

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY
REPORT OF THE CITY LIBRARIAN
For the Month of March 2024

Bridgeport Public Library filed FCC form 471, Schools and Libraries Universal Service Program Services (also known as the E-rate program) for the fiscal year /1/2024 – 6/30/2025. Discounts of 90% will cover Internet service and fiber maintenance at all BPL locations. Additional funds will cover network equipment upgrades at an 85% discount. An optional Resolution is included in the Board documents; however, these costs will not be billed to the library until after July 1, 2024.

A one-year contract extension for completing an Office of Policy and Management Grant for the East Side Branch Phase 2 Project was approved at the March 25, 2004 meeting of the State Library Board. As there was no extension on the start deadline, I will begin working with Antinozzi Associates to hold a Groundbreaking Ceremony no later than May 31, 2024. David Otero will continue working with the City's purchasing and legal departments to finalize a contract with bid winner, Bismark Construction Company.

A User Survey has been created and will be open to public feedback for the period April 30 – June 30.

Our Library App is now available for download at iOS and Android app stores. Members of the staff Technology Committee are redesigning the Resources page, but overall, the app appears to be functioning. For a period of time, we will market the Library App in a "Beta Testing" mode so that we can make use of any user feedback we receive, including engaging a focus group made up of volunteers from the public. This will also allow time for us to receive a new logo from True North, when we can then fully market the App.

At the recent meeting of the Division of Library Development's Legislative Committee (I am a member of this committee), it was reported that two E-Book bills (SB 148 and HB 5312) that have passed out of committee and we will be closely watching the progress of these bills during the week of 4/15 – 19 to see if they will be added to the agenda for discussion by the full legislature. The library community is hopeful that these bills will lead to positive change in the way E-Books are purchased.

A question that I realize has not been fully addressed is how our patrons can get help with our Online Library databases, such as Tutor.com, Hoopla, Scholastic BookFlix, TERC (Testing Educational Resource Center) and many other databases. Problems with using any of these resources can be addressed by contacting any one of our reference or children's librarians or public support staff, depending on the database. As with all assistance, patrons should contact their library branch and ask for assistance of any staff member handling reference duties. Staff can also call the library if they are not able to come in, but depending on the issue, they may have to stop by the library to get the issue resolved, such as if their library card has expired. Staff will be able to determine what the issue may be; checking to make sure that the patron's library card has not expired, walking the patron through the steps to use the database, or show the patron how to get help directly from the database. Once the issues are resolved, the patron will be able to use many of our online databases from the home. I hope that answers the question and I am happy to answer any other questions on this topic.

During the Month of March, I attended the following meetings

- Monthly Managers' meeting

- E-Rate Planning with Brian Remigio, Total Communications (winner of 2024-2025 E-Rate bid) and Rachel Botts, our consultant at Kellogg & Sovereign
- True North – Presentation of Brand House
- Weekly Administration Meetings (Assist. City Librarian, IT, Facilities, Technical Services and Public Services)
- Policy Committee (Laura Matthews, Chair)
- Safety Committee (Quarterly (Andre O'Connor, Chair)
- Outreach committee (as needed, Joyiesha Smoak, Chair)
- Labor Relations
- IMLS Regional Digital Navigator Grant - Zoom Call
- Connecticut Libraries and Partners for Digital Equity
- I represented Bridgeport Public Library at a CTPublic regional event
- East Side Walkthrough

I field many calls per month which are passed along to the appropriate staff member to assist, such as with book donations, individuals and organizations wishing to use library meeting rooms or are looking to propose an event at the library. I also handle any number of patron issues from all location phone calls from patrons that wish to speak to me about their particular situation.

Burroughs Reference Librarian Kate Mozier-Tichy and Technical Support Specialist Brian Remigio have volunteered to assist me in our partnership with the Greater Bridgeport STEM EcoSystem. Brian served as a judge in a recent regional science competition. Kate is attending meetings and is looking into grant opportunities that the library can apply to under the STEM EcoSystem.

We purchased t-shirts at a discount to be sold for fundraising purposes at the next Juneteenth Parade. After receiving many compliments on the t-shirts, we were fortunate to purchase some on sale that we can offer at our table.

We now have six passport acceptance agents, and for each passport, the library receives a \$35.00 acceptance fee, which is deposited to the library's Non-Levy account.

Eight staff will attend the Connecticut Library Association's Annual Conference for at least one day during April 29 & 30. For the second year in a row, I am proud to announce that BPL has nurtured a winner of the FLAG Scholarship – Ana J. Felipe, Junior Librarian. She will attend the Award Breakfast on Tuesday morning of the conference, where she will be honored by her peers and receive a scholarship that will help defray her library school tuition costs. Last year, Taslima Sultana, Junior Librarian, won the Flag Scholarship. Taslima is on track to complete her library science degree from Southern CT State College this May. We commend them both and are proud to have them among our staff.

The Approved Library Budget for 2024-25 was received by OPM on 3/27 2024.

The meeting with members of Bridgeport Public School's literacy team was postponed. We will make every attempt to reschedule this meeting. One suggested collaboration would be a city-wide "Big Read."

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Braithwaite
 City Librarian
 April 17, 2024