



Released June 2, 2020

1. **COVID-19 UPDATE.** The first thing we have to cover is to acknowledge every single one of you (this includes staff AND board) for your patience and perseverance during this pandemic. It's gone on a lot longer than any of us expected. Part of what makes you the best library staff in the world is your sincere desire to make a difference in the lives of those who turn to the library for information, entertainment, connection, improvement, and, sometimes, even solace. To keep you quarantined deprives you of the connections which validate your purpose in life. We all understand that. So, welcome back! I tried to show our honor and respect for you by continuing your pay when the time away from work was not your doing. But, as we look around the valley at extended empty streets on the strip and closed stores for the first time in the history of Clark County, we know there will be economic consequences.

This year, our brilliant Deputy Director/CFO **Fred James** (the man who, with your help, got us through the Great Recession ahead of all other public entities) has estimated there will be a \$5M shortfall. We have cancelled contracts wherever we could. Obviously, a couple are going up—janitorial and security are at the top of that list. Even with some contracts which cannot be cancelled without jeopardizing our service to the community, we identified an immediate savings of \$2M. We were hoping the union would recognize our problem position and let us freeze health insurance increases along with merit and cost-of-living raises for two years beginning July 1st and then immediately pick up where we left off. It would basically be a two-year extension of the current agreement. But, the union didn't agree. So we are looking for other avenues of saving. Two items came into that discussion which the Board approved at their May meeting.

2. **VOLUNTARY FURLONGHS.** The first of our proposed savings would be to offer voluntary furloughs. Some of our staff are in unique positions and don't want to be in the first wave of reinstatement. Those individuals would receive unemployment and US CARES Act monies. The paperwork for the initial 30-day applications is on the staff portion of the website. Since it is a *furlough*, the District would continue to pay insurance and certain other benefits (see the website for details and the application).

3. **VOLUNTARY SEPARATION PACKAGES.** The second board-approved savings plan includes one the District used at the beginning of the Great Recession. For those who are close to retirement (a combination of age and years of service which would equal 65), the District would provide a buyout that would include payment of one week for each year of service. The position would remain frozen until the full costs are recovered, then a replacement could be hired at a lower step on the pay scale. Those who opt for this will also receive full payout of both sick and vacation leave. Again, see the employee website for all the details and the application paperwork.

Your first step to be in consideration would be to send in the Acknowledgment form that is on page two of the memo. Your completed Acknowledgment will serve as your application for the VESP program, and must be received physically or electronically by Human Resources between Monday, June 8, 2020 and Friday, July 31, 2020 by 4:00 p.m. The packets will be mailed to eligible employees upon completion of the Acknowledgment form. This is NOT a request that you participate, just letting you know you are eligible.

We won't know the total savings for these two programs until we see how many people respond. To all who opt to try either of these options, THANK YOU!

4. **PHASED REOPENING.** While our plan was written, outlined, and released ahead of the state's, it has left us with some differences in terms. Library Operation Director **Jennifer Schember** made the following proposal to equalize our terminology with that used throughout the state. This was accepted by the Executive Council:

As you know, our current Phased Reopening Framework has three phases (attached). This document was developed and approved by the Board prior to the governor's release of his plan, which has four phases. To align the two plans, I'm proposing that we change the numbering of our phases to include Curbside Service as Phase One. The change would look like this:

	Current	New
Pre-Phase	Curbside Service	Staff Preparation
Phase One	Limited Services/Critical Needs	Curbside Service
Phase Two	Expanded Services	Limited Services/Critical Needs
Phase Three	New Normal	Expanded Services
Phase Four		New Normal

Phase Two (new terms – same definition, see above). We are opening for Phase Two this Thursday. While we were able to reopen Mesquite on Monday, several of our other outlying branches (Sandy Valley, Indian springs, and Searchlight) along with the Meadows Library, are in shared spaces with County buildings. Their reopening will remain Phase One until the County decides to release its recreation facilities for public access and service.

This does not mean we are jumping ahead phases. We are still going phase-by-phase but just renumbering them. The content and order haven't changed, just the numbers.

5. **QUESTIONS FROM STAFF.** A respected staff member asked me about the possibilities for the future of those employees with Masters Degrees in Library Science (MLS). While we increased the number of non-MLS staff members to cover our computer centers and maker spaces, our Branch Managers, Assistant Branch Managers, and upper level operations staff are all required to have that degree. In addition, with the VESP program mentioned earlier, we may have some more immediate advancement opportunities for professional staff members. One can never have too much education. This might be an opportunity for some of our professional staff to expand their skills in electronics, robotics, etc.

6. **KUDOS.**

EResources Manager **Jocelyn Bates** shared this letter from Lorraine Trujillo concerning eResources staffer **Ria Eufemio**:

*Ria, in your EMedia Dep't. is absolutely unbelievable. She has the skill, knowledge & patience to work with the public on problems & the perseverance to resolve the issues. It was a great experience to have an employee working in the Clark County Library District that is extremely knowledgeable, great people skills & best of all, *She has the highest standards of excellence doing her work!*

Thank you Ria for caring about Patrons like me, that are the recipients of enjoying the BEST service possible (in my opinion) just having you on the other end of the phone when I am on the verge of "giving up" !

Looking forward to continuing my very long association with my treasured Clark County Library Staff!

*Best wishes,
Lorraine*

Executive Assistant **Allison Boyer** received this note from a caregiver at her mom's nursing home. This is a shout out to **all our wonderful operations staff**.

Going to the Library yesterday was such an effortless experience. My husband and I are so happy that we are able to request books, videos, and music from the Library again - and what a super easy way to pick up the items. It was so easy to just sit in the car and wait for our books and videos to be brought out. I sure could get used to this way of checking out - not that I'm lazy, but just sitting and waiting is what I do best!

Thank you Library District. Everybody working there should be highly praised for giving our Libraries back to us.

*Sincerely,
Sheri Richardson*

7. **EMAIL BLASTS.** During the pandemic our Branding and Marketing Folks have released on my behalf two email blasts to our customers. These messages have elicited a lot of responses. Here are just a couple of them that we thought would be worth sharing:

Good Morning,

I just wanted to tell you how much I have missed coming to your (Sahara West) great library!

...I took my son to get his first library card many years ago, and have now mailed books to him to help instill the love of reading to my grandson. Appreciate your very helpful staff and hope to soon see you face to face.

Glenn Crabtree

It is my great honor and gratitude to be a member of the library as it has been the center of my educational and entertainment resource. The library has been my home when I was in college --- thank you -- I graduated!

Now, in my retirement years, I depend on the library for a vast array of videos, magazines, books, etc -- that keeps me company on my dull and lonely days. Thank you.

*My prayer to you and your staff, be safe God bless you all ♥
Nora Bostonj*

Dear Dr. Heezen,

It is with pleasure I see an email from "MY Favorite" go to library for a good portion of my life! Yes, We all miss the physical contact of seeing Your staff (mine is Flamingo) but

the great part is I can continue to stream! With appreciation & gratitude, being so isolated, this has been a salvation for me to still have my books on audio streamed & so many sources of varied information available!

When we once again can fill our lives with events that are so critical to the senior public, like me, it will be welcomed! In the interim, my heartfelt love for my library district staff for all stay healthy & safe!

Best Wishes,

Lorraine Trujillo (Very long time patron!)

*We miss the library. Please consider opening again by allowing curbside pickup. --
Laura Hojnacke*

I miss my library.

I like real books... the paper kind.

Walking through aisles of books gave me joy.

Can't wait until I can enjoy the library again ♥☐

LiFro (email name)

8. LETTER FROM FORREST LEWIS, NLA PRESIDENT (AND DIRECTOR AT NLV LIBRARIES).



Dear Las Vegas-Clark County Library District ,

Dear NLA Family,

I hope that this finds you and your families safe and doing well! It is sometimes hard for me to imagine that it has only been a couple of months since the shutdown began, most days it seems like years since we were living our normal lives. I very much look forward to the time when this period of our lives is a distant memory that we can use to lord over future generations, who will never know how tough we had it back in the wild days of 2020. Our parents thought that they had it tough walking to school both ways uphill in the snow, but they never knew the pain of dealing with bedsores from a 12 day Netflix marathon!

In all seriousness, though, it has brought me great joy to see how libraries across the State have come together to meet the unique challenges that we are all facing. Rather than being defeated by an enemy that we can neither see nor defeat at the moment, we are looking for ways to help our community and to ensure that our economy bounces back as quickly as

possible. Our libraries will play a vital role in the recovery, and I have every confidence that we will rise to meet the challenges with our usual professionalism, compassion, and ingenuity.

As things begin to move back in the direction of normal, your NLA board, State Library, and library leadership teams around the State have been working tirelessly to make sure that libraries have a plan in place to open safely and efficiently. Some of our traditional services will not be coming back right away, and some may never come back. In these situations it is best to forgo mourning for what we have lost, and instead get excited for what will take their place. Libraries have always embraced new technology and services, which is a big part of the reason that we have survived as a trusted community institution. To this end, we will soon be presenting a best practices document for reopening. This document is a direct result of a collaborative effort involving the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records, and contributions from library districts across the State. The document is in no way intended to supersede the plans of your individual library system, but will be a useful tool to help in the planning process.

As part of our own planning process at NLA, we have been having serious discussions regarding our annual conference. When I decided to run for the presidency, one of my deciding factors was the ability to bring this great event for the first time to North Las Vegas. I am so proud of my City and what we have accomplished since digging ourselves out of the great recession, and I was thrilled to be able to showcase our achievements. However, with the reality of our current situation and looking ahead to the coming challenges, our board has made the hard decision to cancel this year's conference. We just could not see a scenario for success, and it would be irresponsible to saddle NLA with the cost of a failed conference. We are looking into possible alternative events, and will keep you posted if a decision is made to move forward.

Thanks for all that you do for the community, and thanks in advance for the amazing ways that you will be embracing the upcoming challenges. There is a lot of darkness right now, but it is definitely the time for libraries to shine. I look forward to seeing what we come up with!

Stay safe and be well!

Forrest Lewis

NLA President

9. **SPEAKING OF....** You've probably noticed that I always like adding a "speaking of" to kick off new sections. So, speaking of our Interim HR Director, we can't make poor Fred

wear too many hats. So, as my next to last official action, I selected our new Human Resources Director. He officially signed the email letter offering him the position and returned it today. I hope everyone will welcome Jeffrey Serpico who will join us a week from Monday (June 15th) from his current residence in Florida. (Maybe he liked the idea of Las Vegas to help him dry out following the humidity he encountered there.) He is impressed with our system, our staff (and your accomplishments), and our Board. I believe, with his extraordinary skill sets, he is just what the doctor order.

10. **FINAL WORD.** I addressed the two buyout packages approved by the Board. What I did not mention was that I will be opting for the VESP program, myself. Board Chair **Felipe Ortiz** approached me with a different option and I told him the VESP would be more cost effective. The Board approved the package at their specially called meeting on June 2, 2020, and that will effectively save a couple of staff positions. And, since I have been battling cancer for over four years and, despite a period of improved numbers, they are spiking once again, this appears appropriate for me. Combined with the fact that I have COPD and diabetes, I am extremely vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus. I have lost friends my age to this disease, friends who didn't have the same health complications that I do. The hardest part is saying farewell to a staff that I love with my whole heart.

My last day is today. Chair Ortiz announced that Deputy Director/CFO/Interim HR Director **Fred James** will be the Acting Director until my replacement is identified. I feel badly that I owe y'all some cake and won't be able to deliver it. Well, if you ever come to East Texas, the cake is on my.

The hardest part is saying farewell to a staff that I love with my whole heart!

11. **YOUR DOSE OF BAD HUMOR** *(If you aren't feeling in a humorous mood, please skip this section!)*



"If you go flying back through time, and you see somebody else flying forward into the future, it's probably best to avoid eye contact."

FOR THE RECORD

LVCCLD INTERNAL MEMO FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DOES ANYONE ELSE WANT TO KNOW WHAT DAY IT IS?



FOR THE RECORD

LVCCLD INTERNAL MEMO FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Goodbye. . .