Building Improvement Report

Progress on the Building Plan for May 2018 to September 2021

September 2021
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Background

In May 2018 a report was completed on the building work which had been completed in the fiscal years 2016/17 and 2017/18. This report detailed the work undertaken in accordance with the Capital Improvement Plan for these fiscal years, and the Facility Plan which was approved by the Board in February 2017. This work addressed various improvements which had not been included in the major capital improvement project managed by GRP Mechanical of Bethalto, Illinois in 2014 and 2015.

Copies of that earlier report were given to library board trustees, city councilors and staff, and published on the library website at: tinyurl.com/dplbuilding2018. That report included descriptions of the painting, restoration, furniture, landscaping, technology, and elevator projects completed during those two fiscal years.

In March 2018, the Board commissioned Willett Hofmann and Associates to complete a Building Needs Survey. This study was used to prioritize and plan the work to be done to the building for the next three fiscal years, and also forms the basis of the next major building project we hope to undertake in 2022. The study can be found online here: tinyurl.com/dplwhreport.
Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide detailed information on the work that has been done to the building and infrastructure of the Dixon Public Library since the completion of the last report in May 2018.

It is hoped that this report will provide a thorough account of work done and be of assistance in future projects.

Description of the work

The work completed during this time falls into several distinct categories. These are safety and preventive maintenance; painting; restoration; furniture; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility; lighting and electrical conservation; and general improvements.

The reasons for this work were to improve the accessibility of the building for all patrons, to improve staff and patron safety, to further encourage a warm and welcoming atmosphere that continues to honor the heritage of the building, to prevent future maintenance issues from arising, and to ensure that the building continues to be appropriate and useful to its community.
Safety and Preventive Maintenance

The Building Needs report identified several issues with the building which were safety related. The Board of Trustees put the highest priority on addressing these issues first. Other projects which were given a high priority were those of a preventative nature. Working on these projects meant that the library could avoid larger expenses later.

**Glass**

The first of these was to replace glass in various public and staff only areas with new ¼” laminated safety glass. The old glass had wire embedded in it, which could have been dangerous if someone had fallen into or pushed against it. All of this glass was removed in two phases. The first phase removed all of the glass in higher risk areas. This work was performed by Dixon Glass in July 2018 at a cost of $3,800. The second phase replaced the glass in lower traffic areas where the risk of accident was much lower. Dixon Glass performed this work for $1,560 in September 2019. The picture shows one of the large sections of glass which was replaced.

**Retaining Wall**

A limestone retaining wall on the southern edge of the library had shifted, probably due to rain water pushing against it over time. There was concern that the wall could become unstable and may even collapse if left. In September 2018 Distinctive Gardens dismantled the wall and rebuilt it. They also installed a new drainage tube to the downspout which leads rainwater away from the wall. At the same time, the ivy was once more removed from the southeastern corner of the library to prevent damage to that façade. This work was completed for $1,985.
**Sump Pumps**

For some time, rain water had not been draining properly from the light well, and several options were explored including proposals for filling it or putting a sloping roof over it. After examination of the plans from the 1969 addition which were donated to the library during 2018 by John McLane, it was realized that window well was supposed to drain into a sump tank in the basement. Water was then supposed to be pumped out of the tank into city drains. It was found that the two pumps were completely seized with silt. These pumps were replaced with new, smaller units and the electrical supply to the pumps was also updated. The light well has been draining successfully since. This work was completed by MO-ST Plumbing with electrical work subcontracted to Complete Electrical at a total cost of $5,300.

The first two pictures show one of the old pumps and its sending unit. The picture on the right shows one of the new units.

![Old pump and sending unit](image1.png)
![Old pump and sending unit](image2.png)
![New unit](image3.png)

**Downspouts**

Another issue which had led to some damage in the building and had the potential for causing more was that the water collection boxes and downspouts on the 1900 section of the building were blocked and leaking. One of the downspouts had been removed altogether at some point and its collection box would regularly overflow with water. Sterling Commercial Roofing took down boxes, resoldered them, and aged them, installed two new copper downspouts and cleaned out debris throughout. This work was completed in August 2020 for about $3,800.
The top picture shows rainwater pouring out of the top of a blocked downspout. This downspout was replaced with a new copper one. The two lower pictures show one of the original collection boxes which had been resealed and treated to age it, and then reinstalled along with another new downspout.
**Water fountains**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the two existing public fountains were shut off as a transmission prevention measure, in common with many other locations. In preparation for reopening, the existing fountains were replaced with two Elkay LZS8WSLK with bottle filler and filter units in December 2020, at a total cost of $4,260 by MO-ST Plumbing. These allow for no touch bottle refill. The traditional spout can be turned on at a later date.

**Painting**

Repairs to the painting have been completed throughout the library in worn or damaged areas while the painter has been onsite for other projects.

**Exterior railing and staff areas**

In August 2018 the railing around the light well was repainted in a pale gray. Staff areas in the lower level were also repainted by Mike McNamara for $1,360. The colors used for this project were SW6211 Rainwashed and SW6215 Rocky River. These areas had last been painted in about 1995.
In June 2018, the TAD room was repainted in two shades of gray (SW7648, Big Chill and SW7650, Ellie Gray) to provide a more neutral setting than the previous pink, and to tie in with the carpeting already installed. This work was completed by Mike McNamara for $940.
Basement

In April 2021 a new painting project was started in the basement storage areas following major work to declutter the basement. This included using an oil primer to seal the masonry and then SW6385 Dover White was used on the walls and SW0038 Library Pewter was used on doors and door trims. Mike McNamara completed this work, and it cost approximately $1,800.

Future work will be done to complete this project in stages as books for sale are removed from this area. The boiler room will be repainted as part of this project as well.

Other painting work has been completed as part of other projects and will be discussed with those projects.
Photographs of the basement painting
Furniture and Furnishings

Desk
A new desk was bought from SBM for the Director’s Office at a cost of $2,890 in June 2018. This provided a much more ergonomically appropriate work environment than the previous desk bought in 1969.

Carpet and shelving
In August of 2018 Brothers Flooring installed carpet tile in the staff areas as an approved asbestos mitigation method. This carpet tile has a 10-year guarantee. At its end of life, the asbestos tile can either be recovered with new carpet tile, or be removed completely. This work was competed for a cost of $3,920. In January of 2020 new utility shelving was added to this area to replace the old desk and book case that had been used. This was purchased from SBM for $1,650. The shelving provides storage for cleaning and maintenance supplies and interlibrary loan materials.
Local history shelving

In December 2019 additional oak shelves were supplied by SBM for $3,170 to house the Local History collection. The collection had outgrown the shelving purchased for it a couple of years earlier and so additional matching shelving was installed. Two magazine racks purchased in 1969 were removed and replaced with these new shelves.

Lighting

General Lighting upgrades

New lighting and ceilings were installed for $5,000 in various staff areas. This work was completed by Swedberg in February, 2019. In October 2019 work to replace lighting units in various areas around the library was completed. New lights were installed in the TAD Room, the main lobby, and the youth entrance lobby. These were areas where the lights had not been replaced during the GRP project in 2015. In the TAD Room and the youth lobby the ceilings were also replaced by Swedberg for $6,400 to accommodate the new lights.
1900 Adult Library lighting upgrade project

In the 1900 section of the adult library, the lighting units were retrofitted to take LED tubes, and in the 1900 stacks new lights were installed to the ceiling to replace those attached to the shelving. The new lighting system was designed to be more energy efficient and the library received grant money from ComEd to cover a portion of the costs. This work was engineered by Thayer Electrical and completed by Complete Electrical. Costs totaled $16,600, of which $3,266 was paid by the ComEd grant.

The image on the previous page shows the old light holders attached to the shelves. This arrangement prevented us from moving the shelves to accommodate ADA access between them. Suspending the new lights from the ceiling, as seen in the image below, enabled us to rearrange the shelves. That project is discussed below.

Basement lighting

New LED lighting costing approximately $2,200 has also been installed by CEC Electrical in the boiler room (pictured below) and in the basement just outside it to improve the usability of these spaces.
Restoration

Attic restoration
The most significant restoration project completed during the period covered by this report was the restoration of the attic in the 1900 portion of the adult library. This project, completed in March and April of 2019, consisted of the removal of the false ceiling which separated the main floor from the attic, the repair and replacement of the plaster walls in the attic, hanging new chandeliers, and general electrical system and safety improvements. The drywall, plastering, and painting was completed by Witzleb Drywall and Remodeling for $15,500, and
the removal of the false ceiling and restoration of the oak trim, along with electrical work subbed out to Complete Electrical, was undertaken by Brown Construction of Milledgeville for about $27,000. The paint colors used in this project were SW0029 Acanthus and SW6178 Clary Sage. They were chosen to be in keeping with the colors that had been previously used.

Restoring the attic and removing the false ceiling had long been an ambition of the Library Board, and it became necessary to do the work to address concerns arising from a fire safety inspection completed by the Dixon Fire Department. The finishing touch was to hang new chandeliers from the attic ceiling to replace lights lost when the false ceiling was removed.
A new electrical service box was installed to replace a previous unsafe splice.

And below is the finished attic restoration
Ceiling removal

Removal of the false ceiling required the installation of a scaffolding which eventually reached all the way to the attic ceiling to allow patching, painting, and electrical work to be completed. The next two pictures show the main 1900 section of the adult library before the ceiling was removed, and the ceiling as it was being dismantled.
The finished project
Refinishing the attic floor

In June 2019 the attic floors were refinished thanks to a very generous gift from some patrons. Over the previous 120 years the floors had become very dirty and none of the original finish remained. The floors were sanded, some holes patched with matching period wood, and refinished at a cost of $3,050.
**Restoration of the fireplace shelving cabinets**

The shelves either side of the fireplace formed part of the original furnishings of the library when it opened in 1901. This area originally comprised the ladies’ reading room. Over the years these cabinets had been heavily damaged, and the original doors had been removed and lost. The shelves themselves had been heavily notched to allow for storage of LP records. Tom Prendergast made new shelves and replicated the doors, using original photographs of the interior of the building completing the work in October 2020 at a cost of $4,100.

The restored shelves are now used to accommodate the large collection of paperweights which the library had been given by the Shaw family in the 1970s. These had previously been housed in display cabinets which were removed to allow more easy access to the 1900 stacks.
Accessibility

The Willett Hofmann report highlighted several Americans with Disabilities Acts related deficiencies in the building.

1900 Stacks rearrangement and carpeting

Most of these shelving units were original to the building, dating back to 1901. Over time some additional units were added meaning the aisles were not accessible to patrons with wheelchairs or walkers. The aisles were all different widths, ranging between 27 and 33 inches. The lighting had previously been replaced in this area as noted earlier. Those new lights were installed in positions to line up with the planned new locations of these shelves. Two sets of later shelves were dismantled and recycled and the cabinets used to house the paperweight collection were also removed once the paperweights were moved to the fireplace cabinets. It was discovered when these shelves were moved that they had stood not on the original flooring but on the floorboards, so each of these holes had to be patched with plywood. The existing carpet was removed, the shelves were moved out, the floors patched, and the shelves replaced in their new positions in early July 2021. The moving was completed by Hallett Movers for $16,130.
New carpet was then fitted by Brothers Flooring for a total of $6,500 including the cost of patching the floors. Each of the aisles is now 37 inches wide and line up with the lights.
In September 2021 sections of drywall will be patched and repainted due to the shelves being cut into them and the old light fixtures removed.

The tops, sides, and kick panels of the shelving units will also be repainted at this time.
Bathrooms

Each of the public bathrooms had handrails installed or replaced with the most appropriate fittings available. In addition, Lav Guards were installed under each of the five wash basins, mirrors were repositioned, and the faucets in the staff bathroom were replaced with compliant units. New compliant signage was installed and the bathrooms were relabeled for All Genders ahead of legislation which mandated this. Repairs were made to the walls in each of the public bathrooms and the stalls were remounted to newly reinforced walls. This work was completed in three phases and completed by Swedberg and MO-ST Plumbing. The remodeling work totaled $10,500 and was completed in January 2019 with approximately another $1,500 spent on the rest of the work.

In February 2019 all five bathrooms (four public and one staff) had their walls repainted in SW6099 Sand Dollar. Previously the bathrooms were painted three different colors. $1,485 was spent in labor and approximately $500 in materials.

Handrails

The staircase up to the attic and the staff staircase from the work room to the staff area on the ground floor only had one handrail each. In the spring of 2020 Swedberg installed one new handrail on the staff staircase to match the existing. The staircase up to the attic was completely replaced as it was no longer compliant with the new rails making a complete run all the way up both sides of the staircase. This work was completed for $6,400. It was later repainted in SW7517 China Doll.

Electrical

Distribution system

May 2018 the distribution system for the library’s electrical supply was replaced. Three of the relays in the old system had stopped working, including one that had been used to supply power to the sump pumps, and the whole system dated back to the building of the addition in 1969. This replacement work necessitated the library closing for two days while the old system was dismantled and the new one installed. Also, circuit tracing and relabeling was completed. The work was performed by Complete Electrical Contractors at a cost of $19,500. Significant improvements to the electrical system were also made during the attic renovation project described elsewhere.
General improvements

TAD Room HVAC
The HVAC system in the TAD Room is separate from the rest of the building’s HVAC. The original system which was suspended from the ceiling and dating from the building of the addition in 1969 failed and was replaced in August 2018. This was completed by MO-ST Plumbing with ceiling work being contracted to Swedberg. The cost for this work was $7,300.

Air purifiers
In August 2021 Loescher installed air purifiers into each of the seven HVAC air handlers. This cost $5,500 and was completed partially in response to the pandemic, and also to provide a healthier environment for staff and patrons going forwards.

Workroom remodeling
The workroom was largely unchanged from when the addition was built in 1969. The general layout and the fitted cabinets and work surfaces were no longer fit for purpose. The library purchased new cabinets from SBM for $3,500 and these were fitted into new worksurfaces and cabinets by Witzleb. A new sink was also installed with ADA compliant faucets. Spare shelves from the local history shelving project were repurposed and fitted to one wall of the workroom.
for storage of the Library of Things and other items and the photocopier was relocated to move it away from a high traffic area. Total costs for this work were $12,365. The workroom, adjacent office, and stairway up to the attic were then repainted in SW7517 China Doll by Mike McNamara for approximately $1,600.
In December 2020 and January 2021 Swedberg upgraded the kitchenette next to the staff lounge. The nonfunctioning all in one sink, stove, and fridge unit were removed, the walls patched and painted, and a new sink and cabinets were installed. MO-ST provided plumbing work, and Complete Electrical provided electricals. This work amounted to $5,800. Separately Farley’s Appliances supplied a GE dishwasher. This allows staff to provide sanitary toys to the children in the youth department, as well as providing a useful area for staff to clean up after their lunches and programs.
Summary

The projects listed in this report were completed over a period of about three and a half years. Total costs for these projects have been approximately $216,000. Funds to pay for them were drawn from the Library’s Capital Reserve, the Operating Budgets for Fiscal Years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22, and from State Grants managed by the Illinois State Library. This ongoing investment has made the library a more pleasant, safer, and useable place for staff and patrons.