

Director's Report: Submitted by Patrick Pittman

April 2025

Director's Focus:

Pending Grants; Begin Summer Reading; 2026 Budget

Personnel: See Personnel Committee report.

Finance: See Finance Committee report.

Facilities: See Facilities report.

Policy: See Policies Committee report.

Library Function: The board and library should consider April as the new month to close for staff development. Seymour hit lofty numbers in building usage and door count in April 2024, totaling 6,730 patrons. At 232 service hours, April 2024 served 29 patrons per hour (pph). Accounting for a full day closure for staff development and the Duryea flooring project, April 2025 still exceeded 2024 by 7%. The library saw 7,211 patrons using the building in April 2025 with 225 service hours, resulting in 32 pph. In the context of summer reading rapidly approaching, with the evaluation of current staff levels, the library will need to shift personnel to accommodate the needs presented by the community.

The library also saw an increase in circulation of 13% in April 2025. The library had 12,698 items circulate in 2025 as opposed to 11,212 in 2024. Circulating items have continued moving in a positive direction. While flat increases help indicate the demand for books from patrons, this increase aligns with the collection goals of 2025. The library will put more books of more interest and demand into the hands of its patrons.

The total circulation should then correlate with responsible and meaningful spending of municipal dollars within the collection. The library has about \$14,000 in funds from the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library (FFRPL) as a supplemental grant to further increase areas of the collection. One area the MCLS budget cuts this year (July 2025-June 2026) will consist of OverDrive renewals/e-books for the system. This will result in fewer books for electronic readers, which Seymour will need to compensate, likely with money from FFRPL.

The week of spring break brought many families to the library for a variety of literacy and STEAM programs themed around the holidays and springtime. The library relies on this week to increase its presence in the community, as well as provide families with space while schools go on break. The library has seen success build each year, and 2025 proved no exception. Additionally, the Friends of the Seymour Library's book sale helps draw in many members of the community. The spring thaw tends to get the community moving, so various factors play into the increase in foot traffic and program attendance in April.

In addition to regular programs, the Seymour Library hosted Tricia Arnold's BHS education class. The students came to learn how to use a library and navigate its resources. The class, comprised of 20 juniors and seniors, worked together and with the library staff to complete the tasks assigned. This represents one of the library's core principles of partnerships with community organizations and educational institutions. The library will take its story times on the road this summer. In addition to the Brockport Child Development Center and Inspire!, the library will fold in the SCCC for story times on Tuesdays during camp weeks. Seymour has many external connections and assets that enhance the library experience, whether in the library or outside it.

Looking Ahead: Pro Carpet finished the flooring in the Duryea Room within a day while the library closed for staff development. Suggestions for minor improvements came out of the day, which have low costs for a high quality of life return. Seymour will begin implementing some of these solutions in May and June. The library has started to move into a position of relatively rapid change in significant ways and with incremental enhancements. Most of these purchases will come from continued grant writing and donations. To date, the library has collected over \$27,000 in grants and donations. Lauren completed her first funded grant application, so the library has some diversification of the grant pipeline. These will consist of the major push behind updating and modernizing the operations.

Regarding the budget, the library looks to run a balanced, breakeven budget in 2026. The Finance Committee will need to consider the priorities of the library, in cooperation with other pertinent committees, but the overall picture looks straightforward. So long as no major expense increases occur over the course of 2025, and into 2026, the library has enough inputs to balance the current spending. The library has the stability and vision to continue moving forward to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

In Closing: The Seymour Library has operated at the effective peak capacity for the first several months of 2025. The trends have shown consistent and reliable increases in usage of library services over the last several years. Some of the key indicators show this usage may have started gaining momentum requiring a second look at the current staffing model. If the current models pan out as projected, summer reading will require a significant staff investment. Given the number of improvements taking place at the library, this can fit part and parcel with current planning.

As it pertains to current and future planning, the budget for 2025 looks to pace for breakeven. A significant uptick in grants and donations has bolstered what the library can do for community offerings. While somewhat challenging to balance each area while moving ahead with improvements and initiatives, working with the board in tandem has relieved some of the pressure. The library has an excellent relationship with the municipalities, a primary target goal in the current Long-Range Plan. Each entity will need to work together to ensure the library's success. As with each report so far this year, much of how the library moves forward will depend on what legislation takes place at the state and national level. Everyone should keep a close eye on what unfolds, but things look positive for the Seymour Library.

