

FY 2026 Plan of Service and Operating Budget

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Executive Summary

Abstract

The budget for FY2026 marks a key milestone for the library—the mortgage from the 2015 total renovation will be paid in full, 10 years ahead of schedule. This allows the library budget to refocus on developing staff and services. Another key area of the budget is our continued marketing efforts to increase public awareness of the library and our wide range of services. We will also be looking ahead with the completion of a capital improvement plan to continue to maintain the building, our largest physical asset.

Tax Rate

The projected tax rate for FY2026 is \$.27325. This continues the downward trend of our overall tax rate from the highest point of \$.34837 in FY2016. This trend has been because of two factors: a strong EAV and the end of TIF 1. However, our corporate tax rate, which has a ceiling of .27% as determined by the voters of Effingham, is at .22%. This is a number to watch and to try to start moving upward again while still keeping the overall tax rate low.

Exclusions

The Building Fund is not included in the Operating Budget. These funds are used for related income and expenses for the construction of the new building and other major renovation projects (Building Fund).

Additionally, the Special Reserve Fund is not included in the overall Operating Budget, but does play a role in paying our debt on the mortgage as well as providing a cushion for any unexpected repairs.

Expenses vs. Standards

FY	Operating Budget *	Salaries (Total Compensation)	Salaries % of Budget	Materials	Materials % of Budget	% of Budget Remaining
2026	\$1,433,702	\$711,874.30	49.5%	\$132,500	9.2%	41.3%
2025	\$1,394,484	\$693,137.77	50%	\$130,300^	9.4%	40.6%
2024	\$1,306,057	\$672,520.94	51.5%	\$120,300	9.2%	39.3%
2023	\$1,164,429	\$587,679.71	50.7%	\$111,700	9.6%	39.7%
2022	\$1,123,221	\$562,467.99	50.1%	\$106,500	9%	40.9%
2021	\$990,703	\$552,730.14	55.8%	\$98,800	10%	34.2%
2020	\$948,888	\$529,213.32	55.8%	\$117,800	12%	32.2%

*See exclusions above

The standard for salaries and benefits (including IMRF, Social Security, and health insurance) is “up to 70%” of the operating budget (found in *Serving Our Public*).

The standard for material expenditures is a minimum of 8-12% of the operating budget (found in *Serving Our Public*).

We continue to run much leaner than our peer organizations from a staffing perspective and have kept our personnel expenses at or near the 50% mark for several years. This has been achieved through automation of several procedures (including the automated materials handler) as well as looking for ways to outsource specialty services, such as marketing and technology.

Mortgage and Reducing Debt

In 2016, we converted our construction loan to a mortgage loan with a balance of \$1,500,000. Over the years, we have made a few extra payments and have been able to get our balance down to \$678,621.35. Our current interest rate is 2.65%

In January 2026, our mortgage rate resets, which it is scheduled to do every 5 years. The rate change will be based on the 5 year treasury rate plus a margin of 1.05%.

With this information, the library has been setting aside funds to pay off the mortgage debt in calendar year 2025. The library has more than sufficient funds to achieve this

goal as well as maintain strong balances to face challenges. Currently, the date for the final payment has not been set as the mortgage funds are currently earning more interest than the cost of the mortgage. Our current savings rate in our money market account is 3.7%.

The board reviews at least quarterly a mortgage payoff sheet that tracks balances in all of our funds and accounts to determine the best timing for paying off the mortgage debt.

Assumptions

Operating Budget Funds

The Operating Budget consists of income and expenses to the Corporate, Donations, Grants, Enterprise, Maintenance, Tort/Liability, Worker's Compensation, Audit, IMRF, and Social Security/Medicare Funds.

Corporate Fund

Income for the Corporate Fund includes: corporate tax receipts, mobile home tax, housing authority tax, personal property replacement tax, eRate rebate, investment income and fund interest.

In our levy request for FY2026, we requested \$1,189,367 which represents an increase of \$40,220. However, while we have increased our total revenue request, the tax rate itself is projected to drop by \$.01 over last year and will be down over \$.07 from 10 years ago.

Any additional money in the corporate fund budget has been allocated as a transfer to the Special Reserves Fund and will be used for capital improvements and other major purchases. We will be completing a capital improvement plan in 2025 that will help shape the usage of this fund.

Grants

The library applies for competitive grants that offered on a local, regional, state, and national level. We continue to focus our grant requests around opportunities that can either provide new programs or otherwise increase our circulation of materials. All grant expenses are tracked in accordance with the grant funder's rules and regulations.

In addition to external grant requests, we also apply annually for funding with the Secretary of State's office via the Per Capita grant program. We typically received around \$18,000 and these grant dollars are usually used to supplement our overall collections budget as well as supporting marketing efforts with targeted marketing campaigns with Orange Boy. We'll also be monitoring the Per Capita grant process closely over the next few years. Funding for these grants are not certain because of forces from the State of Illinois (projected budget shortfalls that need to be addressed) as well as the Federal government (a proposal that includes cutting funding to the Institute of Museum and Library Services from which our State Library receives a significant portion of funding in the form of Grants to States).

Accuracy

All amounts presented in this document have been compiled using the most accurate information available at the time of preparation.

The working budget is intended to serve as a guiding document for the day-to-day functioning of the library.

FY 2026 Income Detail

Taxes—Property	
Corporate	\$955,000
Building and Maintenance	\$86,452
Audit	\$4,000
Liability (Tort)	\$50,000
Workman's Comp	\$1,800
Unemployment	\$8,000
IMRF	\$50,000
Social Security/Medicare	\$30,00
Personal Property Replacement Tax	\$40,000
Investments	\$25,000
eRate	\$4,000
Per Capita Grant	\$18,000
Other Grants	\$50,000
Donations and Memorials	\$40,000
Enterprise Fund (fines, fees, hourly meeting room rental)	\$49,200
TOTAL	\$1,411,452

Note: Some income lines have been combined. Exact detail is shown on the FY 2026 Working Budget Detail in Appendix A.

FY 2026 Expense and Services Detail

Collection Development

Collection Development is a core service to our patrons. Our staff works hard to purchase materials our patrons will love as well as keep the collection orderly by regularly assessing the collection and weeding our materials. Our collection is comprised of books, CDs, DVDs, BluRays, electronic resources (ebooks, databases, etc.), equipment (such as fishing poles), periodicals, audio books, video games, and kits. Balancing the needs of ematerials with physical materials continues to be a focus. The pricing methods for ematerials employed by the various vendors is always challenging as the prices are not reflective of what a regular consumer would encounter, which can make communicating the lack of availability challenging.

There have been several format changes in the last two years that have had a large impact on our collection development strategy. The first is the closing of Hachette Books audiobooks division. Hachette is the largest publisher of physical audiobook content. With their closure, that largely ends our ability to purchase in this category. We had already seen declining numbers of use as more and more vehicle manufacturers stopped producing new vehicles with CD players; this closure makes a definite end to our ability to purchase the physical audiobook format.

The second format change has been the decline of titles appearing in DVD/BluRay format. The rise of direct-to-streaming has also caused this format to stagnate. While DVDs are still being made, not nearly as much content has been available. This has caused a sharp decline in our circulations in this area.

FY 2026 Materials Budget

	FY26	FY 25	FY 24	FY 23	FY22	FY21
Books	\$46,000.00	\$43,000	\$39,000	\$34,000	\$26,000	\$24,000
Visual	\$18,000.00	\$15,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$20,000
Audio	\$0.00	\$0	\$1,500	\$900	\$500	\$1,000
Periodicals	\$3,500.00	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000
Online Databases	\$30,500.00	\$30,300	\$28,300	\$28,300	\$20,500	\$20,000
Youth Books	\$32,500.00	\$31,000	\$27,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000
Youth Visual	\$2,000.00	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Youth Audio	\$0.00	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
Grant Purchases		\$6,000				
Total	\$132,500.00	\$130,300	\$120,300	\$111,700	\$96,500	\$98,800

Collection Development Standards Compliance

The materials budget for FY2026 represents 9.2% of the FY2026 annual budget; the standard for materials budget is 8-12%.

Print books will once again receive a large increase in our overall budget. Our circulation figures are beginning to rise and we want to make sure that we have the collection budget to support that continued growth.

We will also continue to look for grant funds to refresh and supplement our materials budget.

Trained Cataloging Staff

We catalog nearly all of our own materials through the talents of our cataloging staff. Our User Experience Manager has retained her cataloging privileges in SHARE (our resource sharing consortium) to provide support to our cataloging staff member. As a result, she is able to complete original cataloging (required when no cataloging record is available and mostly used for local authors and kits).

FY 2026 Non-resident Card Rate

In May 2022, the board moved to the tax bill method for calculating the non-resident rate. This has been a wonderful change for our patrons as it has created a more equitable method for assessing the fee. If the library had continued with the old method of assessing the household fee, the rate for FY2026 would be \$213. We will provide a more detailed review of the non-resident card program in April 2025 as the board evaluates continuing this program.

Marketing

The Effingham Public Library uses a mix of online and in-house marketing materials supplemented with local PR and, when required for major events, paid-for advertising. With one of our strategic goals being library service for all, it is becoming increasingly important that we make sure the whole community is aware of the services we provide.

The marketing plan has been updated for 2025 and is focused on increasing awareness of the library's services and increasing both card redemption and circulation.

Staff have developed several strategies for the board to consider to meet these goals. We would continue our work with Imagine This! to support our efforts in social media. In house, we are focusing more on "organic" posts as well as adding video to improve our overall exposure on social media.

We will also add in two targeted marketing campaigns through our library-specific marketing service, Orange Boy. We launched one targeted campaign during 2023 and saw a 25% return in customers. On the strength of those results, we feel that investing in two campaigns per year will help us achieve our goals.

We would also invest in a year-long advertising campaign with the local radio station to further extend our reach into the community. Finally, we will also add in billboards to extend our reach into the community

MARKETING	FY2025
Promotional Items	\$3,000
Targeted Marketing	\$8,000
Outsourced Social Media Support	\$12,000

MARKETING	FY2025
Radio Ads	\$3,700
Billboards	\$3,300
Total	\$30,000

Programs

Adult Programming is one of the most effective tools a library has for bringing its community together and demonstrating the benefits and services a library offers. The Effingham Public Library offers a regular schedule of programs that foster and promote a love of literature, life-long learning, and open discussion.

Adult programming costs will go up this year. This is largely due to a grant expiring that had been funding the return of our adult computer/technology classes. The classes continue to be very popular, so we wish to continue to offer them to the community. However, the other costs for programs are controlled thanks to the creativity and hard work of everyone involved and the generosity of community members and organizations donating their time and talents to provide a wide range of quality yet low cost programming.

Adult Programming	FY2026	FY2025	FY2024	FY2023	FY2022
Swag - Seniors with Attitude Group Prize	\$250.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	120.00	\$40.00
SWAG Paint Party		\$150.00		75.00	\$ -
Coffee/ Cups/Plates etc.	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	100.00	\$50.00
General Programming	\$1,200.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Large Budget Programs	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	500.00	\$ -
Movie License		\$0	\$153.00	300.00	\$ -
Summer Reading Program Prizes	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	340.00	\$340.00
Half of Beanstack cost	\$420.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	400.00	
ILP Program Cost	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	400.00	
Winter Read prizes and Rewards	\$225.00	\$225.00	\$350.00	340.00	\$340.00
History Programs with the Museum	\$300.00	\$300.00			
Chair Yoga	\$600.00	\$600.00			
Computer Classes	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00			
Total	\$6,245.00	\$6,125.00	\$3,753.00	\$3,575.00	\$1,770.00

We continue to prioritize getting folks to return to the library in all capacities and our youth programs is a key component. Overall, programming attendance has returned to 2019 levels. This budget reflects sustaining that effort.

We will continue to put a portion of our budget toward the purchase of prize books for Summer Read, 1000 Books before Kindergarten, and the newly-relaunched Book Bike. We will also continue to put a portion of our budget toward story time and STEAM programs and will also put funds toward weekly preschool programming and the craft table with the hopes that offering more in house programming for this age group will improve patron use of the library.

We will continue to put much of the programming budget toward Summer Read, as this is our best opportunity to reach large numbers of both youth and adult patrons.

A portion of the youth programming budget has been allocated to Teen Advisory Board (TAB) sponsored events. By giving this group a budget to work with to create programming that is engaging for teens, we hope to both increase attendance at teen programs and overall use of the library by our teen patrons.

Youth Programming	FY2026	FY2025	FY2024	FY2023
In House Programs: Story Times, Scavenger hunts, craft table, STEAM, Homeschool, and general youth programming	\$2,500.00	\$2,005.00	\$1,730.00	\$3,550.00
1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Back to School Event and Books	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Eggstravaganza	\$200.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$ 150.00
Downtown Trick or Treat (Books)	0	\$0	\$300.00	\$300.00
Halloween @ Evergreen	0	\$0	\$100.00	\$150.00
Halloween Parade	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$300.00	\$ 275.00
ECC Trick or Treat	0	\$100.00	\$50.00	\$ 50.00
Hometown Christmas Story Time N Craft	0	\$0	\$100.00	\$100.00
Family Read Night	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$500.00	\$50.00
Movies with Make and Take	0	\$0	\$150.00	\$25.00
***Special One Off Programs	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$100.00
Summer Read Evening Support (contracted)	0	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Summer Read kickoff	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$600.00
****Summer Read external program presenters	\$1,000.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$400.00

Youth Programming	FY2026	FY2025	FY2024	FY2023
Summer Read inhouse programs	\$300.00	\$320.00	\$320.00	\$200.00
Summer Read Décor	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Summer Read Books	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Summer Read Prizes and Rewards	\$750.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$750.00
Super Summer Readers Medals or lanyards (200)	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$250.00
Summer Read teen volunteer thank yous	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00
Summer Read Pool Party	\$250.00	\$225.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
Summer Read and volunteer t-shirts	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Half of Beanstack	\$420.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	
TAB Sponsored Teen Events	\$500.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	
Community Events	\$1,700	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	
Miscellaneous supplies (paper, cardstock, glue, etc)	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Book Bike Supplies	\$500.00	\$500.00		\$500.00
Total	\$13,570.00	\$13,395.00	\$13,300.00	\$14,200.00

Staffing

Effingham Public Library currently has 5 full time positions and 13 part-time positions. FTE for the library is 11.98. Combined, staff work 479 hours/week. The team is currently in flux because of a staffing change at the Assistant Director level. This has created the opportunity to evaluate all positions and the overall needs of the library. This opportunity should provide the ability to promote several internal candidates as well as develop some new talent through new hires.

Compensations

During FY2020, the minimum wage in Illinois began its ascent to \$15/hour. With the FY24 budget, we made the jump to the \$15/hour minimum wage and made wage adjustments for staff at all levels to account for position category and years of service. While we do have some continued wage compaction as a result of this increase, overall, staff compensation is strong and in line with our peer institutions.

The FY2026 budget reflects wage increases that fall within our staff development program, which allows for up to 3% raises, based on a series of metrics.

Total FY2026 salaries are budgeted to be \$709,438.30, which includes social security and other payroll taxes, benefits, and employer IMRF contributions.

Benefits

The Library's health insurance will be renewed with Blue Cross Blue Shield Illinois. We will continue to pay 100% of the premium for all full time staff who wishes to obtain health insurance through the library. We continue to be a small group plan, sourced by Weiss Insurance. In 2022, we switched plans and added an HSA component as well, making the insurance offerings more attractive. This year, we again saw a significant increase in our overall premium, an increase we had largely been sheltered from in years past. While this increase was large, it was not unanticipated.

Dental and vision coverage is offered through a group plan with the City of Effingham and is paid 100% by the employee, if they wish to participate.

The Library is an IMRF employer; all employees meeting the IMRF hours threshold of 20 hours/week must participate in IMRF and 4.5% of their earnings will be withheld for IMRF contributions. Our IMRF rate for calendar year 2025 is 9.99%.

Volunteers

For FY25, we will continue to rebuild our volunteer program. We typically have three categories of volunteers: probation, teen/youth, and adult. For each group, there is the expectation of completing an application and receiving standardized training. All volunteers receive a brief orientation to the library, but we want to move this to a more standardized process for everyone. In addition, we have volunteer job descriptions posted on our web site and other outlets to clearly advertise for what types of assistance we need.

In the past, opportunities have included:

- Light cleaning and dusting of the library building
- clerical and computer projects
- program preparations (i.e. cutting crafts for storytime)
- special projects
- outreach opportunities, including Book Crossing, Book Box, homebound delivery and pickup,
- book sales
- technical services functions, including book mending and preparation
- Summer Reading Program, including running prize desk and assisting at programs

Volunteers must comply with all Library policies and are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all library information. The library reserves the right to terminate the services of a volunteer.

Last year, we added volunteer recognition around the winter holidays. This was incredibly well received and everyone enjoyed coming together to meet each other and share about their experiences. We plan to continue this in future years as well.

Staff Development

Continuing education for staff members and community involvement continues to be a priority of the library. The Illinois Library Association conference for 2025 will be in suburban Chicago and we intend to send one staff member. We have budgeted \$2,000 for training and \$2,500 for travel expenses; we will work with each request as it comes through to ensure good use of these dollars.

Technology

The majority of our technology needs are met through the service contract with Lazerware. They provide a structured maintenance program for an annual cost of \$34,000. This include maintaining the integrity of our network, improving and updating speed and response times for software, as well as all maintenance, large and small. We no longer need to have a person on site to troubleshoot technology issues with staff equipment as they can be onsite within a few hours for major problems and within 24 for minor. In addition, they have remote access to our network to troubleshoot network outages (which are rare) within minutes.

Tort/Liability

Tort funds can be expended as approved by state statute. The Library continues to participate in the purchase of liability insurance and bonds on the same policy with the City of Effingham. The City is aggressive in ensuring top-notch coverage at competitive prices.

The FY 2026 Liability budget is as follows:

Liability Insurance	\$14,000
Legal Fees	\$3,000.00
Maintenance/Safety	\$19,680.00
Security System	\$500.00
RFID Security System	\$9,000.00
Pest Control	\$300.00
Trash Removal	\$1,020.00
Janitor Supplies	\$2,500.00
TOTAL	\$50,000.00

FY 2026 Working Budget

The following shows the FY 2026 Working Budget, with contingencies included, in full and segregated by fund.

Authorization of this document authorizes the Director to work within the budget lines defined in these sections.

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5010.010	Director	\$85,750.00
5020.010	Assistant Director	\$66,560.00

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5016.010	User Experience Manager	\$0.00
NEW	Programming/Outreach Manager	\$50,000.00
5035.010	Library Asst. II (6 positions)	\$197,038.53
5030.010	Library Asst. I (8 positions)	\$145,575.77
5017.010	Bonuses	\$5,000.00
Personnel Total		\$547,488.30
6025.010	Adult Programming	\$6,245.00
6030.010	Youth Services Programming	\$13,570.00
Programming Total		\$19,815.00
6045.010	Accounting/Payroll	\$13,000.00
6050.010	Legal Fees	\$1,000.00
6052.010	Software Fees	\$36,000.00
Professional Fees		\$50,000.00
6055.010	Internet	\$5,000.00
6060.010	Telephone	\$5,500.00
6065.010	Postage	\$2,000.00
6165.010	Utilities	\$52,000.00
6113.010	RFID Project	
6114.010	Processing Materials	\$3,200.00
6115.010	Office Supplies	\$3,900.00
6160.010	Contingency/Misc.	\$200.00
6140.010	Refunds	\$700.00
6048.010	Administrative Fees	\$3,000.00
Administrative Costs		\$75,500.00
6100.010	Books	\$46,000.00
6101.010	Visual	\$18,000.00
6103.010	Audio	\$0.00
6105.010	Periodicals	\$3,500.00
6112.010	Online Databases	\$30,500.00
6110.010	Youth Books	\$32,500.00
6111.010	Youth Visual	\$2,000.00
6116.010	Youth Audio	\$0.00
Materials		\$132,500.00
5050.010	Group Hospital Ins (5 positions)	\$60,000.00

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5055.010	Life Insurance	\$150.00
Insurance		\$60,150.00
6149.010	Capital Expenditures	\$25,000.00
NEW	Contractual Expenses	\$71,360.70
	Transfer for Building Fund	\$0.00
	Reserves	\$50,000.00
Fund Subtotal:		\$1,046,250.00

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
6090.010	Grants	\$68,000.00
Grants		\$68,000.00

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
	Transfer to Building Fund	
6091.010	Donations/Memorials	\$40,000.00
6029.010	RISE	\$0.00
Donations		\$40,000.00

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
6015.010	Consultant/Professional Fees	\$2,000.00
6031.010	Marketing	\$30,000.00
6080.010	Training/Staff Development	\$2,200.00
6075.010	Dues	\$2,500.00
6070.010	Travel Expenses	\$2,500.00
Professional Fees		\$39,000.00
6040.010	Mainte/Office and Other Eq.	\$5,000.00
6150.010	Furniture and Equipment	\$5,000.00
Equipment		\$10,000.00
Fund Subtotal:		\$49,200.00

Acct. No.	Building and Maintenance Fund	FY 2026 Budget
6170.020	Mainte/Grounds (snow/mowing/weeding)	\$3,500.00
6185.020	Janitorial Service	\$25,000.00
6175.020	Mainte/Computers	\$33,000.00
6180.020	Improvements	\$3,000.00
6035.020	Mainte/Building	\$11,952.00
6150.020	Equipment	\$5,000.00
6155.020	Computer Equip.	\$5,000.00
Fund Subtotal:		\$ 86,452.00

Acct. No.	Audit Fund	FY 2026 Budget
6195.030	Annual Audit	\$4,000.00

Acct. No.	Liability Insurance Fund	FY 2026 Budget
6200.040	Liability Insurance	\$14,000.00
6053.040	Bonds	
5046.040	Safety Coordinator	
NEW	Legal Fees	\$3,000.00
6205.040	Maintenance/Safety	\$19,680.00
6210.040	Security System	\$500.00
6215.040	RFID Security System	\$9,000.00
6190.040	Pest Control	\$300.00
6085.040	Trash Removal	\$1,020.00
6130.040	Janitor Supplies	\$2,500.00
Fund Subtotal:		\$ 50,000.00

Acct. No.	Workman's Comp Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5065.050	Workman's Comp	\$1,800.00

Acct. No.	Unemployment Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5070.060	Unemployment Ins.	\$8,000.00

Acct. No.	IMRF Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5075.070	IMRF Employer Contributions	\$50,000.00

Acct. No.	Social Security/Medicare Fund	FY 2026 Budget
5080.080	Soc. Sec/Medicare Payments	\$30,000.00

Acct. No.	Library Fund	FY 2026 Budget
NEW	Principal	\$600,000.00
NEW	Mortgage Interest	\$20,000.00
NEW	Mortgage Fees	\$5,000.00
Fund Subtotal:		\$625,000.00

Delayed Payments, Cash Shortfalls, and Unaddressed Expenses

In the event of delayed receipts of expected tax monies, the Library may operate utilizing reserve funds and/or working cash monies.

In the event of cash shortfalls where the actual tax income received is less than is expected, the Library may cover the shortfall with reserve funds and/or adjust the Working Budget, as directed by the board.

To cover unaddressed expenses, i.e. major repair projects not foreseen at this time, major upgrades in equipment or furnishing not foreseen at this time, etc., the Library may use the appropriate reserve funds, as directed by the board. In the case of emergency maintenance, the Director is authorized to work with the board co-presidents to make repairs that exceed budget lines stipulated in this document.

Serving Our Public: Standards Compliance

The *Standards for Illinois Public Libraries: Serving Our Public 4.0*, was adopted in 2019 by the Illinois Library Association. They are guidelines that both enable a basic level of service across all public libraries in Illinois as well as provide a mechanism for reaching further to enhance library services. Reporting on our level of competence is also the key requirement for the Illinois Per Capita Grant program, effective with the 2021 application process. Each board is required to annually review each standard and the library's progress toward each standard as well as any plans for achieving standards that aren't currently met and improving services in standards where the minimum has been achieved. Below is a recap of where the Effingham Public Library stands in regards to each of the 13 standards.

Core Standards

Illinois statute sets a minimum level of compliance for all public libraries and the Standards build upon that foundation. The Effingham Public Library meets and/or exceeds all of the 23 core standards for basic library service.

Governance and Administration

The library meets all of the core standards, which include the basic functions of being a public library, such as having a strategic plan, a board, and a library administrator. This year, we will focus on updating our succession plans. There is a succession plan in place for some of the duties of the Director, but not at all for other leadership and/or mission critical positions. Both the Director succession plan as well as other key positions will be updated and/or created.

Personnel

The library meets all of the standards in Personnel. The board and administration have worked hard the last few years to improve pay rates for staff at all levels and to hasten compliance with the increase in the state minimum wage. Each new staff member receives an orientation in the first weeks of employment as well as core training on all library functions within 6 months of hire. This year, we will also have a comprehensive legal review of our current personnel policy to ensure compliance.

Access

Staff continually evaluate access to all of our services and spaces. The Children's Room will undergo an expansion this year to better meet the needs of this population and to make the best use of our current space. This project will also include a small re-working of the Teen Room to make it more functional and useful as well.

Building Infrastructure and Maintenance

Infrastructure and ongoing maintenance continue to be an important aspect of keeping the library in the best condition for the public. While we have only been in this space for 8 years, we are reaching the end of life for a few of our systems, including our lighting BAS. We are also looking at the condition of our interior paint and replacing a few carpet tiles. However, overall, the building is fairing very well. A facility assessment will be completed that will be the foundation for a capital improvement plan to guide our future needs.

Safety

The library routinely evaluates the safety of the building and our plans in the event of an emergency. For FY2026, we will be re-evaluating our current emergency plan and updating accordingly.

Collection Management

The library will be completing a comprehensive analysis of our collection this year. While we routinely weed and evaluate each section, we plan to evaluate the entire collection this year to ensure that we have items that circulate well and meet the diverse and unique needs of our community. This will include re-assessing our non-fiction classification system to ensure that all items on similar topics are brought together.

System Members Responsibilities and Resource Sharing

Our staff continue to be active in participation with the Illinois Library Association, including serving on committees. We would like to be more active in our Library System and will work to make that a priority in the coming year.

Reference and Reader's Advisory Services

All staff receive training on reference and reader's advisory services before they begin working at the Reference Desk. Because we are a small staff, we all work every public desk and all staff receive the same type of training.

Programming

Our library programs and attendance have completely recovered to above pre-COVID pandemic levels. Staff continue to work hard to bring a variety of programs that meet the needs of our community as well as expose all ages to different concepts and topics.

Youth/Young Adult Services

The board and staff will be working towards increasing the size of our Children's Room to better provide for this age group. When the building was remodeled 10 years ago, our use looked different; however, with the new building, we've seen a dramatic rise in families coming to our library and they quickly exceeded the space that was available. With this remodel, we hope to be able to address some of these issues.

Technology

We continue our partnership with Lazerware to provide our day-to-day technology and troubleshooting needs as well as to provide us with information and support for our long-term goals. We are happy with this partnership and can't imagine being able to hire enough staff on our own to do the things that they do under our contract.

Marketing, Promotion, and Collaboration

Marketing is one of the primary focal points for the board and staff this year. We want to continue to raise the profile of the library as well as expand people's awareness of the rich range of services at the library. To that end, the board will be looking at adding new ways to reach people with our marketing budget, including radio ads, billboards and targeted marketing campaigns.

Appendix A—Working Budget Detail