



## The Newsletter of the Argyle Public Library Board's Building Committee

# Off the Shelf

July/August 2022

## FEH Design Visits Argyle



An inquisitive audience showed up to the Argyle EMS building on June 9 to hear a presentation on strategies for getting a new space for the Library. Building Committee Co-Chair Monica Hodgson (at right in photo) introduced AIA member and Principal Architect of FEH Design of Dubuque, IA, Christy Monk. Monk provided an overview of the steps required to make the vision a reality. Attendees learned how FEH has completed 30 successful library projects in communities both large and small around Wisconsin.

Monk discussed FEH's model for library projects that includes how people can be involved in the design process leading to a final product that truly meets the needs of the community. The Argyle Public Library serves the Village of Argyle as well as the seven nearby townships and beyond, so reaching out to all the current and future library users will be an important effort. Monk emphasized that it will take time and patience to get financing, design work, and more lined up to ensure a great library that will serve generations to come. 🍷

**Note:** For a full recap of Monk's presentation, see the front page of the June 16 *Pecatonica Valley Leader*. The entire presentation is also online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBcyWapURKU>.

## Friends of the Argyle Public Library

The Friends group and the Building Committee together are hosting an information and fundraising table at the Argyle Open Markets from now through October. Look for the bright blue canopy. Volunteers will have fliers, newsletters, and stickers for kids. There will also be fundraising with a Book Sale (\$1.00 hardbound, \$.50 paperback), selling hats and tote bags, and signing up new Friends members. You heard right: the Friends group is now taking new members! To join, simply stop by the Market or the Library and complete the short membership form. Annual memberships are \$15.00 for a family, and \$10.00 for an individual, and are a great way to get involved and support the Library. 🍷

## **New Library Project**

- Complete a library space assessment for the community (Fall 2020)
- Site visit and community presentation by John Thompson, Director IFLS Library System of west-central Wisconsin (June 2021)
- Form a Building Committee (June 2021)
- Visit area libraries that recently were built or remodeled (July 2021)
- Carry out a community survey (Fall 2021, survey results are available at the library)
- Establish a nonprofit group, Friends of the Argyle Public Library (Feb 2022)
- Friends of the Argyle Public Library begins taking new memberships (June 2022)
- Meet with an architect and hold community meeting (June 2022)
- Explore sites and funding options including grants, loans, private donations (ongoing)
- Retain an architect and obtain renderings
- Launch fundraising campaign
- Review design options and gather community input
- Final selection of design plan
- Select contractors and complete construction

### **Additional Information about the New Library Site Selection**

In addition to the activities in the above checklist, the Building Committee has recently been in communication with the Argyle-Adams Fire Department whose current facilities do not meet the needs of today's firefighting professionals or modern equipment. A joint Fire Department-Library project is being explored as a possibility.

### **About the Building Committee**

The Committee is made up of 15 community members working to find a larger space for the Argyle Public Library. The need for a larger library was recognized as far back as 2004. A formal space assessment completed in 2020 said that a community Argyle's size should have a library with a minimum of 3000-4000 square feet of space, compared to the current library of only 900 square feet. The most critical factor is that the current library is not fully accessible to those using walkers, strollers, and wheelchairs. It also lacks sufficient space for children's story times and for chairs for people to sit. Why do this now? A new crop of programs, stimulus funds, and foundation grants has become available to help pay for a library project like this, and the Committee sees this as the right time to move forward. To stay informed, find *Off the Shelf* in the *Pecatonica Valley Leader*, at the library, or on the library's website. Subscribe by sending an email to [communicationscommittee53504@gmail.com](mailto:communicationscommittee53504@gmail.com).