



**ALL DISTRICT MEMO**

**TO:** All District Employees  
**FROM:** Fred James, Acting Executive Director  
**DATE:** November 20, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** District Updates

**NEW COVID-19 GUIDELINES FROM THE GOVERNOR.** On Tuesday, November 10, 2020, Nevada Governor Sisolak announced new “Stay at Home 2.0” guidelines, asking for everyone to intensify efforts to contain the new wave of cases appearing statewide. Adjustments to Library District operations made in response to the new 2.0 guidelines include health check-ins at events with more than 50 people. The Governor also warned that further restrictions might be ordered in two weeks if conditions do not improve. At this time, the Library District continues to operate with the understanding that all Library District resources – buildings, collections, programs, and services - are critical education, economic, and social supports for the public as they navigate the disruptions and challenges of the pandemic. Should the Governor issue further orders next week, all employees should use the Staff Updates web page to obtain the most recent status of Library District operations. Every employee should also be familiar with their department’s emergency communications plan, to readily obtain information on job duties and department operations.

Meanwhile, COVID-19 cases are rising at the Library District. Since October 17, 2020, branches have seen a rise of positive cases:

COVID CASES IN LIBRARY DISTRICT SINCE 10-17-20	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10/23/20 MV</li> <li>• 11/2/20 WMSC</li> <li>• 11/3/20 CC</li> <li>• 11/4/20 CC</li> <li>• 11/6/20 WV</li> <li>• 11/9/20 SV</li> <li>• 11/10/20 CC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11/11/20 WV</li> <li>• 11/12/20 EV</li> <li>• 11/16/20 WH</li> <li>• 11/17/20 CC</li> <li>• 11/17/20 WV</li> <li>• 11/18/20 RB</li> <li>• 11/18/20 WC</li> </ul>

In all incidents, the Library District is following the COVID-19 Protocol found on Voyager (Column D) for response notifications and recommended actions:  
[https://d4804za1f1gw.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/09/10171312/COVID-Protocol-Poster-07222020-v3.5\\_9.10.20.pdf](https://d4804za1f1gw.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/09/10171312/COVID-Protocol-Poster-07222020-v3.5_9.10.20.pdf).

At this moment, in accordance with Governor and Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) guidelines and protocols, the Library District Administration will adhere to the following COVID-19 (confirmed) *Threshold Guidelines* in determining the need to close individual sections of branches or entire branches due to COVID-19:

- If any District location or section experiences three (3) or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a rolling 7-day calendar period, the section or building impacted will be shut down for a minimum of 48 hours. Confirmed cases will exclude within household transmissions or cases that cannot be connected by proximity or time. For example, three (3) positive cases in the Service Center would not require the Windmill Library Branch to close entirely.
- During this 48-hour period, the District will perform enhanced cleaning to the branch facilities and all staff will be requested to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms.
- If the SNHD instructs the District to close a branch prior to meeting these thresholds, or extend an active closure, the District will comply with these SNHD recommendations.
- If during the 48-hour closure period additional employees test positive for CV-19, the District will determine whether, or not, a prolonged closure should occur.
- Staff scheduled to work during the 48-hour closure period will be paid administrative leave time.

As with everything COVID-19, these are not hard and fast rules about branch closures, as guidance has shifted as case loads increase. We will continue to work closely with the SNHD and follow their directives, and will stay tuned for new Governor directives.

**IN THE EVENT OF LIBRARY DISTRICT CLOSURE:** Library District staff can access the current status of library operations on the Staff Updates web page: <https://lvccld.org/staffupdates/>. Every Library District employee is responsible for knowing how their department or branch will communicate in the event of a closure.

**THE LIBRARY DISTRICT FINANCES ARE STABLE AT THIS TIME.** Acting CFO/Financial Services Director **Floresto Cabias** presented an update on Library District finances, both end-of-year FY20 and year-to-date FY21, at the November 12, 2020 meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees. For the end-of-year FY20 summary of Library District finances and community conditions, he noted that:

- The Library District paid out \$8.7 million in personnel costs during the facility closure from mid-March to Mid-June 2020;
- Local businesses also shut down in mid-March, with visitor volume decreasing 71% in June 2020 from prior year levels, and an unprecedented shut down of all convention activity;
- Local unemployment rates increased to 34% in April 2020, with a decline to 14% unemployment by September 2020;
- In terms of end-of-year revenues, CTX (sales tax) revenues were \$1.7 million higher than projected. Local financial analysts speculate that CTX levels were higher because of the generous federal government stimulus checks issued between April and July 2020;
- The combination of higher CTX revenues and savings on services and supplies due to reductions in contracted services and lower levels of supply purchases during the COVID-19 facility closures (\$1.1 million in savings) produced a FY20 Ending Fund Balance that was \$2.6 million higher than expected;
- The capital funds took a huge hit in FY20, with transfers to the Capital Projects Fund reduced from a projected \$6 million to \$3 million. This impacts the capital replacement fund balances and wiped out the savings for new capital projects. Thus, the plans for renovating 13 branches are now on hold.

In terms of the current fiscal year, FY21, Floresto noted that property tax revenues based on Assessed Valuations continues its upward trend. As assessments are set by October each year, he anticipates that the region will not see a decline in assessed valuations until October 2021, though we may see a rise in the level of delinquent property tax revenues in FY21. A two-year lag in property tax collection declines was experienced in the Great Recession of 2009, when we

did not see property taxes start to drop until 2011, continuing through 2015 when they finally started to increase again.

Historically, CTX revenues are more volatile, reacting to dropping economic activity more quickly than property taxes. In terms of FY21 CTX revenues, because there is a two-month lag in Library District receipt of collected taxes, we will receive August and September CTX revenues in the next two months and will probably start to see if the months without federal stimulus and unemployment checks result in a larger drop in CTX collections. Until we have better trend data, it will be very difficult to anticipate the levels of CTX revenues for the remainder of FY21, especially if there are additional COVID restrictions and no new federal stimulus funds approved by Congress. At this point, the pre-COVID CTX revenue estimates of \$25.4 million have been adjusted downward to \$17.8 million.

In terms of FY20 expenditures, the Library District is finding expenditure levels \$1.1 million lower than estimated. Services and Supplies were \$893,000 lower than expected and purchases of Library Media Materials is \$250,000 lower than estimated. The VESP (Voluntary Employee Separation Package) program was tremendously successful in this uncertain fiscal environment.

FY21 expenditures have also seen dramatic decreases due to:

- a decrease in Salaries and Benefits by \$1.5 million (3.3%). The most impactful action taken by the Library District Board of Trustees was establishing the VESP (Voluntary Employee Separation Package) program. The VESP program retired 47 positions at a cost of \$4.5 million. We anticipate that it will take 12 months to break even from savings on Salaries and Benefits, as long as a limited number of those VESP positions are filled. Depending on the number of positions held vacant or eliminated, the Library District should see significant long-term savings. Additionally, the Library District has seen positions vacated due to attrition. There is currently a hiring freeze, with the exception of critical positions approved on a case-by-case basis by Acting Executive Director **Fred James**. The cumulative effect of these savings in Salaries and Benefits has meant that the Library District has not had to involuntarily furlough or lay off employees to date.
- a decrease in Services and Supplies by \$898,000 (5.5%) due to contract terminations
- a decrease in Library Materials expenditures by \$322,000 (3.0%)

The Library District hopes to have savings in FY21 in order to transfer money to the Capital Projects Fund in FY22 to maintain a reserve for critical capital replacement funds (capital projects include vehicles, technology, and equipment for performance venues).

In sum, the Library District has made significant budget adjustments across all categories of expenditures. While this has brought us to a point in time of fiscal stability, there is great uncertainty ahead as many factors fuel continued volatility, including CTX sensitivity to economic disruptions, no new federal relief plan in sight, federal unemployment benefit extensions ended July 2020, and eviction moratoriums end December 2020.

**RETIREMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES DIRECTOR STEVE RICE.** On November 13, 2020, Director of General Services **Steve Rice** retired after 27 years of service. A recap of his time at the Library District demonstrates the immense strides made over the course of those three decades. In 1993, Steve joined the District as Facilities Manager, responsible for the maintenance of all library facilities. His office was at the Clark County Library Annex. His department had two trucks, two maintenance staff, five janitorial staff, and a part-time volunteer office assistant. In this position, he was handed off responsibility for all new buildings. Upon the completion of the Rainbow Library, his department moved into the adjacent building behind the library.

Over the years, Steve was promoted to Director of General Services where he continued to supervise facilities maintenance along with additional functions of General Services Administration; Courier Services; Safety, Health, and Security; Vehicle Fleet Maintenance; and Purchasing. At his departure, the department had 29.45 FTEs and a budget of \$10,600,298.

Steve literally changed the landscape of the Library District. His projects included the West Las Vegas Young People's Library Addition and Spring Valley Remodel (2007); Efficiency Remodels to install Automated Materials Handling equipment in all urban branches (2008-2009); and construction projects for Centennial Hills (open 2009); Windmill (open 2011); Mesquite (open 2018); and East Las Vegas (open 2019). He was instrumental in taking the complex New Market Tax Credit program over the finish line for the Mesquite and East Las Vegas libraries. He was the lead on the Library District development of the Library Facilities Master Plan Decision Framework and the completion of schematic design for 13 branches, working with three local architecture firms. Over the years, he secured future sites for branches at Cactus Point and Skye Canyon, in anticipation of Vegas Valley growth in the next 15 years.

He was known for his attention to the maintenance of all District facilities, relentless stamina, budget and timeline adherence, and attention to building a strong and committed staff team. We wish him well in the road ahead.

**LIBRARY CUSTOMER USE BUILDS WITH NEW AND INNOVATE SERVICES.** Acting Library Operations Director **Leo Segura** reports that branch circulation remains around 60% of last year levels and gate count is around 55% of last year levels. Youth Services Manager **Shana Harrington** reports that one way staff have been able to grow customer use in the buildings is through a service innovation called "Take & Makes." These kits are making it easy for families to jog in to pick up craft and STEAM projects for their kids, building their confidence and appetite for repeat visits and use of more services. Youth Services Take & Make program kits demonstrate the flexibility of branch staff and their responsiveness to the changing needs of how patrons use the library. Families feel the warm welcome and are surprised by the variety of activities bundled into age- and interest-appropriate kits. In September alone, 273 of these unique program kits were created and 7,699 kits were handed out. These include kits for all ages. Examples of kits for different ages are: *STEAM: Articulated Snakes*, *Creating Your Family Tree*, and *Traffic Light Transportation Storytime* (which pairs a craft with a book bundle). *Mindful Monday* kits from the Clark County Best Buy Teen Tech Center encourage empathy and balance for teens. To support Limitless Learning, many kits include early learning activities, STEAM and other school support tools. These kits encourage parents and caregivers to come into the branches where they can see not only what services have returned, but how our safety procedures are ensuring that District libraries are safe and welcoming places for them to visit. Youth Services branch staff started making these kits as a way to supplement in-branch programming in July, and the District has seen posts from patrons on social media that mention them driving across town to pick up certain kits. Outreach Services Specialist **Andrew Bannon** is also taking the Take & Make kits to students at the West Las Vegas Vegas Strong Academy locations.

**EXECUTIVE SEARCH IN FULL GEAR.** At the November 12, 2020 Board of Trustee meeting, Trustees agreed to interview six candidates in an all-day public board session that starts at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, December 4, and a final slate of two to three candidates in a public board session that starts at 4:30 on Thursday, December 17.