

Fiscal Officer Report

Highlights for February:

Revenues: PLF receipts for February were down 7% or \$19,548.39 from February of 2023. Receipts at the state level were lower than originally estimated. The March amount is higher than the previous year. State receipts were stronger than anticipated. OLC and the state still appear to be confident in the PLF estimated amounts. We will continue to monitor the monthly PLF amount. I believe we should receive the first levy installment either in March or April.

Revenues as a whole are down from 2023 amounts but are still on track for the year. The reduction is due in large part to the lower PLF receipts.

Investment strategies are being discussed and reviewed. A meeting with 5/3 representatives to create a long term plan will be held in March. The goal is to invest funds that are currently in the 5/3 Money Market account back into other investment options with stronger return amounts. Funds were transferred from the 5/3 Money Market to the Operating Checking Account at First Commonwealth in February to cover daily operations and maintain a certain "minimum balance."

Expenditures: Expenses year to date are slightly higher than for the same time period in 2023, however we are on track for the timing within the fiscal year. Expenditures for the year are only 12% of the budget as opposed to 16% for the second month of the year. Several one time renewals have been paid adding to the expenditure balance.

The 2023 Financial Report and Notes have been completed and were submitted to the Auditor of State through the Hinkle System. A copy of the submission was shared via email. If you have any questions or would like additional insight into what was submitted, please let me know. I continue to work with the Auditor of State and our contracted independent auditor to plan future audits. We have been approved for a single year audit for 2023 and then go back to a two year cycle for 2024-25. This option was proposed to be able to minimize audit costs while still allowing DCDL to sunset the old CMI accounting software. Costs associated with two single year audits were higher than I anticipated.

Budget training was provided during a monthly all-staff zoom meeting. I explained how our revenues are generated and how the 2024 budget was derived. Staff asked very good questions and feedback has been extremely positive.

A meeting was held with SFM Insurance representatives to go over the library's policy for 2024. After discussion, we determined the replacement values for buildings were too low based on the expenditures for the Liberty Branch. Those values have been adjusted to a level that makes the administrative staff more comfortable. Originally, there was a reduction to the annual premium amount. These changes will add additional premium, but the premium cost is still significantly less than the budget amount. The new amounts will provide better coverage should there be a loss of a facility.

Ohio Library Council (OLC) has partnered with Amazon to offer Amazon Business Prime to OLC member libraries at no annual cost, providing a \$1,300 savings per year. Included in the membership is free shipping and deeper discounts on certain categories of items. The current agreement is for one year. OLC will analyze how things are going and potentially add additional years of membership going forward. Should the free offering end, DCDL would reevaluate the benefit to cost of the business prime membership and make adjustments as warranted.

As we continue to review and update fiscal practices, we are changing how we prefer to do business. Writing a significant number of checks each month is costly and time consuming. There are other, better, and more secure ways to purchase items and make payments. We are seeing a rise in the number of checks that never reach a vendor. One of the ways we are exploring is the use of credit cards. Per our current policies, the board is required to approve the amount of a line of credit for DCDL as well as who may be an Authorized Card Holder. Because things cost more and we are evolving our purchasing practices, I am requesting the Board to grant authority to increase our line of credit through First Commonwealth Bank to \$40,000. This would allow us to update the current amounts on individual staff member credit cards to meet operational needs as well as allow for unused credit line availability as additional staff are added. I'm also asking for approval of an updated list of potential Authorized Users and authorized card amounts. Policies related to credit cards and purchasing in general will be reviewed, updated, and presented for Board approval as practices are reviewed and updated.