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## Library revenue for rentals and copies more than anticipated, yet hiring freeze leaves head custodian position vacant



The Bristol Public Library. | Laura Bailey

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The Bristol Public Library is raking in an unexpected profit for the current fiscal year.

Thanks to the public's access to copy machines hosted at the two branches of the library and ability to rent library's meeting rooms, revenues are exceeding expectations this year.

During her review of the current budget year's expenditures, Library Director Deborah Prozzo told the Board of Library Directors, "We've seen a very, very big increase in our revenue through, particularly, in the library room rentals and copier charges."

According to the budget ledger presented to the directors at their Monday, May 5 meeting at the downtown branch, the library expected room rentals would generate \$17,700 this year. Instead, the library has raised \$20,382, or 115% of its plan. For copier charges, the library had expected to collect \$2,000. Instead, they collected \$3,435, or 171% of what was expected.

The revenue raised by the library is sent back to the city's general fund.

"As far as our expenditures for all of the major departments and main, children's and Manross (for fiscal year 2024-25), we 're on target right now," said Prozzo.

The fiscal year for the city ends June 30.

One of the budget moves out of the mayor's office, however, has had unexpected consequences for the High Street library, Prozzo told the directors.

Currently, Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano has implemented a hiring freeze in the city. One of the positions currently vacant is a maintenance technician at the library.

"That is still a major concern for us," said Prozzo. "Since the position has been vacant. I've been fielding numerous maintenance issues, alarms going on through both (High Street and the Manross Memorial Library in Forestville)."

Eversource has proven to be particularly vexing for Prozzo due to continuing utility construction work on High Street.

Eversource is installing a gas main and, in the process, it "hit a water main causing flooding (leaving) the library closed on the Thursday (April 17) before Good Friday, which was also during school vacation week. It created



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## DOING GOOD



JULY 3, 2025

# 194 students

Prozzo said, “We had a full house that day. We had (an organization) in the meeting room with a guest speaker and their luncheon. Starbucks was doing training so they paid for use of the meeting rooms.... There was a program up in the children’s department... Everyone had to be evacuated.”

“I was scheduled for that day off, but I did come in because it was a lot of moving pieces there and things that had to be done,” said Prozzo.

A lot the issues could have been handled by someone holding the senior maintenance technician position that is now vacant, said Prozzo.

“We want to get someone here,” said Prozzo.

“The mayor’s aware (of the need for the post) and (he) had a conversation with us,” said the librarian.

One position that was taken off the freeze list is a new children’s librarian, said Prozzo. The post will be empty soon due to an impending retirement. The city has begun to advertise for the position.

The timing couldn’t be better to get that post filled, said the library director. She said the summer reading season is the busiest time of the year for the children’s department.

Prozzo also announced that the library has made it easier for patrons to make financial donations to its nonprofit funds.

The web page, [www.BristolLib.com](http://www.BristolLib.com), has a new “Donate” tab. If you click on the tab, which is on the top right side of the page, you will be taken to another page where you can make a contribution to the “Bristol Libraries Fund.”

The fund, which is maintained by the Main Street Community Foundation, goes toward the High Street and Manross facilities of the library. Patrons can make a donation in their name or someone else’s name or they can make an anonymous donation.

The library is in the process of also setting up a link where patrons can donate to its Centennial Fund, which the website explains “was established to mark the 100th anniversary of Bristol Public Library in 1992. The Centennial Fund is used to enhance current library services and plan for future improvements.”

*Mike Chaiken is the Editor of CTFashionMag.com and was the longtime Editor of the Bristol Observer.*

## to carry on legacies of local residents

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