April 2024 Board President Report
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Strategic Planning Update
We've hit several significant milestones in the Strategic Planning Process:

- Sent a survey to all OCPL Board of Trustee Members, as well as staff from OCPL Administration as well as city branches and member libraries. The responses to this survey will help inform the direction of the system as a whole. It is due on April 18 (tomorrow!). A public-facing survey is also set to be distributed. It is attached in the Board packet to keep you updated. Thanks to Mary Carney for helping facilitate, design, and eventually analyze the survey and responses.
- Began meetings with the Strategic Planning Working Group where we discussed the major pillars including programs and finances. Heidi Holtz from Stillwork Consulting will give an update on the discussions so far.

As a reminder, this process will continue over the next several months, and we will continue to check in as we proceed. If you want to be more involved or have questions let me know. I sent out a communication (attached in the Board packet) with an overview of the goals and approach this process should take.

Board Composition
The County Executive appointed, and the Onondaga County Legislature approved four new Board members to the OCPL Board of Trustees. I was reappointed. We anticipate Jill Hurst-Wahl will be reappointed at the next meeting. The new members are: Mary Bilbo Coughlin, Esteban M. Gonzalez, Svetlana Dyer, Desaree Dixie. I have sent an email welcoming them and Amanda Perrine will lead a new Trustee orientation session with them. Existing Board members are also welcome to attend (and this counts toward the 2 hours of required training!)

I am appreciative of the County Executive's attention to this matter, and thanks to everyone on the Board who helped advocate for filling the Board seats. There was some discussion about the process for appointing and approving Board members during the County Legislature hearing - I am personally happy that OCPL has attention and support from our partners across the County.

OCPL Policies
At the March Board meeting, Jill brought up a need to review existing policies. This has been a long-standing need. The Trustee's Handbook recommends a set of policies that we should have and review - consistently updating these policies helps us ensure we are meeting minimum standards as well. Dawn and her team will help prioritizing the review of and updating of key policies and will bring several per Board meeting for approval. The tentative list of policies is here.

Generative AI in Libraries
For my monthly update on Generative AI in libraries, two articles were of interest. The first: "5 Ways Artificial Intelligence Is (Quietly) Changing Libraries" reveals how AI is revolutionizing libraries by streamlining librarian workflows, enhancing visitor interactivity, and preparing librarians to integrate future technologies and teach critical thinking. For further information, check out the full article here. The second: "How Tech Giants Cut Corners to Harvest Data for A.I." is a reminder that there is a race to develop this technology, and the key way to do so is through the capture of data and information. The leaders in the space, OpenAI, Google, and Meta are reported to have made compromises in the pursuit of data capture. While the technology is exciting and potentially unlocks opportunity, it will also be important to understand how the technology comes to be and where the aggressive pursuit of growth and innovation can have negative sides as well. The full article is here.