

ALLERTON PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT REPORT FOR DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT

I. Unit of Government Submitting Report

Allerton Public Library District (APLD)
4000 Green Apple Lane
Monticello, IL 61856

About Our Library

APLD is one of six libraries in Piatt County. As of the 2020 census, it serves a population of 6133 and employs 10 people, including one custodian. The library's annual budget for FY2023 is \$702,558. Its equalized assessed value (EAV) for 2022 is \$162,840,585.

III. About Our Committee

A. The decennial committee consists of APLD Board President Sue Gortner; APLD Trustees Jeff Clodfelter, Michael Harris, Sue Lochbaum, Beth Manuel, Lynn Richardson, and Ellie Tracy; APLD Director Sherry Waldrep; and APLD residents Stephen Lyons and Dawn Stahl.

B. Committee meetings were held at Allerton Public Library on the following dates and times:

First Meeting: Wednesday, May 3, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Second Meeting: Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Third Meeting: Wednesday, October 11, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Additional Meetings: Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

IV. Core Programs and Services

A. APLD currently offers the following programs and services: an archives room, general information desk, tax forms, tax form assistance (in collaboration with AARP), books, newspapers, magazines and periodicals, DVDs, video games, Roku, school outreach, outreach services to senior living centers, virtual programs, bingo for adults, bingo with the mental health center, passive programs such as take and makes, children's programs, a Halloween event (in collaboration with the Monticello Chamber of Commerce), playtime, technology assistance, adult programs, e-resources (including Libby, Hoopla, CloudLibrary, and SHARE resources with other libraries), Sages Read annual community reading program (in collaboration with Hartfield Book Company and the Monticello schools), StoryWalk®, copy/printing/faxing services (including print-from-home mobile printing), summer and winter reading programs, a pollinator garden, just-in-case resource bins in restrooms, drinks, puzzle exchange, movies, database access (including Ancestry, Digital Archives, Heritage Quest, other genealogical resources, and World Book), notary services, free Wi-Fi, and a Kids Read program.

B. APLD may offer the following programs and services in the future: streaming sticks, library of things, 3D printing, Cricut electronic cutting, maker spaces, laminating service, history room presentations, résumé and job-search assistance, portable Wi-Fi hot spots, adopt a StoryWalk sign, more senior-based programs (including basic health screen screenings and access to a dietitian advisor), and Legal Aid office hours.

V. Awards and Recognitions

APLD has not received any awards, distinctions, or recognitions.

VI. Intergovernmental Agreements

APLD has intergovernmental agreements with the City of Monticello to provide basic maintenance for the StoryWalk and with Illinois Libraries Present (ILP) to provide access to virtual programs with popular authors.

This intergovernmental cooperation has increased APLD's efficiency in the following ways: By partnering with Illinois Libraries Present (a group of over 200 libraries) Allerton Public Library can offer patrons access to multiple well-known author presentations each year for only \$525 a year. This is a substantial savings compared to organizing individual author events at thousands of dollars per event per author. The library also saves upkeep costs for the StoryWalk by partnering with the City of Monticello to maintain the walking trail and the area around the posts so patrons can view the stories without hindrance.

VII. Community Partnerships

APLD partners with the following organizations: AARP Tax Aide for tax preparation for adults, Piatt County Extension for educational programs for adults and kids, Sangamon Valley CEO for mentoring and resume-writing workshops for participants across five school districts, Hartfield Book Company for Sages Read (an all-ages community reading program) and the Learn Together Grow Together nonfiction book group, Monticello School District for the Kids Read and Sages Read programs, Monticello Area Chamber of Commerce for Halloween safe trick-or-treat program, and Kirby Medical Center for programs for adults

VIII. Review of Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures, Training Materials, and Other Documents

We have reviewed a non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the library to evaluate our compliance and determine if any of the foregoing should be amended. The committee determined that APLD is in compliance with state laws related to libraries. Areas where further action is recommended have been noted here and in section XIII.

Specifically, APLD complies with the **Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1 et seq.)**, including the Policy on Public Comment. APLD has a designated OMA Officer: Director Sherry Waldrep. All board members have completed OMA training, but recently re-elected board members need to retake the training. The schedule of regular APLD board meetings complies with 5 ILCS 120/2.03, are voted on once a year, and are published on the library website as well as at the library. A board member reviews the written minutes from closed meetings twice a year and will include audio recordings of the closed meetings to comply with 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d). Based on a training she attended, President Gortner indicated that recordings may be destroyed after 18 months. Having no employees with a total compensation package of more than \$75,000, APLD does not need to post IMRF total compensation postings to comply with 5 ILCS 120/7.3.

The committee determined that APLD is in compliance with the **Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.)**. Director Waldrep is the FOIA officer and completes

the required training every year. FOIA materials are posted on the library website, including the lists or types of documents that can be requested. Regarding the computation and retention of FOIA, the library maintains a document detailing the requests, dates of requests, etc., but will record more specific details about what is being sent to FOIA requestors, including the type(s) of documents and not just the number of pages.

The committee determined that APLD is in compliance with the **Illinois Governmental Ethics Act (5 ILCS 420)** and the **State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILC 430)**. Specifically, all applicable officials file a Statement of Economic Interests. Received from the County Clerk and Recorder's office each year, the forms are completed by the library director and all trustees and then returned to the County Clerk for filing. The Board of Trustees President is the designated ethics officer. Board President Gortner may need to complete the state-indicated ethics training.

APLD does not have a Whistleblower Auditing Official and will need to appoint one per **50 ILCS 105 4/1 et seq.**

All of the APLD staff complete sexual harassment training each year per the **Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5)**, specifically 775 ILCS/2-109(C). The committee has determined that the APLD Board of Trustees is also required to complete this training for APLD to be in full compliance.

The committee has determined that APLD is in compliance with both of its **intergovernmental agreements**.

The committee has determined that APLD is in compliance with policies and procedures regarding **budget and financial documents**. Specifically, the library has a written investment policy, written procedures, and an appointed Board of Trustees treasurer. The board reviews financial statements every month, and all bills and credit cards are reviewed monthly. The budget goes through three processes and is reviewed by the board. The annual Budget and Appropriations is posted each year for the public to view and is then approved by the board.

IX. What Have We Done Well in the Last Decade?

The committee believes APLD has done very well in the past 10 years, including building a new facility, adding a StoryWalk, and completing a community Oral History project (available on YouTube). In addition, the library expanded its programming (including popular passive and virtual options), increased and enhanced the tracking of programs and usage, redesigned and updated the website, and expanded the collection to include new material types (including video games and Roku sticks). The Library's Special Reserve Fund has been increased, and the program room technology is being updated. APLD approached Sangamon Township with an invitation to be included in our district and continues to build more relationships with businesses in town to pursue more collaborations like those with Hartfield Book Company and the Monticello Farmers Market. APLD strives to be fiscally responsible with an increasing revenue and works to ensure that policies and technologies are up to date and responsive to the needs of the public (for example, by increasing its social media presence, adding an Instagram account, and by going fine-free).

X. What Inefficiencies Did We Identify? What Are Our Next Steps?

While reviewing information about APLD, the committee recognized that the board has not been aware of awards, distinctions, or recognitions for which APLD may be eligible, and may be able to increase program reach and publicity by actively seeking information about available awards and nomination procedures.

While reviewing intergovernmental agreements and partnerships, the committee recognized that APLD may be able to increase program reach and efficiency by communicating with area libraries about upcoming programs and coordinating schedules.

While reviewing laws, polices, procedures, etc., the committee recognized that some training may need to be completed, that audio recordings of closed meeting minutes need to be reviewed, that more detail needs to be included in the FOIA records, and that a Whistleblower Auditing Official needs to be appointed.

XI. What Can We Do Better or More Efficiently?

To continue improving and working more efficiently, APLD can:

- Cultivate and communicate a standard of excellence by researching and pursuing eligible awards
- Continue to offer relevant services by focusing on the consumer and conducting brief surveys
- Increase community engagement (without increasing payroll costs) by creating a library volunteers program (including social media volunteers to create or capture content)
- Increase reach and efficiency by expanding collaboration and communication in the community (e.g., further cross-posting and advertising with Hartfield Book Company; press releases and marketing in the local newspaper), in the area (e.g., coordinating presentation or program dates with area libraries), and online (e.g., capture short-form videos from current programs or create how-to's and post to TikTok, YouTube, or Instagram to reach new audiences and educate current patrons)
- Complete the few outstanding requirements for compliance with laws, policies, and procedures (see XIII Recommendations).

XII. Studies on Governmental Efficiencies

The committee reviewed studies on governmental efficiency and noted that merging smaller and larger organizations creates a net increase in the costs of the new organization. This currently does not apply to APLD.

XIII. Our Committee's Recommendations Regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:

To increase accountability and efficiency, the committee recommends that APLD:

- Complete the following outstanding compliance and accountability requirements:
 - Newly elected and re-elected officials: Open Meeting Act (OMA) training
 - Appointed board member: include review of audio recordings as well as written minutes of closed meetings twice a year
 - FOIA officer: specify the types of documents sent in response to FOIA requests

- Ethics officer: complete any state-indicated ethics training
- APLD board: appoint a Whistleblower Auditing Official
- APLD board: complete any required sexual harassment training
- Continue its fiscally responsible, efficient, and responsive manner of serving its patrons.
- Research and pursue awards, collaborations, and new program ideas that will efficiently increase reach, visibility, and healthy growth.

Submitted by: 
Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee

Date of Committee Approval of Report: 12-13-23