

**TOWN & COUNTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT  
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT  
FINAL REPORT**

**I. Unit of government submitting this report:**

**Name of Library:** Town & Country Public Library District

**Address of Main Library Office:** 320 E North St. Elburn, IL 60119

**II. Information about our Library**

- A. We are located in Kane County. There are 16 libraries in our County.
- B. The population of the territory in which our Library is located is 11,823 (as of the 2020 census).
- C. We have 25 employees of the Library.
- D. Our annual budget for FY 23-24 is: \$1,594,000.
- E. Our District's equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for 2023 is \$525,601,261.

**III. Information about Our Committee**

A. **Committee Members:**

**Board President:** David Burroughs

**Trustee:** Kelly Gagne

**Trustee:** Mary Cherry

**Trustee:** Ann Jumonville

**Trustee:** Brandi Krall

**Trustee:** Matt Timko

**Trustee:** Christine Porter

**Executive Director:** Megan Shumaker

**Library Staff:** Bronwen Heneghan

**Library Staff:** Suzann Gemini

**Library Resident:** Susan Schubert

**Library Resident:** Helen Gruber

**Library Resident:** Dani Fischer

**B. Dates that our Committee Met**

**First Meeting:** May 8, 2023

**Second Meeting:** March 11, 2024

**Third Meeting:** May 13, 2024

**Fourth Meeting:** June 10, 2024

**IV. Core Programs or Services Offered by our Library**

**A.** Our Library offers the following core services and programs:

- Up-to-date print materials
- Periodicals
- Electronic materials
- Online databases
- Local history resources
- Voter registration
- Discounts at local museums
- Educational programs for all ages
- Entertainment for all ages
- Passive enrichment activities for kids
- Outreach services & homebound delivery
- Free computer and internet access
- Printing, copying, and faxing services
- Passport services
- Meeting spaces for community use
- Study tables
- Opportunities to meet others in the community

**B.** Other core services and programs we could possibly provide:

- Wi-fi printing
- Makerspace items, such as a Cricut or 3D printer
- A Library of Things
- A designated teen space
- A Reading to Rover/Paws to Read program

**V. Awards and Recognitions**

Our Library has received the following awards, distinctions and recognitions:

- The U. S. Census Bureau recognized Town & Country Public Library as an invaluable member of the 2020 Census Community Partnership and Engagement Program
- Town & Country Public Library was awarded an On the Road to Recovery: Transforming Library Spaces grant for \$19,647.00 to create an outdoor programming space for families

## **VI. Library Partnerships**

We partner with or have Intergovernmental Agreements with the following library entities:

1. **Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS)** – Provides continuing education, group discounts for services, networking groups, and other professional support.
2. **S.W.A.N. Consortium** – Provides resource sharing, a shared catalog and mobile app, continuing education opportunities, and other professional support.
3. **Illinois Libraries Present** – A joint programming initiative for Illinois libraries offered through an IGA with Northbrook Public Library.

**Our Library's efficiency has increased through cooperation with other library organizations in the following ways:**

Participating in a consortium and state library system allows us to share the cost of materials and other services that we would otherwise have to fund ourselves or be unable to provide altogether. It also allows us to keep abreast of current issues and best practices in the profession.

## **VII. Community & Governmental Partnerships**

We partner with the following governmental and community organizations:

1. **Elburn Chamber of Commerce & Local Businesses** – The local Chamber of Commerce sponsors annual community-wide events in which the Library participates. We partner with many local businesses to provide programming to our patrons. These partners also supply us with prizes for our Summer Reading Program, offering a valuable incentive for literacy.
2. **Kane County Forest Preserve** – Provides educational programs for children.
3. **U of I Extension Master Gardeners** – Provides educational programs for both children and adults.
4. **Local Preschools** – Preschool classes come to the Library for weekly fieldtrips in the summer, which promote early literacy.
5. **Local Mental Health Organizations** – We have worked with NAMI and a local counseling center to provide programming for our patrons and training for our staff.
6. **Elburn Police Department** – Provides safety and emergency preparedness training for Library staff.

7. **Elburn and Countryside Fire Protection District** –Provides safety and emergency preparedness training for Library staff as well as programming for Library patrons.
8. **Kane County Genealogical Society** – Operates out of the Library-owned Lawrence J. Martin Heritage Center facility where they hold office hours to assist the community with local history and genealogical research. They also maintain and organize the Library’s local history collection and hold their monthly meetings in the main Library building.

**Our Library’s efficiency has increased through local government and community cooperation in the following ways:**

Partnering with our local police and fire departments has allowed us to provide free training for our staff as well as build relationships with the individuals and organizations that we will depend on in the event of an emergency. Partnering with local businesses and non-profit organizations has proven mutually beneficial, as well as cost effective for the Library.

**VIII. Review of Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures, Training Materials, and other Documents**

We have reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the Library in order to evaluate our compliance and to determine if any of the foregoing should be amended.

- State laws applicable to Libraries
- State Ethics Laws
- Reports on government efficiency
- Documents related to the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA) and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- Schedule of Regular Meetings of the Library Board
- Library Board of Trustees By-Laws
- Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes
- IMRF Total Compensation Postings
- Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official
- All applicable officials have filed statement of economic interests
- Sexual harassment prevention training

- ✓ Intergovernmental Agreements
- ✓ Budget and financial documents
- ✓ Employee handbook
- ✓ Public policies related to Library usage
- ✓ Welcome booklet detailing Library services
- ✓ Program guide detailing Library program offerings

**IX. What Have We Done Well?**

**Finances and Transparency**

- Our budget and financial processes are detailed and accurate with appropriate checks and balances including director approvals, board oversight, and yearly audits by an independent firm.
- We have tangibly improved the Library's financial health over the past five years.
- The Library has established a Special Reserve Fund to prepare for future capital expenses such as renovating and expanding the building as it ages and the community grows. This will help us be the best stewards possible of public funds entrusted to us.
- Important budget and financial information is kept at the main service desk of the Library and is available for patrons to view upon request during operating hours.
- FOIA information is readily available both on the website and prominently displayed in the Library. FOIA requests are handled in a thorough and timely manner.
- The Library website provides information as to how the Library operates along with how to request additional information as needed.

**Collections and Services**

- The "make a request" option on the website allows patrons to make requests for materials. This serves as an efficient way to seek input from the public.
- Our Collection Development Policy complies with state law and adheres to the ALA Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statement.
- Both the physical and digital collections are easy to access.
- Our program offerings are diverse and of high quality.
- We have added valuable new services and programs over the past decade including passport services, increased electronic materials, 1-on-1 technology assistance, increased outreach services, and virtual program options.

**Collaboration**

- Belonging to SWAN and RAILS has greatly expanded the materials that are available and accessible to patrons.
- We have increased and expanded our collaborative partnerships with groups such as the Kane County Genealogical Society, Illinois Libraries Present, local government entities, and local education providers

X. What Can We Do Better?

- Train our staff on laws governing public library work such as the Library Records Confidentiality Act, FOIA, and OMA.
- Improve our program registration processes to make them more equitable for all patrons.
- Renovate the Library building and grounds for increased accessibility and efficiency.

XI. Studies on Governmental Efficiencies

In preparing this report, several studies on local government efficiency were examined. We found that Illinois has the highest number of local governments of any state according to the United States Census of Governments. As a library district, TCPLD is considered a Special Purpose Government, which make up 68% of local governments in Illinois. The studies on local government efficiency show that the average local government in Illinois serves 1800 residents compared to the national median of 2850 individuals. The service population of the Town and Country Library is 12,382, which is almost 7 times greater than the number served by an average Illinois local government, and over 4 times greater than the national median of 2,850 individuals served.

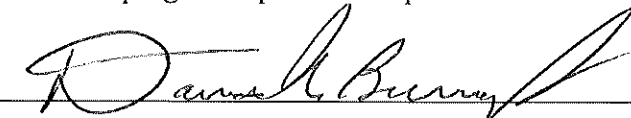
**Studies and publications examined:**

1. An Inventory of Local Governments in Illinois: <https://www.civicfed.org/inventory>
2. Delivering Efficient, Effective and Streamlined Government to Illinois Taxpayers: [https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/datasmart/files/illinois\\_delivering\\_efficient\\_effective\\_and\\_streamlined\\_government\\_to\\_illinois\\_taxpayers.pdf?m=1631286795](https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/datasmart/files/illinois_delivering_efficient_effective_and_streamlined_government_to_illinois_taxpayers.pdf?m=1631286795)
3. Illinois Has More Governments Than Any Other State, Now Looking to Consolidate: <https://reason.org/commentary/illinois-has-more-governments-than-any-other-state-looking-to-consolidate/>

XII. Our Committee's Recommendations Regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:

- Post more of the Library's financial documents on the website for remote and after-hours access.
- Update the Board of Trustees by-laws and including links within the document for easier access.
- Date the policies in our employee handbook as they are revised so we can easily see which ones may need to be updated.
- Research and apply for grants to help cover building renovations aimed at increased accessibility.
- Publish a progress report for the public on our current Strategic Plan goals.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_



Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee

Date of Committee Approval of Report: \_\_\_\_\_

June 10, 2024