. Many patrons expressed their appreciation for the event. *(Welcoming & Vibrant)*
- Head of Circulation and Technical Services Samuel Bolton, along with one of our Public Service Associates, will begin hosting regular drop-in technology help sessions in January. Patrons can bring their own devices and get assistance with a wide range of questions, including accessing eBooks and audiobooks from the Library's digital collection. *(Accessible & Inclusive) (Informative & Collaborative)*

Department Reports

Administration:

This section contains general updates and news about Library administration.

- The Friends of the Library held their monthly meeting on December 4. They provided an update on their online store, announced the sale of their new branded mugs at the Library, and discussed potential fundraising ideas for 2024.
- The Library Advisory Board held its monthly meeting on December 4. Ms. Cachuela reported on the sale of the Library's piano, which netted the Library \$8,000. The funds will be used to update the Library's teen space. Ms. Cachuela also outlined the procedure for disposing of books being weeded from the Library's collection, and asked the Board to approve a new reporting method for program attendance in the Monthly Report. The new method will compare attendance numbers to the same month of the previous two years, rather than the previous two months of the current year, which will provide staff with a more relevant way to track program growth. The Library Advisory Board approved the change to begin in January 2024.
- Ms. Cachuela attended the Connecticut Library Consortium's New Director's Roundtable on December 7. The topic was Budget Presentations.
- Ms. Cachuela attended a one-on-one meeting with Strategic Planning Cohort leader Maureen Sullivan on December 8. Ms. Sullivan provided a timeline for scheduling Board and Staff engagement sessions and community conversations, all which will take place in February and March of 2024.
- Second-round interviews for the vacant Children's Librarian position took place the week of December 18 and involved a live storytime at KOCO Child Care, a tour of the library, and formal questions with members of the Library staff. A conditional offer was made to the first-choice candidate on December 28. The individual will undergo a background check, reference check, pre-employment physical including drug and alcohol testing, and fingerprinting before starting at the Library.

Children's Department:

This section contains general updates and news about the Children's Department.

- In early December, two 5th grade Center School classes visited the Library to obtain materials for a research project. The classes took a tour of the Library, were given a brief overview of Library services, and checked out books for both their projects and for independent reading.
- The Storywalk® book at Seamster Park was changed on December 7 to the winter-themed story *The Longest Night* by Marion Dane Bauer.
- Our 3rd Book Bingo program on December 18 was a big success, with many families commenting that attending the program has become a tradition for them. 30 patrons attended.
- Public Service Associate Wini Cerreta hosted Bluey Playdate on December 28. The program featured imaginative free play stations related to the Bluey show. 60 patrons attended, including several families who were new to the Library.

Adult / Young Adult Department:

This section contains general updates and news about the Adult / Young Adult Department.

- Lessons in Culinary, a teen cooking class series began this month. The program was the idea of the Teen Advisory Board. Teens in attendance made four kinds of dip. The program continues monthly through February, with a new theme each month.
- The fourth Music in the Library concert of the year took place mid-month and featured Entwined Early Music, a trio performing on replicas of ancient instruments.
- Teens in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in a Teen Winter Reading Challenge. Upon completion of a number of activities intended to engage teens with the collection, programs and staff, they will receive a scratch card to win a prize. The challenge goes through February.

Circulation and Technical Services Department:

This section contains general updates and news about the Circulation and Technical Services Department.

- Memoirs and biographies have been reclassified, creating a more organized collection.
- A large-scale update to our Adult Fiction collection, including Romance, Mystery, and Sci-Fi/Fantasy, is underway. Popular titles in poor condition are being replaced and titles with low circulation are being removed from the collection.
- East Hampton Public Library has over 3,800 active library cards as of January 1st, 2024.

Strategic Plan Indicators of Success

Circulation

Borrowers (*Accessible and Inclusive*)

	+/- Last Month	December	November	October
Adults (borrowing physical items)	+10	1166	1156	1239
Children (borrowing physical items)	+10	254	244	273
Corporate (borrowing physical items)	-1	11	12	11
Staff (borrowing physical items)	-1	15	16	16
SUBTOTAL		1446	1428	1539
Overdrive	+1	255	254	262
Hoopla	+4	243	239	244

SUBTOTAL		498	493	506
TOTAL		1,944	1,921	1,945

Borrowing (*Welcoming and Vibrant, Informative and Collaborative*)

	2023	2023	2023	2022	2021	2020
	December	November	October	December	December	December
Adult Collection	2815	2761	3101	3,048	3,001	4,368
Children's Collection	2810	2633	2973	2,308	2,243	2,814
Young Adult	365	358	385	312	242	199
SUBTOTAL	5990	5,752	6,459	5,668	5,486	7,381
eBooks – Overdrive	1403	1362	1460	954	940	658
eBooks - Hoopla	711	700	705	595	534	546
eBooks – RB Digital*	0*	0*	0*	0*	0*	19
SUBTOTAL	2,144	2062	2165	1,549	1,474	1,223
TOTAL	8,104	7,014	8,624	7,217	6,960	8,604

*RB Digital was discontinued.

Visits

Door Counter (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
5,019	6,497	3,964*	4,639	4,122	4,829						

*New Door Counter for September

Programs and Partners

Events, Workshops, Programs and Outreach (*Accessible and Inclusive*)

Onsite Programs				Participants		
	December	November	October	December	November	October
Adult	7	8	9	69	28	88
Children's	15	19	21	346	388	450
Young Adult	3	6	7	14	28	66
Intergenerational	4	1	3	367	29	139
SUBTOTAL	29	34	40	796	473	743
Self-Directed Activities				Participants		
Adult	1	1	1	18	11	18
Children's	4	6	6	374	286	369
Young Adult	1	1	1	5	5	5

Intergenerational	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	6	8	8	397	302	392
Offsite Programs				Attendance		
Adult	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children's	10	5	7	221	91	145
Young Adult	0	1	0	0	15	0
Intergenerational	0	0	1	0	0	3400
SUBTOTAL	10	0	8	221	106	3545
TOTAL**	45	54	56	1414	881	4680

Promotion

Website (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

	+/- last month	Dec	November	October
Users	+70	1626	1556	1739
Sessions	-14	2672	2686	2849
Page Views	+283	3612	3895	4220
Events Calendar	+243	1586	1343	1688

5 Most Popular Pages: Library Homepage, Hours & Contact Info, Library Staff, Museum Passes, Events

Social Media (*Welcoming and Vibrant*)

	+/- last month	December	November	October
Facebook				
Reactions/Comments/Shares	+160	458**	298**	2333
Page Reach	+1683	5863	4180	2514
New Followers	+15	30	15	10
Instagram				
Reactions/Comments/Shares/Views	+31	5222	5191	8456
Page Reach	+368	828	460	695
New Followers	-2	17	19	20

**Facebook has changed the way they calculate Reactions/Comments/Shares/Views. This number no longer includes views, and is now called 'Content Interactions'.

Donations and Fundraising

Donations (*Ready for the Future*)

Anonymous	\$200, unspecified
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