



Agenda: Board of Trustees  
March 6, 2025, at 4 pm  
Community Room, Ladd Library

### ***Literacy, Access, & Inclusion***

Library Board President – Monica Challenger

- A. Call to Order
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
  - Minutes: February 6, 2025
- C. Public Comments and Communications
- D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
- F. Board Education: State Legislative Process – Dara Schmidt
- G. Library Board Committee Reports
  - Advocacy Committee – Elisabeth Hepworth, Committee Chair
    - No Action
  - Building Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
    - No Action
  - Finance Committee – Chris Casey, Committee Chair
    - **Action:** Purchase Order and Payment Approval - new chairs for the downtown library. Payment in the amount of \$55,207.18 to Pigott.
  - Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
    - No Action
- H. Library Director's Report
- I. Old Business
- J. New Business
- K. Adjournment

The next Board of Trustees meeting is **April 3, 2025 at 4 pm**, in the Conference Room, Downtown Library.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a City program, service, or activity, should contact Jessica Musil, Library Administrative Assistant, at 319.261.7323 or email [musilj@crlibrary.org](mailto:musilj@crlibrary.org) as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the meeting.

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**  
**Cedar Rapids Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**February 6, 2025**

**Board members in attendance:** [President] Monica Challenger, [Vice President] Jeremy Elges, Chris Casey, Jade Hart, Susie McDermott (in person); Ana McClain, Elisabeth Hepworth, Hassan Selim, Rafael Jacobo (via Zoom)

**Staff in attendance:** Dara Schmidt, Jessica Musil, Kevin Delecki, Erin Horst, Todd Simonson (in person); Patrick Duggan (via Zoom)

**Others:** Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation; Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library (in person)

- A. Call to Order
  - Ms. Challenger called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
  - Minutes: January 2, 2025

*Ms. McDermott moved to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Hart seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.*
- C. Public Comments and Communications
  - There being none, the meeting continued
- D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
  - Ms. Tyler reported. The Foundation started the week at Lion Bridge Brewery with the library lager brew day with the guest brewmaster. So far, Foundation staff with Dara Schmidt have visited seven to eight local organizations and businesses for the Gong Tour. This has been a unique way to celebrate the gifts toward the capital campaign and has been well received. At this time, the Foundation has raised \$7.4 million for the campaign with ongoing conversations for more donations and they are also submitting applications for grants.

Chris Casey joined the meeting at 4:05 pm.

- Development Associate Jess Netolicky is organizing Literary Vines, which will take place on April 18. Early bird postcards were mailed to last year’s donors and attendees. Invitations to the event will go out the end of February.
  - The Foundation also celebrated Dolly Parton’s birthday with over 200 in attendance. The Programming Team helped with children’s activities. Enrollment partners were present in support of Dolly Parton’s Imagination (DPIL) program. Volunteers helped to enroll kids and hand out cookies donated by HyVee.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
    - Ms. Slappey reported. The Friends sold children’s books at the Dolly Parton birthday party and earned more than three times as much as last year’s event. This year, in addition to children’s books, they also sold parenting books. Amazon continues to grow in sales. January’s sales figures were higher than December, which was a record month. February appears to be promising. Previously, the Friends sold about two to three books a week on the platform and is now selling about two to three books a day.
    - The Friends are also selling book sets on Facebook Marketplace. They will evaluate this new endeavor. Online sales of book sets would be cost prohibitive with shipping costs. The Friends plan to sell books at Lion Bridge Brewery to on the Houbly Days’ weekend in Czech Village.
  - F. Library Board Committee Reports

- Advocacy Committee – Elisabeth Hepworth, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Hepworth reported. At this time, there are no action items to report. The committee is watching what’s happening at the state and federal level and will share updates as the legislative sessions unfold.
- Building Committee – Jade Hart, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Hart reported. The committee met with Fehr Graham, contractors for the Urban Plaza. The committee and the contractor are continuing to revise the plan to meet the project needs and budget. The Foundation graciously increased their contribution to the project so we can do more. There is nothing to show the full board at this time. Ms. Hart also noted that our City partners have been helpful in the process.
  - Plans for the Westside Library continue. Recently, the committee met with Genus Landscaping to review design ideas and give feedback for the building’s east and west entrances, both courtyards, and the Discovery Garden, which is adjacent to the west entrance. Ms. Schmidt showed the designs and noted that the final designs and furniture are not yet final. The Discovery Garden, which will have seating, interactive literacy features, and an outdoor classroom space, is part of the library’s project because it’s right outside the front door. The idea is to include it right away so that space is finished at opening. The design has been in collaboration with the City’s Parks and Recreation department – they will maintain it – and are thrilled to have this addition to the Library and Parks campus. Construction continues on the library itself has slowed down because of the weather. Garling Construction still feels good about the progress and overall timeline. Contractors are on top of the ordering items to be cognizant of cost and lead times. Friends volunteer Steve Sovern has been taking drone photographs for us, which are helpful as underground work turns into above ground work.
- Finance Committee – Chris Casey, Committee Chair
  - Ms. Casey reported. She briefly reviewed the December finances, which marks a halfway point through the fiscal year. There are no concerns or surprises.
  - **Action:** Contract Amendment No. 4: OPN Architects for Westside Library Project (original contract amount was \$1,272,100; total contract amount with this amendment is \$1,460,800). Ms. Casey noted that this request came from OPN. As the construction cost was underbudget, we are adding items back into the project. These fees are for OPN’s time to investigate and incorporate those changes into the design.

*The committee recommendation to approve the revised contract total with OPN to \$1,460,800 as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.*

- **Action:** Linn County Contract for Library Services FY25. Linn County sent the contract for library services to support unincorporated county residents. This is the standard contract to accept \$79,161.50 for services in this fiscal year.

*The committee recommendation to accept the Linn County Contract for Library Services in FY25 for \$79,161.50 as presented in the packet carried with unanimous approval.*

- **Action:** FY26 Budget. Ms. Casey walked through the budget, which will ultimately go to City Council for approval. As a reminder, the approval is for Operations (151), Public Library Grants (7010) and CIP (316). Operationally, this is a flat budget to maintain current services – nothing has been added or removed. Revenue and expenses are increasing a bit but they balance each other out without extras. The City asked all departments to cut discretionary spending by 3% and with increased revenue, overall expenses can remain the same. We will need to watch a few things in FY26 for potential amendments:

- A bill has been proposed at the State, which may alter the revenue we receive at approximately \$115,000.

- With our MLN partners, we are close to deciding on our ILS provider for a five-year contract. So far, the bids are under our current rate; however, this is also reflected in revenue because Marion and Hiawatha pay us for their portion of the contract.
- The library will take the opportunity to review any staff opening and make the best call for future state for the new library in FY27. The goal is to add two FTE for the new library.

For the Public Library Grants portion of the budget, there are no changes or concerns to discuss. In the CIP budget, money is set aside for the books budget. A sizable bequest was given to the Foundation for materials, which is being held to support the new library's collection.

*The committee recommendation to accept the FY26 budget as presented in the board packet carried with unanimous approval.*

- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
  - Ms. McDermott reported. The committee reviewed two policies this month.
  - **Action:** Policy 3.05 Internet and Computer Usage. This policy is established to remind patrons of their responsibility to use library-provided computers and Internet at their discretion. Library staff do not control or monitor the information available so it's the person's responsibility – or parents for a minor child – to use the resources appropriately and responsibly. There are no recommended changes at this time.
  - **Action:** Policy 3.06 Library Access for Sex Offenders Convicted of Sex Offenses Against Minors. By law, these individuals cannot come to the library in person; however, they still have options to access the library, which are outlined in the policy. The committee did not recommend changes as there have been no issues in maintaining access in these cases.

*The committee recommendation to accept the reviewed policies as presented in the board packet carried with unanimous approval.*

#### G. Library Director's Report

- Ms. Schmidt reported. Ms. Schmidt, along with the other MLN directors, attended the Iowa Library Association's (ILA) Lobby Day at the State Capitol. Unfortunately, timing was bad – a member of House died and the funeral was the same day. She did not see anyone from the House but spent time with local Senators. It was nice to hear how much these leaders use and appreciate libraries.
- This month's ILA newsletter highlighted our library twice. One feature was about the story time with Iowa athlete Ethan Hurkett, which brought in new audiences. Another article featured an ILA member who is a school librarian at Washington High School. He was part of the school librarians who presented at the spring 2024 staff day to talk about book recommendations for kids. It was a great presentation for our staff and to build connections with school librarians.
- We're in the process of getting quotes to replace a majority of the soft seating around the downtown building. Based on preliminary quotes, it is more cost effective – and with warranties – to buy new versus replacing pieces. The current chair styles we have are discontinued but we're looking at very similar styles in vinyl for easier cleaning. In addition, some of the lighting is not working or bulbs has been discontinued without replacements. For example, there is a mud-in light over the Commons that we can no longer get bulbs for. We're working with Hawkeye Electric for options. A discussion as held on when decisions like this go to a committee versus staff. Ms. Schmidt felt the distinction would be if staff were electing to choose a style significantly different. The board agreed. Regardless, anything over \$50,000 will go to the Finance Committee for approval.
- This winter, Cedar Rapids' homeless population has increased, which brings more individuals to the library. Ms. Schmidt and Public Service leadership have had several

conservations about how everyone is welcome at the library but not all behaviors are welcome. There are levels of frustration but it has been helpful for people to understand everyone is welcome and staff can address behavioral concerns. The Public Service team does an incredible job at addressing behavioral issues with dignity and respect. There have been issues downtown with groups of teens, which has happened at the library and in other areas. Similarly, kids are encouraged to be here if they can behave. Ms. Casey asked what does success look like for teens at the library. Mr. Simonson shared success is 15-20 teens using the spaces and not impeding on access or being disruptive. Staff are more effective at managing behaviors because they have built relationships with our regular teen users.

- As a reminder, the first Corridor Libraries Staff Day is on Thursday, February 20. We will host staff and representatives from 14 libraries from Linn and Johnson counties. The day starts with our keynote speaker, Shola Richards, at the DoubleTree along with the City leadership team. Then we'll come back to the library for a book signing – Mr. Richard's book called *Civil Unity* – followed by lunch and afternoon sessions. All trustees are invited to attend and should have received the program guide via email yesterday.

H. Old Business

- There being no old business, the meeting continued.

I. New Business

- **Action:** Tentative Agreement CWA Wages July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027. The library and Union negotiated for wages for fiscal years' 2026 and 2027, as the agreement only noted years 2023-25. Ms. Schmidt is pleased that the Library and City could give bargaining staff the maximum across the board wage increase we could offer.

*Mr. Elges moved to accept the Tentative Agreement for CWA wages as presented in the packet. Ms. Casey seconded. The action carried with unanimous approval.*

J. Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:14 pm.

**The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 4 pm in the Community Room, Ladd Library**



## Self-defense claim

Defendant says killing wasn't an act of murder

Iowa Today, 2A



## Tools of the trade

ISU men's basketball uses their best weapons

Sports, 1B



# The Gazette



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# Ben Rogers resigns as Linn County supervisor



Linn County Supervisor Ben Rogers speaks during a launch event for the Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation's "Inspiring Big Dreams" capital campaign in January 2024 at the Ladd Library in Cedar Rapids. (Nick Rohlman/The Gazette)

## After 16 years, Rogers taking a position with the Unity Point Health-St. Luke's Foundation

By Emily Andersen, The Gazette

**C**EDAR RAPIDS — Ben Rogers, the Linn County supervisor who represents District 2, announced Monday that he will resign his seat, effective April 1, after serving on the board for 16 years.

Rogers, 44, has accepted a position as senior director of development with the Unity Point Health-St. Luke's Foundation.

"This has been the greatest job within the greatest organization I've ever been part of, so it was not an easy decision, but I was just looking at what's next in life and that was what's next," Rogers told The Gazette.

Rogers, a Democrat, was first elected in 2008, when the board of supervisors expanded from three members to five.

In 2016, Linn County residents voted to reduce the size of the board to three representatives.

He was reelected in 2012, 2016, 2018 and 2022. Rogers' seat as a supervisor is up for re-election in 2026.

District 2 includes areas of northeast and southeast Cedar Rapids, as well as portions of Hiawatha.

According to Iowa Code, Linn County Auditor Todd Taylor, Recorder Carolyn Siebrecht and Treasurer Brent Oleson will meet to determine whether to fill the board vacancy by appointment or to hold a special election.

### DISASTER RECOVERY, MENTAL HEALTH CARE MARK ROGERS' TENURE

As a supervisor since 2009, Rogers played a large role in the recovery and rebuilding efforts after the 2008 flood

and the 2020 derecho. He also helped lead the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rogers has been passionate about issues related to mental health and disabilities. He serves as chair of the East Central Region Mental Health/Disability Services board, and he was instrumental in the creation of the Linn County Mental Health Access Center.

He also helped lead creation of the Winter Weather Overflow Shelter for people experiencing homelessness.

As supervisor, Rogers voted to approve utility-scale solar projects in Coggon and Palo, and he worked with other board members and county employees to appropriate \$44 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars in the community, according to a news release from

► ROGERS, PAGE 8A

## UI professor: Most faculty 'left-leaning'

Iowa lawmakers propose creating new school at UI

By Vanessa Miller, The Gazette

In voicing support for a legislative proposal to establish a new School of Intellectual Freedom at the University of Iowa — with a bill that started in the House now bolstered by a companion bill in the Senate — a tenured UI professor cited research revealing extreme political bias across top-ranked American colleges and universities, including in Iowa.

"This is a fact you cannot dispute," UI economics professor Luciano I. de Castro told lawmakers last week. "Most, but not all, professors are left-leaning. And this has implications."

For starters, de Castro said, faculty hire "like-minded" colleagues who engage in teaching and research likely to "convert believers" — or students — who graduate, enter the workforce and vote.

"Education level has become the best predictor of how someone will vote," de Castro said, reporting college graduates are "much more likely to vote Democrat."

"The most educated states are all blue, and the least educated states are all red," he said.

Suggesting political bias among the professors, de Castro pointed to a 2020 peer-reviewed study from Boston

► UI, PAGE 8A



Luciano I. de Castro  
University of Iowa

## Bill advances to remove Iowa obscenity law exemptions

Opponents argue Iowa law already adheres to legal test

By Tom Barton,  
Gazette Des Moines Bureau

DES MOINES — Republican lawmakers' efforts to protect children from books and material they view as obscene would extend beyond schools to all public libraries under a proposal advanced Monday.

Iowa House File 274 would repeal a section of Iowa Code that states nothing in the state's obscenity laws prohibits the use of appropriate materials for educational purposes in accredited schools, public libraries or educational programs for minors.

The Iowa Code section also does not prohibit the attendance of minors at an exhibition or display of art works or the use of any materials in any public library.

Iowa Code defines

► OBSCENITY, PAGE 8A

# Effigy Mounds workers fired in cuts

About 1,000 parks workers lost their jobs last week

By Jared Strong, The Gazette

At least two National Park Service employees in Iowa were abruptly fired last week amid President Donald Trump's ongoing purge of federal workers to limit government spending.

One was Brian Gibbs, 41, an educational technician at Effigy Mounds National Monument, near Harpers Ferry in far northeast Iowa, whose story has been widely shared on social media.

"It's been a really special place for a long time for people of many cultural backgrounds,"

Gibbs told The Gazette of the national monument. "Losing a person who is educating people about the significance of that is heartbreaking."

The site contains the largest known concentration of American Indian burial mounds. There are more than 200. It was preserved by President Harry Truman in 1949 and has since doubled in size to about 2,500 acres along the Mississippi River.

Gibbs, who for eight months had developed educational programs for the site and worked to draw more visitors, said he was one of two people at the park

► CUTBACKS, PAGE 9A



Brian Gibbs was abruptly fired last week from his job at Effigy Mounds National Monument in northeast Iowa. He is pictured with his son, Ollie. (Brian Gibbs photo)





# UI/Educator says political bias is real

## ► FROM PAGE 1A

College associate professor Mitchell Langbert and Sean Stevens, chief research adviser for the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression.

That study — published in academic journals by the Institute of Education Sciences — evaluated registration and donor behavior of 12,372 professors in 116 colleges nationally, pulling data from the top two private campuses and top two public universities from each of the 30 states that collect political registration data.

“Research since World War II has consistently found overwhelmingly left-oriented political attitudes and ideological self-identification among college and university faculty,” Langbert and Stevens wrote in a 2020 article about their research for the National Association of Scholars — a conservative education advocacy organization that this legislative session has sent two representatives to Iowa for presentations: one promoting greater legislative oversight across its higher education system and another backing a proposal to improve civic literacy at Iowa’s public universities.

“These findings are important for several reasons,” Langbert and

Stevens wrote. “Researchers have raised concerns that ideological homogeneity may lead to questionable research practices. This concern is grounded in research on confirmation bias, group polarization, motivated reasoning, and the tendency for these phenomena to be even more pronounced among the highly educated. As well, partisan polarization has been leading to Republicans’ increasing skepticism about higher education.”

### POLITICAL BIAS

#### ‘VERY, VERY STRONG’

The study found 48 percent of the 12,372 professors sampled were registered Democrats and 6 percent were registered Republicans — amounting to a ratio of nearly 9 to 1 — compared with the 2024 population, with 28 percent identifying as a Democrat and 28 identifying as a Republican, according to a Gallup poll.

Looking across disciplines, the Democrat-to-Republican registration dominance was strongest in anthropology at 42:1 and weakest in economics at 3:1, the report said. It was most pronounced on campuses in the Northeast at 15:1 and least pronounced in the Midwest at 5:1.

Because so many

professors in the sample weren’t registered for either party, Langbert and Stevens triangulated their research using political contribution data, roughly verifying “professors’ partisan affiliations and the political cultures in academic institutions and fields.”

Donor data found 10,260 non-donors, 2,081 Democratic donors, 22 Republican donors and nine donors to both parties — with a ratio of \$21 to \$1 in favor of Democrats.

“The overall ratio of Democratic to Republican donors is more extreme than the registration ratio,” the study said.

Looking specifically at 141 UI faculty, 91 were Democrat and eight were Republican, for an 11:1 ratio. Donor-wise, 31 made at least one Democratic donation and one made a Republican contribution, for a donation ratio of \$42 to \$1 in favor of Democrats, according to the study.

Of 142 Iowa State University faculty, 66 were Democrat and six were Republican, for an 11:1 registration ratio. Donor data showed 23 gave to Democratic causes and two to Republican, for a dollar ratio of \$7 to \$1.

The UI finding of 91 registered Democrats was among the highest across all campuses

polled — topped only by eight institutions, including Columbia University, Penn State University, the University of Colorado in Boulder and Yale.

UI and Board of Regents officials declined to respond to de Castro’s assertions or the political-bias study.

Regarding Iowa’s private campuses included in the study, of 101 faculty at Grinnell College, 64 were Democrat and six were Republican, with 25 giving to Democratic causes and none giving to Republicans.

Of 54 faculty at Luther College, 28 were Democrat and eight were Republican, with nine giving to Democratic causes and none giving to Republicans.

“The imbalance is very, very strong,” de Castro said, later sharing a personal experience about why “it is very hard to change this from the inside.”

### DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKERS PUSH BACK

In response to a request at the UI for suggestions of potential courses, de Castro told lawmakers, he proposed one titled, “Political Economy and Capitalism.” The class, he said, would have adopted a “market-friendly perspective on current political issues” and informed

students about how to have an “informed and well-reasoned response to criticisms of capitalism.”

“The university staff prevented this course proposal from being included in a survey that was solely intended to gauge student interest,” de Castro said, voicing support for independence of a new UI School of Intellectual Freedom. “The only thing that’s important is contained already in the proposal — it’s the fact that you need to have some protection from the university administration,” he said. “Otherwise they will meddle with the organization of the school and impede the school efforts.”

Following de Castro’s presentation, lawmakers peppered him with questions — including from Rep. Jennifer Konfrst, D-Windsor Heights, who requested evidence of his assertion that like-minded colleagues hire like-minded colleagues and asked, “Are you saying that there is not a single course at the University of Iowa that teaches about capitalism?”

Rep. Dave Jacoby, D-Coralville, questioned the study and the way it was presented — noting ways in which donations might not indicate political affiliation, like when faculty of one party

give to their friends and neighbors of another.

“You’re pigeonholing people by party,” he said. “That doesn’t mean that Republicans don’t cross over and donate to Democrats or Democrats don’t cross over and donate to Republicans.”

Rep. Ross Wilburn, D-Iowa City, said de Castro himself is proof that a conservative can rise to the ranks of a tenured professor in Iowa.

“The fact that the University of Iowa produced myself and Rep. (Jeff) Shipley, (R-Birmingham), shows that a lot of different thinking and thoughts can respectfully occur,” Wilburn said.

But Rep. Steve Holt, R-Denison, stressed the need for the proposed new UI School of Intellectual Freedom in House Study Bill 52 by referring back to the discussion on capitalism.

“You don’t have to be a rocket scientist,” he said. “Clearly today the vast majority of young people coming out of our institutions of higher learning view capitalism in a more negative light than they ever have before, and they view socialism in a more positive light. So to suggest that this isn’t happening, in my opinion, is absurd.”

Comments: (319) 339-3158; [vanesa.miller@thegazette.com](mailto:vanesa.miller@thegazette.com)

# Obscenity/Combination of laws could lead to lawsuits

## ► FROM PAGE 1A

obscenity as: “any material depicting or describing the genitals, sex acts, masturbation, excretory functions or sadomasochistic abuse which the average person, taking the material as a whole and applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable material for minors, would find appeals to the prurient interest and is patently offensive; and the material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, scientific, political or artistic value.”

Supporters of the legislation argued the exemptions allow minors access to inappropriate, sexually explicit material at public libraries, and that the bill is needed to restrict children’s exposure to obscene content.

By repealing the obscenity exemptions, they argued Iowans can ensure that educational and public spaces remain safe and appropriate for all students.

Opponents, however, contend Iowa law already codifies and adheres to the legal test established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Miller v. California* (1973) for determining whether expression constitutes obscenity.

Keenan Crow, with LGBTQ advocacy group One Iowa who uses they/them pronouns, mentioned other legislation, SF 116, that would allow parents private cause of

action to sue institutions to determine whether or not something is obscene.

Combined, Crow warned legislators that doing so would create “massive” legal liability risk for public institutions — not because of actual obscenity, but because of lawsuits and other calculated legal actions that discourage public participation that are unlikely to succeed.

“There are no other states that currently have this combination of laws. And I will also note that 44 other states currently have the exemption that this bill is seeking to remove,” Crow said. “The reason is that these frivolous lawsuits will happen at taxpayer expense for no other reason than to intimidate librarians and educators.

“Strong laws about obscenity are necessary and important in our society, and they do a great job of both protecting access to reading and removing truly objectionable, meritless material,” they said.

Crow noted such obscenity laws have been in place for decades.

“I would challenge anyone in this room to come up with a single book in their local library or school that meets the Miller test (for obscenity); not that you disagree with it,” Crow said, who was then interrupted by a woman who dumped a stack of books in front of them on the

committee room table.

Subcommittee chair Rep. Helena Hayes, R-New Sharon, reminded attendees to maintain a level of decorum and instructed the woman to remove the books.

“Not that you find it objectionable, not that you disagree with it, but it meets the constitutional test” of what constitutes obscenity, Crow continued. “... I believe this bill and several others moving in the Legislature right now are just going to be a driver of higher insurance costs and frivolous lawsuits.”

### BILL SUPPORTER: LIBRARY ASSOCIATION A ‘MARXIST, GODLESS GROUP’

Supporters of the bill said the measure was necessary because of material in libraries available for minors that contain sexually explicit content, or that focus on LGBTQ identities and experiences.

Evelyn Nikkel with the PELLA PAC, a Pella-based group lobbying to pass laws to protect children from “propaganda promoted by Marxist and atheist bureaucracies,” according to the group’s website, said the bill is needed to prevent public libraries and educational programs from exploiting “a loophole” in Iowa law to allow their “damnable excuse for unfiltered and unrestricted access for minors to all adult content on shelves and online.”

A group of parents led an effort in 2022 to remove “Gender Queer” by Maia Kobabe, a graphic novel that includes nudity and depictions of sexual activities, from the Pella Public Library.

Nikkel asserted librarians and library boards have exhibited a “total disregard” of Iowa’s obscenity laws to “make sure that they keep this filth continually in front of our children,” and criticized the Iowa Library Association for adhering to standards set by the American Library Association.

She called the latter a “Marxist godless group, hell bent on flooding our minors with sexually explicit graphic novels, violent R-rated streaming videos, adult audio books and LGBTQ+ deviant sexual behaviors.”

“Businesses can’t merchandise this smut, but our taxpayer-funded public libraries intersperse it on their shelves to ambush children as young as 5 years old, especially targeting young people,” she said.

Libraries exist to support free inquiry, not dictate what individuals or families can read, and Iowa law already provides a clear process for addressing concerns about materials, a public librarian told lawmakers.

The Iowa Library Association, in a statement to *The Gazette*, said legal obscenity can only be determined by a court of law, not individual

community members, library workers or other officials.

Current exemptions, the association states, protect library workers when materials serve an educational purpose, which adheres to the Miller Test, or when an individual is using the library’s materials for their own purposes. Removing those protections will create a chilling effect “that leads to over-restriction of legal content, and censorship.”

“This bill is a solution in search of a problem, as libraries are not collecting and making available materials which are legally determined to be obscene,” the association said. “The courts have regularly rejected attempts to label library materials as obscene according to the long-accepted legal standards.”

### DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKER: ‘LIBRARIES ARE VOLUNTARY INQUIRY’

Rep. Heather Matson, D-Ankeny, questioned whether anyone in the room had been “irreparably harmed by a book or a piece of artwork,” and linked the bill to practices in Nazi Germany of removing banned books from open shelves, available to the public, to special collections “to keep them out of the hands of ordinary people.”

Matson argued parents can exercise control over whether they bring their children to the pub-

lic library if they are concerned about their access to certain books.

“If you want to hover over your children in a public library, please be my guest,” she said. “But libraries are voluntary inquiry. I cannot tell you how many times I said that in the last two years, and apparently I don’t have to be done with it — libraries are voluntary inquiry.”

Hayes and Rep. Samantha Fett, R-Carlisle, signed off on advancing the bill to the full House Education Committee for further consideration.

Hayes and other advocates for the legislation disagreed with calling the bill a “book ban,” as they could still be purchased, linking it to criticisms of a 2023 Iowa law being challenged in federal court requiring books with descriptions or depictions of a sex act be removed from public school libraries.

“Should public institutions and libraries be exempt from the obscenity clause, the obscenity code in Iowa language?” Hayes asked. “... I think that’s a fair question to ask that’s not fear-based. And I certainly don’t think it’s a book ban. I know that’s an easy out for anybody who wants to do anything about age-appropriateness or talking about books or setting any boundaries whatsoever, is automatically seen to be a book ban.”

Comments: (319) 398-8499; tom.barton@thegazette.com

# Rogers/Helped lead Linn County through derecho, pandemic

## ► FROM PAGE 1A

the county.

“I’m just really proud to have been able to serve and I feel a tremendous amount of gratitude to those who have allowed me to serve for 16 years,” Rogers said.

Rogers, in a news release announcing his resignation, expressed thanks.

“I am deeply grateful to the voters of Linn County and my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors over the years for the opportunity to serve the community where I was born and where I am raising my family. I cannot fully

express my appreciation for the privilege of representing and working with the incredible people of Linn County,” he said.

Linn County has a three-member board of supervisors. The other two members are Kirsten Running-Marquardt, a Democrat who was elected in

2022, and Brandy Zumbach Meisheid, a Republican who was elected in November 2024.

Currently, Linn County supervisors are paid an annual salary of \$130,090.80.

Comments: (319) 398-8328; emily.andersen@thegazette.com



# Politics Notebook | Iowa Senate lawmakers advanced a bill extending DEI bans to K-12 schools

Also, Senate lawmakers advanced a bill repealing obscenity exemptions for public libraries, educational institutions Tuesday.

## Roxy Ekberg, Politics Editor

Iowa Senate lawmakers advanced a bill that extends the requirement to remove diversity, equity, and inclusion teachings and training from not only regent-controlled universities, but K-12 schools and community colleges as well.

Senate File 335 would also ban training for teachers that teaches “stereotyping or scapegoating” based on the basis of demographic group or identity. Iowa teachers would also be prohibited from providing instruction on sexual orientation, gender identity, or critical race theory in K-12 schools.

The bill would eliminate DEI positions in K-12 schools and would require community colleges to comply with a law passed last year which banned DEI from regent universities.



Cody Blissett

Members of the House meet during the first day of the 2025 Iowa legislative session at the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines on Monday, Jan. 13, 2025.

It would also allow people to sue the school district if DEI is taught or used in training employees. Under the bill, if a school district violates an Iowa law allowing parents or guardians to control their child’s education, the parents can sue, receive attorney’s fees, and levy a \$50,000 civil penalty against the school district.

Margaret Buckton, lobbyist with the Urban Education Network and Rural School Advocates of Iowa, said both organizations are registered against the bill.

She said there’s no requirement that the complaints in the bill have to be established in good faith, and the legislation would create not just discomfort but chaos in schools.

“The penalties in this legislation, they’re kind of like swatting a fly with a sledgehammer,” Buckton said.

Iowa Sens. Sandy Salmon, R-Janesville, and Mike Pike, R-Des Moines, voted to advance the bill, while the only Democrat on the panel, Sen. Herman Quirnbach, D-Ames, spoke against the legislation.

Salmon said the bill provides more pathways to enforce restrictions on DEI and allows enforcement to be driven by parents or school employees.

Pike said the bans on DEI need additional teeth.



Quirnbach said free speech in schools is reinforced by the existing code, and this bill will not affect that.

“I think you’re anticipating that you’re going to be able to sue left and willy nilly, anything you don’t like going on in the schools,” he said. “I think you will quickly find that any money you spend on legal counsel is going to be wasted. There’s a strong defense in the code of free speech, so I see no reason to pass this bill.”

Bill repealing obscenity exemptions for public libraries, educational institutions

Iowa lawmakers advanced a bill to repeal obscenity exemptions for public libraries and educational institutions on Tuesday.

Senate File 235 would no longer allow Iowa’s public libraries and educational institutions to offer obscene material, defined as material that the average person would consider patently offensive and lacks serious literary, scientific, political, or artistic value.

Currently, Iowa Code exempts public libraries and educational institutions from restrictions on obscenity. The legislation would remove this exemption.

Iowan parents, lobbyists, and librarians packed the room, speaking in favor of and against the bill. Many pointed to the use of taxpayer dollars; those opposed to the pay warning of the cost of lawsuits falling to taxpayers, and proponents arguing taxpayer dollars should not be used to purchase and provide minors with obscene materials.

Leslie Noble, a member of the government affairs committee for the Iowa Library Association, said the organization is opposed to the legislation, as it is an “unnecessary attack on Iowans’ right to intellectual freedom under the First Amendment.”

RELATED: Bill banning all forms of DEI in city, county offices advanced by Iowa lawmakers

Noble said Iowa law already provides a clear process for addressing concerns about materials, and the legislation would remove protections for public workers who are required to meet the varied information needs of Iowans.

Noble warned that if the exemption for public libraries is removed, it opens up the possibility for anyone to sue a library repeatedly over materials they are objected to, regardless of the legal fees, which would be paid for by taxpayers.

“Do your community taxpayers want to pay for lawsuits against the library?” Noble asked the crowded room.

Director of the Cedar Rapids Public Library Dara Schmidt said librarians will have to spend time working against frivolous lawsuits, which will waste time, money, and resources. Schmidt said parents have the right to decide what is appropriate for their children, and librarians receive training and often extensive education.

“We are trained, educated, intelligent people who can make the decisions that are best for our communities,” Schmidt said. “Some of us have spent years and years in higher education learning to be professional librarians and develop collections that our communities are asking for.”

The Republicans on the panel of lawmakers, Pike and Salmon, supported the bill, while Quirnbach, the sole Democrat, was opposed.

Salmon spoke on the easy accessibility of pornography, although the legislation targets obscenity rather than pornography.

“Pornography is very easy for a minor to access. It’s both online and physically, even in libraries, as books containing pornographic material are available there,” Salmon said. “It is egregious and unconscionable that the only place in the state of Iowa where minors are allowed to get access to obscene material, pornography, is in the public library.”

Quirnbach quickly corrected Salmon, urging her to reread the legislation she introduced.

“Senator, if I may clarify, the law is against obscenity, not against pornography, and libraries are not currently allowed to have obscene material on their shelves,” he said. “Read the legal definition. Read the piece of the code that the bill addresses.”

Obscenity is not protected under the First Amendment, although pornography is generally protected. The two types of pornography not protected are obscenity and child pornography.



## Murder trial

Mother testifies she heard shots over phone

Top Stories, 3A



## Iowa City budget

City's proposed budget projects deficit of \$2.8M

Iowa Today, 8A



# The Gazette



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## USDA vows another \$1B to help battle bird flu



Chickens stand in cages in 2009 at an Iowa farm. Egg prices hit a record average of \$4.95 per dozen this month. (Charlie Neibergall/Associated Press)

### Egg prices could jump another 41% in 2025 beyond already record costs



Brooke Rollins speaks Jan. 23 during a Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee hearing on her nomination for secretary of Agriculture in Washington. (Jacquelyn Martin/Associated Press)

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts the current record prices for eggs could soar more than 40 percent this year as the Trump administration offered the first new details Wednesday about its plan to battle bird flu.

With an emphasis on tightening biosecurity on farms, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said the USDA will invest another \$1 billion on top of the roughly \$2 billion it has already spent battling bird flu since the latest outbreak began in 2022. Officials had hinted at the plan earlier this month.

But it's not clear how much more farmers can do to keep the virus out. Egg and poultry farmers already have been working to protect their birds ever since the 2015 bird flu outbreak by taking measures such as requiring workers to change clothes and shower before entering barns, using separate sets of tools and sanitizing vehicles that enter farms. The challenge is the virus is spread easily by wild birds as they migrate.

► BIRD FLU, PAGE 10A

## Turn acorns into oak trees, Marion nonprofit urges

Monarch Research Project to create ambassadors for the oak tree

By Bailey Cichon, The Gazette

Monarch Research Project wants Iowans to know that the acorn is mighty.

"Most people don't realize that (the oak tree) is a keystone element in the ecosystem," said Clark McLeod, cofounder of the nonprofit Monarch Research Project, based in Marion. "A keystone is that shaped piece on the top of an arch and when you pull the keystone out, the arch falls. That's what happens when you lose oaks in your ecosystem."

Native oak trees can support hundreds of species of caterpillars, which in turn feed the birds. Caterpillars are a staple in the diet of baby birds. Contrast the oak tree with a non-native ginkgo tree, which supports just five species of caterpillars, according to the National Audubon Society. Plus, they are natural air filters, pulling carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and storing it within tree tissue.

Despite the oak tree's superhero-like status in the ecosystem, "the oak tree has fallen into a position where it's not the top pick

when people are going out and choosing trees," McLeod said. But "an oak tree, by far (is) the best tree you can put in."

After Linn County lost an estimated 1 million trees in the 2020 derecho, Monarch Research Project made it its mission to rebuild. The nonprofit has planted 100,000 native trees in Linn County, distributing 20,000 trees in October 2024 alone. Monarch Research Project wants to double that total in the next five years.

So how do you get people passionate about planting oak trees? You arm them with acorns and create a special society.

► TREES, PAGE 9A



Clark McLeod Monarch Research Project

## UI dropping DEI-associated 'living learning communities' and councils

UI no longer will offer LGBTQ+, Latinx, and Black LLCs

By Vanessa Miller, The Gazette

IOWA CITY — In the wake of sweeping anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion legislation and Board of Regents mandates that have cut millions, closed offices, eliminated positions, and curtailed programming and training across Iowa's public universities, the University of Iowa has confirmed it is dropping three DEI-related "living learning communities" in its residence halls.

The university in 2013 became the first of its kind to require all residence hall students to join a living learning community — or "LLC" — which house students with peers who share similar interests or majors in hopes of forming deeper community connections that aid in retention and engagement efforts.

The university downgraded its LLC mandate to optional in 2018 — when it offered more than 20 different community options students could join, from "BizHawks" for business-minded students to several centered on academic endeavors like engineering, writing, and the arts to less academic and more identity-based communities.

It's those identity-based LLCs that are on the chopping block — with administrators confirming for The Gazette that three no longer will be offered beginning in the 2025-26 academic year. The dropped LLCs are:

- "All In," which aims to "explore and celebrate LGBTQ+ culture and identity," according to the UI website, by connecting its members with campus resources and organizations to "understand, explore, and contextualize the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals."

► UI, PAGE 10A

## Bill would restrict state funds to some libraries

By Maya Marchel Hoff, Gazette-Lee Des Moines Bureau

DES MOINES — Libraries that are "dues-paying members" of certain nationwide nonprofit organizations would be cut off from one avenue of state funding under legislation being considered by Iowa state lawmakers.

The Senate State Government Subcommittee advanced Senate File 238, which would halt state funding to public libraries from the Enrich Iowa program if they are members of nationwide nonprofit organizations that promote federal and state legislation

► LIBRARIES, PAGE 10A

### INSIDE

- Repeal of gender ID protections advances, 7A
- State lawmakers try to tackle child care access, 8A





# Libraries/ALA principles are 'toxic to our republic'

► FROM PAGE 1A

related to libraries and engage in advocacy efforts at the federal and state levels.

Enrich Iowa, run through the State Library of Iowa, appropriates money to libraries for open access, interlibrary loan reimbursement and direct state aid.

Though it is not specifically mentioned in the bill, lawmakers and committee attendees highlighted the American Library Association as the bill's main target. The American Library Association is the largest library membership organization.

Supporters of the legislation argue the ALA is politically motivated, and they disagree with content in specific library books.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. Sandy Salmon, R-Janesville, said she appreciates library services, but believes the ALA does not protect children from sexually explicit materials.

"The ALA does not represent Iowa values of parental rights, protection of the natural modesty and innocent childhood, protection of children's sexuality and sexual identity and protection of children from being groomed for sexual abuse and exploitation," Salmon said.

Sen. Cindy Winckler, D-Davenport, said state funding should not be tied to organization membership, adding that ALA funding allows libraries to have access to more materials and resources.

"When we start micromanaging and taking away the leadership that is provided by our local boards in our communities, we silence the voices of the members," Winckler said. "To associate state funding with belonging to a professional organization makes no sense at all."

## LIBRARIANS: FUNDING IMPROVES 'BREADTH AND QUALITY' OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Multiple librarians from across the state argued they rely on ALA funding for many things, including purchasing library materials and upgrading facilities to make them more accessible.

Sam Helmick, ALA president-elect and community and access services coordinator at the Iowa City Public Library, said the ALA is a nonpartisan organization, highlighting that without its funding, some libraries could be forced to close.

"Iowa libraries are slowly losing their local control, year by year, without the advocacy of organizations like the American Library Association, Iowa Library Association and the Association of (Rural and Small) Libraries, our libraries could face irreversible closure," Helmick said.

"As a conservative, as an Iowan, as a librarian and as somebody who has served the public for over two decades, I can assure you that this is not merely a matter of local policy, but a constitutional right," Helmick added.

Chris Stoner, a librarian at the Hiawatha Public Library, said Enrich Iowa funding made up 10 percent of the library's budget, adding that the Hiawatha Library does not use state funds to pay membership dues.

"My city government or my friends at



The Iowa Senate State Government subcommittee considers a bill that would restrict state funding for public libraries that are members of certain dues-paying national organizations, during a meeting Wednesday at the State Capitol in Des Moines. (Maya Marchel Hoff/Gazette-Lee Des Moines Bureau)

the library organization have no issue funding participation in professional organizations," Stoner said. "We don't use Enrich Iowa money to pay for professional dues and memberships. We rely on Enrich Iowa money to help do exactly that, to enrich Iowa through helping us improve the breadth and quality of the library services we provide to every person in this state."

Leslie Noble, representing the Iowa Library Association, said the ALA awarded grants to 45 Iowa libraries in 2023 and 2024.

"This initiative is for small and rural libraries to increase the accessibility of facilities, services and programs to better serve people with disabilities," Noble said. "This is all money that cities and taxpayers did not have to contribute, but that benefited each city, library and community, including communities in your home districts."

## SUPPORTER: ALA PRINCIPLES ARE 'TOXIC TO OUR REPUBLIC AND OUR STATE'

Supporters of the legislation, including Cheryl Elsloo, representing Protect My Innocence, argued the ALA supports providing children with materials that she does not believe are age appropriate.

"Funding should be denied to political organizations with a radical progressive agenda that promotes principles that are toxic to our republic and our state," Elsloo said. "Iowans should not be forced to fund organizations that don't support the compelling interest of our state to protect the innocence of children and our prosperity."

The senate subcommittee advanced the bill 2-1, with Salmon and Sen. Doug Campbell in favor and Winckler declining to sign on.

House lawmakers advanced the companion bill, House File 284, out of subcommittee Monday.

These bills are two of several introduced in the House and Senate this year that target public libraries. Other bills moving through both chambers would remove the obscenity exemption for libraries and schools.

# Bird flu/Egg prices hit record this month

► FROM PAGE 1A

The main reason egg prices have soared to hit a record average of \$4.95 per dozen this month is that more than 166 million birds have been slaughtered to limit the spread of the virus after cases are found — with most of those being egg-laying chickens. Last month was the worst yet for egg farmers with nearly 19 million egg-laying chickens slaughtered.

In Iowa — the nation's top egg-producing state — about 6.7 million egg-laying chickens were destroyed just in December 2024. So far this year, four outbreaks in Iowa have been confirmed including a flock of 27,000 turkeys in Buena Vista County and 240,000 egg-laying chickens in O'Brien County.

## EGG PRICES WILL GET WORSE

The USDA now predicts egg prices will increase at least 41 percent this year on top of the already record prices. Just last month, the increase was predicted to be 20 percent.

And the average prices conceal just how bad the situation is, with consumers paying more than a dollar an egg in some places. The situation is hurting consumers and has prompted restaurants such as Denny's and Waffle House to add surcharges on egg dishes.

The high egg prices, which have more than doubled since before the outbreak began, cost consumers at least \$1.4 billion last year, according to an estimate done by agricultural economists at the University of Arkansas. Egg prices also normally increase every spring heading into Easter when demand is high.

Rollins acknowledged it will take some time before consumers see an effect at the checkout counter. After all, it takes infected farms months to dispose of the carcasses, sanitize their farms and raise new birds. But she expressed optimism that this will help.

"It's going to take a while to get through, I think in the next month or two, but hopefully by summer," Rollins said.

## WILL FEDERAL LAYOFFS AFFECT THE FIGHT?

Rollins said she believes USDA will have the staff it needs to respond to bird flu even after all the cuts to the federal workforce at the direction of Elon Musk's "Department of Government Efficiency."

"Will we have the resources needed to address the plan I just laid out? We are convinced that we will," she said, "as we realign and evaluate where USDA has been spending money, where our employees are spending their time."

The new USDA plan calls for a \$500 million investment to help farmers bolster biosecurity measures, \$400 million in additional aid for farmers whose flocks have been impacted by avian flu, \$100 million to research and potentially develop vaccines and therapeutics for U.S. chicken flocks and explore rolling back what the administration sees as restrictive animal welfare rules in some states.

USDA already pays farmers for any birds they must slaughter due to the virus, and roughly \$1.2 billion has gone to those payments. Iowa Agriculture Secretary Mike Naig said in a statement that he has been pushing since last year to increase the aid "to ensure farmers are receiving fair market rates for impacted birds."

The administration also is in talks to import about 70 million to 100 million eggs from other countries in the coming months, Rollins said. But there were 7.57 billion table eggs produced last month, so those imports don't appear likely to make a significant difference in the market.

Trump administration officials have suggested that vaccines might help reduce the number of birds that have to be slaughtered when there is an outbreak. However, no vaccines have been approved and the industry has said the current prototypes aren't practical because they require individual shots to each bird. Plus, vaccinated birds could jeopardize exports.

"I am supportive of exploring an effective H5N1 HPAI vaccination strategy," Naig said in his statement. "I encourage USDA to work closely with state animal health officials, farmers and industry to formulate an implementation strategy, incorporate valuable lessons learned, and minimize potential negative trade impacts."

The National Turkey Federation said the plan Rollins outlined should help stabilize the market, but the trade group encouraged the USDA to pay attention to all egg and poultry farmers — not just egg producers.

# UI/Student organizations still active on campus

► FROM PAGE 1A

• "Unidos," which means "united" in Spanish and explores the "cultures and experiences of Latinx students and partners with campus resources and organizations to help create a strong foundation for Latinx-identifying students in their first-year and beyond."

• "Young, Gifted, and Black," through which students are "challenged to understand the various experiences among the African/Black diaspora, encouraged to learn and develop critical thinking skills outside the classroom, relate your passions to your academics, and better Iowa's Black Community through campus involvement."

When asked for more information about the decision to cut the LLCs, UI officials said they had nothing more to add at this time.

## DIVERSITY COUNCILS UNRECOGNIZED

In addition to Iowa Code Chapter 261J — enacted last year to prohibit Iowa's public universities from establishing, maintaining or funding a DEI office or

DEI officers not required by law or accreditation standards — lawmakers this year have proposed a spate of new legislation addressing DEI themes in the classroom.

One, for example, would bar the universities from requiring students or faculty to take or integrate into their courses any DEI or critical race theory material. Other proposed legislation aims to bolster ideological diversity — like through the creation of a new School of Intellectual Freedom or new general education requirements involving American and Western heritage.

In response to continued pressure from both lawmakers and the Board of Regents to comply with DEI mandates — and given President Donald Trump's executive order erasing DEI from the federal government — the universities have rewritten strategic plans, reassigned employees, reframed scholarships, and reorganized campus councils and committees.

As of Feb. 17, the university ceased recognition of all diversity councils — including its African American Council, Latinx Council, Na-

tive American Council, Pan Asian Council, LG-BTQ+ Council, Veterans and Military Council, and Councils on Disability Awareness, and on the Status of Women.

"To become compliant with Iowa Code Chapter 261J, existing diversity councils will transition to informal groups," according to Jan. 31 guidance from Liz Tovar, executive officer and associate vice president of the UI Division of Access, Opportunity, and Diversity — formerly its Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Tovar in the guidance defined an informal group as one that "operates independently and is not officially recognized represented by, or overseen by the university." "The informal group is responsible for managing its own funding, branding, promotion, and marketing resources, including maintaining a website, without utilizing university resources, email addresses, or digital platforms."

Although a UI link to diversity councils now directs website users to a broader list of UI committees — like those for its libraries, recreational services, parking and transportation, and

Hancher Auditorium — just months ago the link listed not just the diversity councils but seven diversity committees, along with DEI units across the university's 12 colleges and seven units or departments.

While its current list of committees still includes a committee on diversity, a message atop that group's web page reports it is "inactive as of February 2025 due to developing legislative and regulatory guidance."

## STUDENT ORGS STAY

The university does still have student organizations associated with DEI-related identities, topics, and themes — as is allowed by the new law — including the Pride Alliance Center, which collaborated with the soon-to-be defunct "All In" LLC.

"This community was founded by LGBTQ+ students with the intent of creating LGBTQ+ friendly housing options for students," according to the LLC page, noting students in that community were required to take an academic course connected to the LLC — in which they were pre-enrolled.

Students in the Young, Gifted, and Black and the

Unidos communities also were required to take an academic course connected to their respective communities. And both, like All In, collaborated with student groups on campus — including the Afro-

American Culture Center and the Latino Native American Cultural Center, both of which are listed as active student organizations.

Comments: (319) 339-3158; vanessa.miller@thegazette.com



## 2024 | The Gazette IMPACT REPORT

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We open conversations.





To: Chris Casey, Finance Committee Chair  
From: Dara Schmidt  
Date: 2/27/2025  
Subject: March Meeting Financial Report

### **January Financials:**

#### 151 – Operations

At 58.33% of the way through the year, revenue is 61% collected. Expenses are slightly over at 59% due to annual cost contract spread. There are no specific concerns at this time.

As reported in previous months, City Finance has chosen to adjust the way they bill departments for services. This is now being shown through and Adjusted Budget column. The adjusted budget is to track amendment requests that will be submitted to City Council. Requests are not approved until approved by Council by resolution as part of budget amendment process.

Currently for the Library, the adjusted budget track consists of two significant reductions in Other Expenses, removing the internal to the City department charges for City Accounting and IT. As the charges are gone, so is the budget for them. The services are still existing, internal departments are not being charges.

In addition, Regular Employees increased by 32,888 to bring additional positions to full time as we prepare for the Westside Library, and we're Transferring Out 20,000 to pay for City Facilities to project manage the westside library for us. Those funds are coming from a 52,888 reduction in External Contracted Labor, which we are underspending.

**151  
Library  
2025-01-31**

**Note** - The adjusted budget is to track amendment requests that will be submitted to City Council. Requests

Account Name	Account	Prior Fiscal Year 2024 YTD Actuals	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adjusted Budget	Current Fiscal Year 2025 YTD Actuals	Favorable (Unfavorable) Variance	Percent of Budget Received Spent	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adopted Budget	Budget Change
<b>Revenue</b>								
<b>Taxes</b>								
		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
<b>Licenses &amp; Permits</b>								
		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
<b>Intergovernmental Revenue</b>								
State Operating	422001	101,472.58	115,000.00	96,778.19	(18,221.81)	84%	115,000.00	-
Local Govt Grants and Reimb	423000	199,278.31	300,000.00	191,240.44	(108,759.56)	64%	300,000.00	-
		300,750.89	415,000.00	288,018.63	(126,981.37)	69%	415,000.00	-
<b>Charges for Services</b>								
Printing & Duplicating of Form	431006	17,349.33	25,000.00	19,029.28	(5,970.72)	76%	25,000.00	-
Dept Charges-External to City	431012	116,678.19	259,792.00	128,891.52	(130,900.48)	50%	259,792.00	-
Library User Fees - Not Fines	431201	18,227.66	10,600.00	26,001.97	15,401.97	245%	10,600.00	-
		152,255.18	295,392.00	173,922.77	(121,469.23)	59%	295,392.00	-
<b>Fines &amp; Forfeits</b>								
		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
<b>Proceeds of Long Term Liabilities</b>								
		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
<b>Other Revenue</b>								
Building Rental	461001	22,352.40	43,455.00	26,199.40	(17,255.60)	60%	43,455.00	-
Postage / Handling	471001	7.00	-	-	-	0%	-	-
Contributions & Donations	471002	22,085.82	70,000.00	17,137.75	(52,862.25)	24%	70,000.00	-
Sale of Inventory	471003	204.33	2,000.00	517.50	(1,482.50)	26%	2,000.00	-
Damage Recoveries	471004	25.00	-	-	-	0%	-	-
Other Miscellaneous Revenue	471005	75.00	3,500.00	-	(3,500.00)	0%	3,500.00	-
Cash Over (Under)	471007	(8.12)	-	(3.24)	(3.24)	0%	-	-
		44,741.43	118,955.00	43,851.41	(75,103.59)	37%	118,955.00	-
<b>Transfers In</b>								
Operating Transfer In - Inter	483001	14,718.96	-	-	-	0%	-	-
		14,718.96	-	-	-	0%	-	-

**151  
Library  
2025-01-31**

**Note** - The adjusted budget is to track amendment requests that will be submitted to City Council. Requests

Account Name	Account	Prior Fiscal Year 2024 YTD Actuals	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adjusted Budget	Current Fiscal Year 2025 YTD Actuals	Favorable (Unfavorable) Variance	Percent of Budget Received Spent	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adopted Budget	Budget Change
<b>Total Revenue</b>		512,466.46	829,347.00	505,792.81	(323,554.19)	61%	829,347.00	-
<b>Expenditures</b>								
<b>Personal Services</b>								
Regular Employees	511100	2,414,591.80	4,432,751.77	2,600,200.68	1,832,551.09	59%	4,399,864.00	32,887.77
Temporary/Seasonal Employees	511200	7,759.50	43,368.40	17,828.00	25,540.40	41%	43,368.40	-
Overtime	511300	41,824.93	114,773.40	48,545.24	66,228.16	42%	114,773.40	-
Other Special Pays	511400	15,085.84	17,158.00	16,279.25	878.75	95%	17,158.00	-
Group Insurance	512100	375,448.16	818,207.00	442,233.61	375,973.39	54%	818,207.00	-
Social Security Contributions	512200	179,541.01	348,485.00	204,502.53	143,982.47	59%	348,485.00	-
Retirement Contribution	512300	227,031.15	431,057.00	258,288.73	172,768.27	60%	431,057.00	-
Workers' Compensation	512500	40,963.93	61,747.00	35,633.74	26,113.26	58%	61,747.00	-
Other Employee Benefits	512600	5,191.73	3,162.00	4,121.21	(959.21)	130%	3,162.00	-
		3,307,438.05	6,270,709.57	3,627,632.99	2,643,076.58	58%	6,237,821.80	32,887.77
<b>Discretionary Expenses</b>								
Advertising & Marketing	521100	8,380.87	5,000.00	5,958.58	(958.58)	119%	5,000.00	-
Consulting & Technical Service	521104	-	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	0%	10,000.00	-
External Contracted Labor	521105	102,432.56	72,578.23	27,132.39	45,445.84	37%	125,466.00	(52,887.77)
Legal Services	521107	11,161.18	-	18,827.29	(18,827.29)	-100%	-	-
Other Professional Services	521108	872.27	9,523.63	1,516.52	8,007.11	16%	9,523.63	-
External Banking/Financial Fee	521109	9,861.90	20,700.00	9,520.95	11,179.05	46%	20,700.00	-
Security Services	521110	-	5,000.00	348.77	4,651.23	7%	5,000.00	-
Other Inter Department Charges	521115	-	-	975.00	(975.00)	-100%	-	-
Computer Hardware	522100	36,905.88	35,000.00	31,238.44	3,761.56	89%	35,000.00	-
Computer Software Maintenance	522101	173,983.07	222,220.00	194,200.43	28,019.57	87%	222,220.00	-
IT Services - External	522102	21,819.52	75,500.00	26,800.58	48,699.42	35%	75,500.00	-
Building & Grounds Services	522104	6,269.47	15,000.00	4,756.68	10,243.32	32%	15,000.00	-
Equip/Furniture/Fixtures Serv	522105	495.00	9,000.00	14,115.79	(5,115.79)	157%	9,000.00	-
Phone Services	523107	17,455.71	35,950.00	18,155.44	17,794.56	51%	35,950.00	-
Rental of Equip & Vehicles	524101	4,288.45	500.00	-	500.00	0%	500.00	-
Printing, Binding, & Duplicate	525102	6,792.11	15,950.00	9,214.61	6,735.39	58%	15,950.00	-



**151  
Library  
2025-01-31**

**Note** - The adjusted budget is to track amendment requests that will be submitted to City Council. Requests

Account Name	Account	Prior Fiscal Year 2024 YTD Actuals	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adjusted Budget	Current Fiscal Year 2025 YTD Actuals	Favorable (Unfavorable) Variance	Percent of Budget Received Spent	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adopted Budget	Budget Change
Awards & Recognition	531102	-	250.00	-	250.00	0%	250.00	-
Books & Subscriptions	531103	131,751.08	109,171.80	124,323.54	(15,151.74)	114%	109,171.80	-
Cleaning & Janitorial Supplies	531105	46.94	1,250.00	1,009.23	240.77	81%	1,250.00	-
Computer Supplies	531106	1,306.30	5,000.00	887.69	4,112.31	18%	5,000.00	-
Equipment/Furniture/Fixtures	531109	4,250.24	11,500.00	12,936.69	(1,436.69)	112%	11,500.00	-
Photography Supplies	531110	-	300.00	-	300.00	0%	300.00	-
Miscellaneous Supplies	531114	-	2,000.00	-	2,000.00	0%	2,000.00	-
Office Supplies	531116	9,313.33	15,320.00	6,498.34	8,821.66	42%	15,320.00	-
Paint Supplies	531117	31.64	-	1,547.28	(1,547.28)	-100%	-	-
Program Supplies	531118	19,898.53	37,000.00	22,078.02	14,921.98	60%	37,000.00	-
Shop Supplies	531119	747.41	250.00	876.76	(626.76)	351%	250.00	-
Sign & Signal Supplies	531120	113.78	-	149.02	(149.02)	-100%	-	-
Uniforms	531123	-	1,694.00	-	1,694.00	0%	1,694.00	-
Personal Protective Gear	531124	396.65	-	1,150.00	(1,150.00)	-100%	-	-
LP Gas	532103	-	-	33.54	(33.54)	-100%	-	-
Building & Grounds Supplies	533100	11,877.64	34,241.28	1,213.81	33,027.47	4%	34,241.28	-
Equip/Furniture/Fixtures Parts	533101	85.21	-	2,514.20	(2,514.20)	-100%	-	-
Conferences, Training, Travel	542102	16,169.04	23,200.00	14,465.21	8,734.79	62%	23,200.00	-
Dues & Memberships	542103	2,564.50	10,000.00	877.50	9,122.50	9%	10,000.00	-
Licensing Fees	542106	30.00	-	-	-	0%	-	-
Postage & Freight	542108	4,150.03	13,500.00	4,879.05	8,620.95	36%	13,500.00	-
Mileage Reimbursement	542111	882.80	3,000.00	1,278.89	1,721.11	43%	3,000.00	-
		604,333.11	799,598.94	559,480.24	240,118.70	70%	852,486.71	(52,887.77)
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
Health Services	521106	300.90	-	392.35	(392.35)	-100%	-	-
City Accounting Services	521113	49,875.00	-	-	-	0%	89,775.00	(89,775.00)
Administrative Area Charges	521114	225.00	-	-	-	0%	-	-
Routine City Facility Charges	522107	73,433.67	325,603.18	138,752.11	186,851.07	43%	325,603.18	-
Routine City Fleet Charges	522108	431.81	1,150.00	1,935.56	(785.56)	168%	1,150.00	-
City Information Tech Services	522109	3,600.45	-	-	-	0%	6,542.59	(6,542.59)
Electricity	523100	142,385.99	243,800.00	139,809.83	103,990.17	57%	243,800.00	-

**151  
Library  
2025-01-31**

**Note** - The adjusted budget is to track amendment requests that will be submitted to City Council. Requests

Account Name	Account	Prior Fiscal Year 2024 YTD Actuals	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adjusted Budget	Current Fiscal Year 2025 YTD Actuals	Favorable (Unfavorable) Variance	Percent of Budget Received Spent	Current Fiscal Year 2025 Adopted Budget	Budget Change
Natural Gas	523103	1,611.00	4,500.00	2,074.50	2,425.50	46%	4,500.00	-
Rental of Land & Buildings	524100	233,126.54	249,000.00	237,513.92	11,486.08	95%	249,000.00	-
Liability Insurance	525104	28,722.51	46,866.00	29,837.04	17,028.96	64%	46,866.00	-
Property Insurance	525107	79,291.31	162,212.00	94,623.69	67,588.31	58%	162,212.00	-
Vehicle Insurance	525108	758.31	1,500.00	875.00	625.00	58%	1,500.00	-
Gasoline Fuel	532101	107.64	498.58	241.75	256.83	48%	498.58	-
		613,870.13	1,035,129.76	646,055.75	389,074.01	62%	1,131,447.35	(96,317.59)
<b>Capital Outlay</b>		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
<b>Debt Service</b>		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
<b>Transfers Out</b>		-	-	-	-	0%	-	-
Transfer Out-Inter	571100	-	20,000.00	-	20,000.00	0%	-	20,000.00
		-	20,000.00	-	20,000.00	0%	-	20,000.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		4,525,641.29	8,125,438.27	4,833,168.98	3,292,269.29	59%	8,221,755.86	(96,317.59)
<b>Net Revenues over/(under) Expenditures</b>		(4,013,174.83)	(7,296,091.27)	(4,327,376.17)	2,968,715.10		(7,392,408.86)	96,317.59



Cedar Rapids Library  
Doon & Lilly Lounge Chairs

1:42:14PM  
Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Qty	Product	Sell Price	
		Unit	Extended
<b><u>4TH AVE</u></b>			
3	<b>Doon 1621</b> Doon 1621 - Grade D, W: 33", D: 31", H: 31.25", SH: 17", AH: 24" Chair - 26" wide (seat width) Finish: PC00 Nickel Momentum Vanguard CV Carbon	\$2,175.00	\$6,525.00
3	<b>Doon 1621</b> Doon 1621 - Grade D, W: 33", D: 31", H: 31.25", SH: 17", AH: 24" Chair - 26" wide (seat width) Finish: PC00 Nickel Momentum Tribeca CV Jam	\$2,175.00	\$6,525.00
<b><u>4TH AVE NF</u></b>			
4	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs Momentum Tribeca CV Rubine (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide	\$938.86	\$3,755.44
<b><u>5TH AVE</u></b>			
2	<b>Doon 1621</b> Doon 1621 - Grade D, W: 33", D: 31", H: 31.25", SH: 17", AH: 24" Chair - 26" wide (seat width) Finish: PC00 Nickel Momentum Vanguard CV Carbon	\$2,175.00	\$4,350.00
2	<b>Doon 1621</b> Doon 1621 - Grade D, W: 33", D: 31", H: 31.25", SH: 17", AH: 24" Chair - 26" wide (seat width) Finish: PC00 Nickel Momentum Tribeca CV Jam	\$2,175.00	\$4,350.00
<b><u>5TH AVE NF</u></b>			
4	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs Momentum Tribeca CV Rubine (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide	\$938.86	\$3,755.44
<b><u>DEN</u></b>			
2	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs Momentum Tribeca CV Java (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide	\$938.86	\$1,877.72
2	<b>Doon 1621</b> Doon 1621 - Grade D, W: 33", D: 31", H: 31.25", SH: 17", AH: 24" Chair - 26" wide (seat width) Finish: PC00 Nickel Momentum Vanguard CV Pier	\$2,175.00	\$4,350.00

**FICTION**

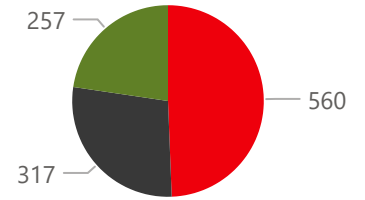
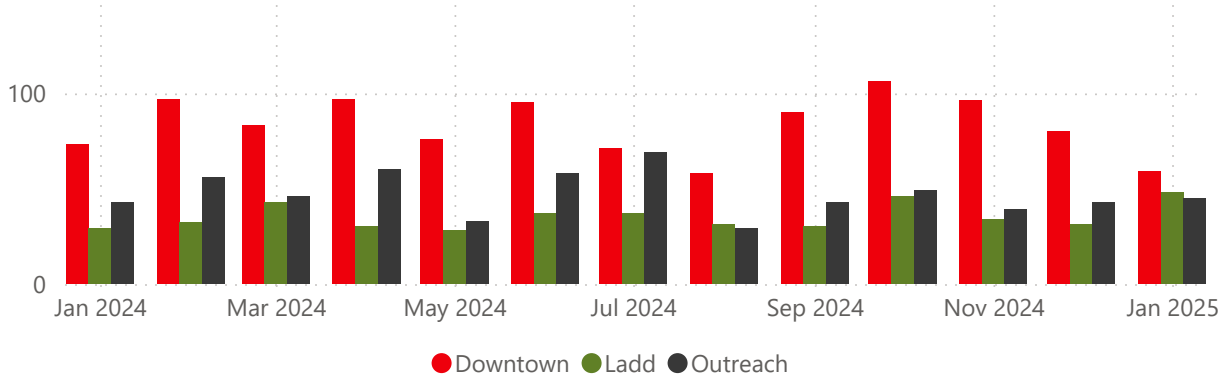
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Qty	Product	Sell Price	
		Unit	Extended
2	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$938.86	\$1,877.72
	Momentum Tribeca CV Jam (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
2	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$938.86	\$1,877.72
	Momentum Tribeca CV Rubine (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
2	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-E-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$1,005.56	\$2,011.12
	Stinson Criss Cross 2.0 Abyss (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
<b><u>MEZZANINE</u></b>			
3	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$938.86	\$2,816.58
	Momentum Tribeca CV Java (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
3	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-E-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$1,005.56	\$3,016.68
	Stinson Flanders Charcoal (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
<b><u>SR CORNER</u></b>			
3	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-E-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$1,005.56	\$3,016.68
	Stinson Flanders Charcoal (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
<b><u>STUDY ROOM</u></b>			
3	<b>9101-LG-4LGB-D-G18</b> Lilly Mid-Back Lounge w/ 4 Metal Legs	\$938.86	\$2,816.58
	Momentum Tribeca CV Java (4LGB) Black Frame (G18) Standard Dome Glide		
<b><u>X-SERVICES</u></b>			
1	<b>Design Services</b> Design Services	\$644.00	\$644.00
1	<b>Install</b> Installation Services	\$1,641.50	\$1,641.50
		<b>Total Sell:</b>	\$55,207.18
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$55,207.18</b>

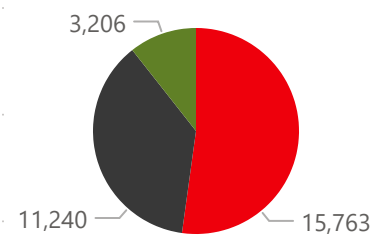
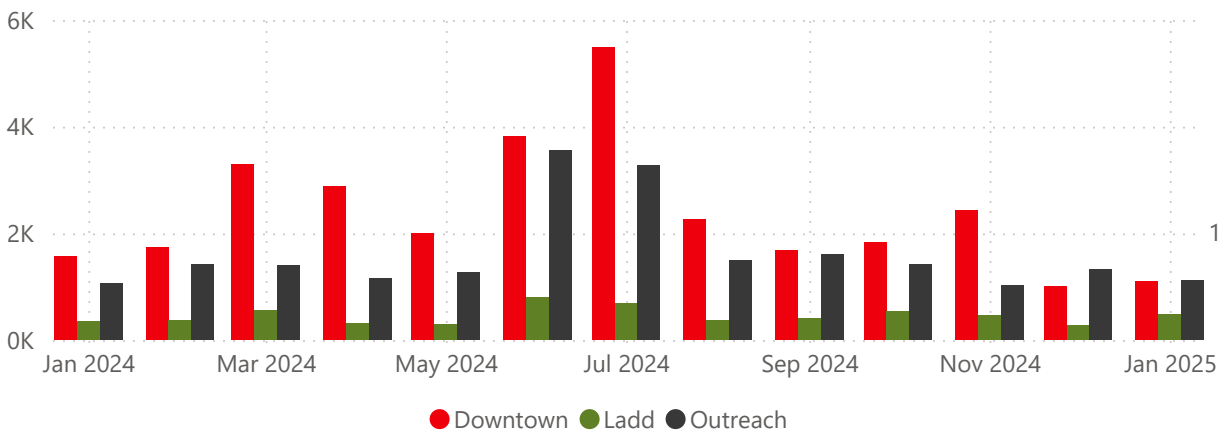
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Programs



1,134

# of Programs



30,209

# of Attendees

Programming has been hard at work, even in the cold! Story times, Baby and Toddler Play Times, Dungeons & Dragons, Trading Card Games, and many other ongoing programs continued to draw large and engaged crowds. Cat Café brought in nearly 700 cat fans, and patrons had over a dozen different opportunities to engage with their creative side through various crafting programs for all ages. We managed to squeeze nearly all of the school and daycare outreach in for the month as well, dodging school days closed for snow and cold.

Additionally, the entire Programming team (and many others) have been hard at work preparing for the launch of LibraryCalendar on March 4 –our new Event Calendar and Room Reservation software. It’s been a huge undertaking by a number of staff to get everything ready, and we’re excited to introduce it to the library’s patrons!

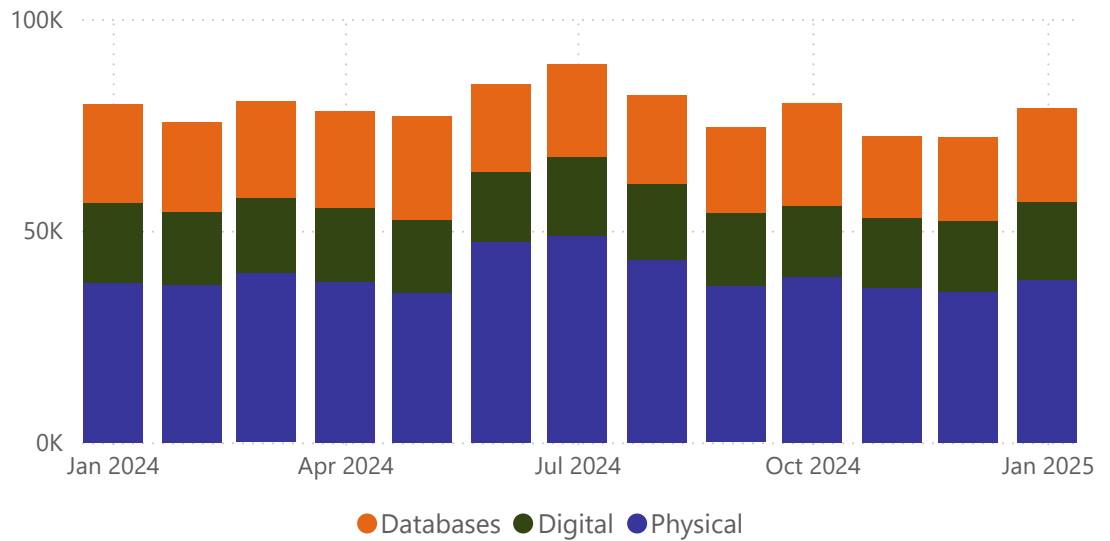
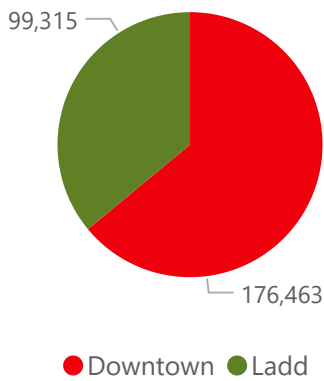
*One of our new volunteers shared that she is always so impressed with our library staff and the way they handle challenging situations with patrons. She related a story from Ladd when a patron came in, plugged in their phone to charge it, and started to leave the building. She said staff were so kind and compassionate in helping the patron understand that it wasn't a safe choice to leave their belongings. She went on to say they continued to show that same compassion while also setting firm boundaries that they could not watch the patron's phone while they left the building. While the patron became argumentative and wasn't thrilled with the outcome, she noted how the staff stayed calm, collected, and compassionate throughout the exchange. She remarked on their patience and professionalism. Having volunteers see and appreciate the good work our staff does is truly rewarding. - Jessica Link, Volunteer Supervisor*

*On an early in-person voting day at Ladd I had at least a half dozen voters who were standing in line tell me how appreciative they were that we were a designated early satellite voting location. Of course I took the opportunity to ask them each if they had a library card and the ones who didn't walked out with new card. What really warmed my heart was seeing a little girl curled up on a chair with a big stack of books waiting for her parents to vote. She looked like she would have been happy to have stayed there for a long time. - Jo-Ann Cook, Public Service Associate*

Borrowing & Collections

148,469 Databases      122,703 Digital      275,778 Physical      2,457 Technology      549,407 Total

Physical Circulation, by Location

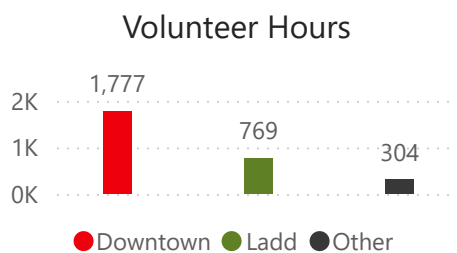


The Materials Department has completed the Request for Proposals process with Metro Library Network and the City of Cedar Rapids' Finance Department. The committee has selected Polaris from Innovative for another five-year contract. This will come to the library board in a later meeting. Spring publications are coming in daily so there is a variety of new products to choose from. We've introduced a "Lucky Day" collection to Libby, which is made up of seven- day checkouts with no holds or renewals. These have been very popular and there are rarely more than one or two titles available at any given time. As this collection grows, availability should improve. This will primarily include new releases with long holds lists.

*I chatted with a patron over the phone about using the library apps for digital books. He asked me to search for the book that got him into reading (his first chapter book as a ten year old), but since it was published in the '50s we couldn't find a digital copy. However, I told him about interlibrary loans and we also found the book for purchase online. He said the effort to find that book made his day and he was excited to get his hands on a copy again. - Alyssa Telecky, Public Services Specialist*

Volunteers

2,850 Total Hours



In February, we reopened our volunteer application process after a temporary hold back in December 2023. We were at capacity for volunteer roles and undergoing staffing transitions. In the interim, individuals were invited to share their contact information so we could alert them once applications opened again. We emailed 140+ individuals on February 12. Within 24 hours, we received 14 applications. In early March, we will open applications to the general public.

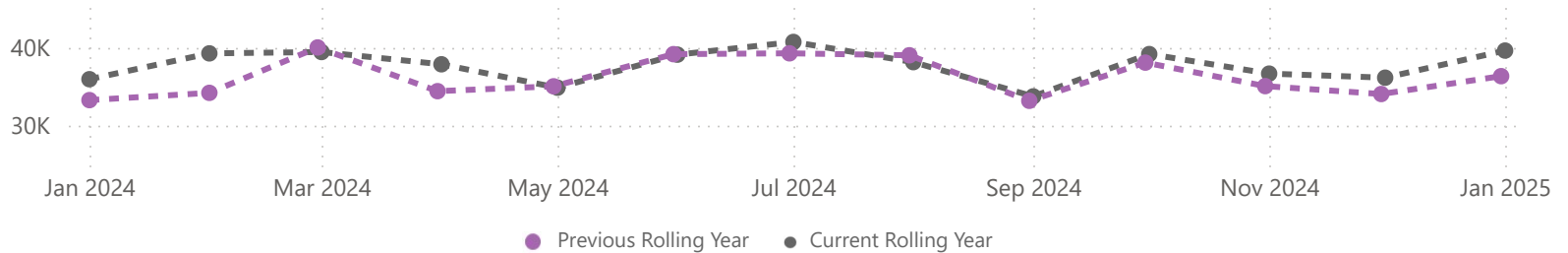
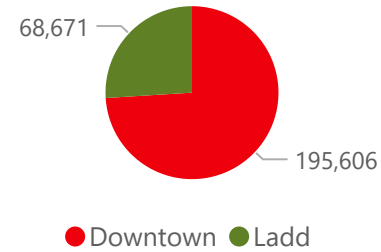
Volunteer Hours in January 2025: 398



Visits

264,277

Physical Visits

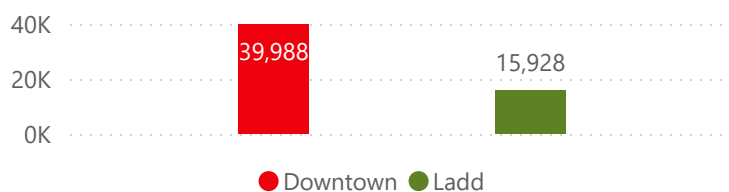


The Public Service Team is starting to prepare for summer. This traditionally includes a change in who we see use the library on a daily basis. This past winter, we had some early behavior issues and staff responded incredibly using our processes, systems, and trainings we have rolled out. Generally speaking we saw many new individuals this past winter which is consistent with trends and data across Cedar Rapids and the country. We developed many new relationships and worked with community partners to provide access to services and resources in the community. We saw many successes that we will use to prepare for next winter season.

*Patron Luke is a pleasant young man, who until recently, was unhoused. He lost his father last year and has been coming to CRPL almost daily for three years. Today, he shyly approached me and asked, "do you notice anything new?" Well no, I said, then he touched a ribbon necklace containing a housekey and a entrance card to his first place to call home in a long while. Slowly, he pulled out of his wallet every new piece of identification including a bus pass, he now carries. He said that library staff has been so supportive of him. He was so proud of himself and so am I. I praised him for accomplishing so much and shared his story with co-workers who will continue to show him their support. - Andrea Jilovec, Public Services Specialist*

Technology Access

PC Uses



110,540

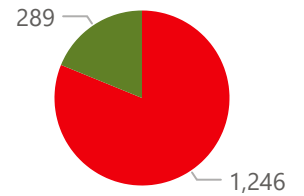
Virtual Visits

65,145

WiFi Sessions

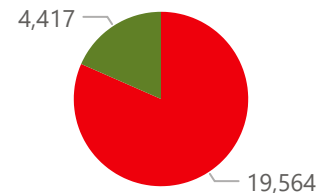
The Technology Solutions is working with the Programming and Community Relations teams to update digital signage and displays for the new library calendar software going live in March. Our digital displays with the list of the day's room reservations is immensely helpful for staff and patrons. Each meeting space has a small screen outside with this display so patrons can view when their reservations begins and ends. Our new product needed a custom solution so the IT team has built a program for these displays.

Meeting Room Use



1,535

# of Reservations



23,981

# of Users

This month, there were approximately 216 room reservations that served around 2,808 patrons. The year started with mostly business as usual: birthday parties, celebrations of lives, and baby showers as well as meetings for businesses and non-profits.

We continue to be a WIC Clinic site, and host many groups, such as support groups, book clubs, day habilitation and daycare groups, and scouts. Special events to note: legislative listening posts; CRCSD’s Magnet School Open House; Cedar Rapids Opera’s master classes; and a high school basketball team celebration.

Community Relations has been working hard over the past few weeks to keep the public informed of possible advocacy needs, as well as all the exciting events and services we offer. The latest issue of OPEN+ hit the shelves and has been distributed. Our design and content team is transitioning to summer planning. We are in the process of hiring an intern to assist with content again this summer. We are also happy to work in tandem with the Programming Department on the Library Calendar transition, which they have handled so well.

*An elderly patron needed some assistance printing off tax forms for 2024 and a sheet of Quarterly Estimated Income Tax Vouchers for 2025. She said she is autistic and has struggled in life due to people not understanding her condition and how she gets fixated on doing things in very specific ways. She has done her own taxes for years and wants to fully comprehend how to do them correctly, but is having a difficult time with State taxes in the last couple of years. She is not computer literate, so I printed off all of the forms and instructions. I had trouble locating the vouchers she was seeking though. In the end, I did come up with a solution that she was pleased with. She then said she came to the Ladd Library last year and Damian would not give up on finding these forms either. She expressed deep gratitude for the library. There is nowhere else she can go and get such service. As I was about to hand over her change from the print jobs, she pointed to the picture of Marilyn Ladd at the entry. She asked what she needs to do to get her estate lined up for the library. I gave her Charity Tyler's contact info. - Trevor Hanel, Branch Supervisor*

<b>Calendar of Initiatives - FY23-25 Plan Year Three</b>												
<b>Initiative</b>	<b>JUL</b>	<b>AUG</b>	<b>SEP</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>	<b>JAN</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>APR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>
<i>Literacy</i>												
<b>Where we become a city of literacy.</b>												
Investigate and potentially implement adult literacy programs												
Promote the library through community literacy and engagement												
<i>Access</i>												
<b>Where we embrace big dreams in our community through investment in a permanent westside facility</b>												
Break ground for new westside library												
<i>Inclusion</i>												
<b>Where we become a hub for civic engagement</b>												
Ensure basic understanding of government and community infrastructure												
Create infrastructure to welcome new community members and provide access to community resources												
Build cultural literacy and understanding												