

X. STRATEGIC ISSUES

A. Board Report on Staff Morale

Commissioners requested information on how the ICfL is mitigating morale issues due to Covid, telework, etc. This is a summary of some of the actions the ICfL has taken to address employee morale.

During “normal” operations, new staff are introduced to the ICfL culture and operations through a comprehensive onboarding experience and are often assigned a peer mentor who helps informally guide new staff through the agency’s procedures. Regular orientation meetings with all supervisors and many project leads help begin a rapport from the first day of work onward. This has continued during the pandemic with most meetings occurring over Zoom. Zoom and Microsoft Teams have been good substitutes for in-person meetings and even social events. We can still see people’s faces (and sometimes their pets or babies), we can pick up on nonverbal cues, and generally people find their online time to be comparable to in-person time. The ICfL hosted two retirement parties, all staff meetings, a “Kick 2020 to the Curb” fun networking event with staff and the library community, and regular check-in meetings using Zoom or Teams video conferencing capabilities. We also have an online “water cooler” where staff can share pet pictures, recipes, and more to socialize about non-work topics like they used to do in the office when they’d get their morning cup of coffee.

The ICfL EMT (Employee Morale Team) has been in place for more than a decade and utilize staff donations to host get-togethers and activities that build comradery. This year they provided “goodie bags” during the holidays in place of the usual potluck event and held a Fall Harvest Event in October featuring a staff crafts fair. Currently, the EMT is hosting a Spring into Action board/prize drawing to encourage healthy habits and relationship building. We’ve attached a game board to this document to give you a better idea of the creativity this staff team has (go ahead and play along!).

Prior to the pandemic, the ICfL’s management team approved a plan proposed by HR Specialist Pete Nelson to allow up to 60 minutes every two weeks for self-care. We were looking for ways to support staff in different ways when pay increases and pay inequity are often things we cannot address. Staff need to let their supervisors know when they are taking their self-care time and are encouraged to use it to get outside, exercise, and other mental health breaks. It has been a popular “benefit” in place for over a year now. Pete and HR Back-Up Josie Bradford also produce an internal staff newsletter every month with health tips, reminders about the Employee Assistance Program, and a feature article on a different member each issue. In addition to fostering staff morale and team building, many staff are dealing with their own physical or mental health issues or those of family members as well as reporting more anxiety

about COVID-19 and the uncertainties it brought with it. We take all these concerns and challenges staff are dealing with seriously and try to provide as much support as possible.

Pete spent time a month after “stay home” orders were issued by Governor Little holding one-on-one interviews with every staff member to see how they were holding up and soliciting any ideas for things the agency could be doing to better support them. We believed that having someone other than their regular supervisor, whom they were meeting with online on a regular basis, would be a good alternative for those who may not want to be seen as complaining during this time. Pete aggregated the information from the interviews and shared it with the management team members and EMT members, and all were more mindful of ways to maintain regular communication and check in more with staff who might be feeling more isolated or anxious during this time.

As reported at the last Board meeting, Talking Book Service staff throughout the nation were reporting additional challenges with the deaths of more of their patrons due to COVID and the pressure of being one of the only social contacts for so many people. A national webinar hosted by COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) provided time for TBS staff to share strategies for how they cope with loss on a regular basis and other self-care tips. Being able to close the lobby during the pandemic and put additional safety precautions into place was welcomed by all staff. We are also looking for a quiet private space in the building that staff can use to decompress when they need a little more time after a difficult call. We will continue to be mindful of the needs these frontline staff face, which is often mirrored by their colleagues in public library settings.

Trainings like the one aimed at TBS staff are encouraged year-round and once or twice a year we do an all-staff development day where we often close the building and gather for training. On April 29, 2021 staff will spend time together online learning about self-resiliency based on the pandemic. Most staff, along with members of the library community, will also attend a suicide prevention training later in the day.

Finally, every three years the agency conducts a comprehensive Employee Satisfaction Survey. Results are compared to the previous survey results, and a staff committee reviews all the open-ended comments and suggestions and works to address as many as we have control over. 2021 is the year we’re due to complete the surveys, and Pete just sent it out to all staff members. The same questions used in 2018 were used again to allow for comparisons and we added two Covid-related questions to gather pandemic-related feedback. We can share those results with the Board at the June meeting if there is interest in hearing more on this topic.



Spring Into Action Challenge!

Grand Prize: \$20.00 Miracle Hot Springs Gift Card



<p>Play a game or do a puzzle</p> <p><u>Gettin' squirrely puzzle</u></p>	<p>Create a Zine! about something that interests you</p> <p><u>Gel pens and notebook</u></p>	<p>Go on an Idaho adventure</p> <p><u>Outdoorsy trucker hat</u></p>	<p>Deep clean your workspace</p> <p><u>Cactus mousepad</u></p>	<p>Chat/check-in with three staff members you haven't talked to lately</p> <p><u>\$10.00 Boise Boba Tea gift card</u></p>
<p>Watch a movie that has people in it with a different experience than your own</p> <p><u>\$10.00 gift card to the Flicks</u></p>	<p>Call a friend/family member you haven't talked to in a while</p> <p><u>Desktop phone holder</u></p>	<p>Go for a hike/walk someplace you have never been</p> <p><u>Idaho Hiking Guide</u></p>	<p>Help someone with one of their projects</p> <p><u>You're Amazing pop-open cards</u></p>	<p>Plan your dream vacation - even if you never take it</p> <p><u>Outdoor Adventure Stickers</u></p>
<p>Treat yourself and/or a friend to coffee or lunch</p> <p><u>\$5.00 Flying M gift card</u></p>	<p>Read a book to a child or your pet</p> <p><u>\$10.00 gift card to Rediscovered Books</u></p>	<p>Write something... start a journal or write a poem or haiku. If you want, share it on Teams</p> <p><u>Journal</u></p>	<p>Do one of the online tutorials on Niche Academy</p> <p><u>Radiance Selfie Light for laptop</u></p>	<p>Take a 5-minute stretch break from work-3 days in a row</p> <p><u>Harney & Sons Assorted Tea Bag sampler</u></p>
<p>Do an intentional act of kindness</p> <p><u>Inspirational and motivational mini note cards</u></p>	<p>Plant something for spring</p> <p><u>Herb garden starter kit</u></p>	<p>Listen to your favorite music while doing a boring task</p> <p><u>MTV Music Throwback Party Game</u></p>	<p>Read a book by an Idaho author</p> <p><u>Four Seasons in Rome by Anthony Doerr</u></p>	<p>Read an article or book that is out of the usual for you or out of your comfort zone</p> <p><u>\$10.00 Rediscovered Gift Card</u></p>
<p>Cook something delicious and post a picture of it on Teams</p> <p><u>Pop up hot dog toaster</u></p>	<p>Ride your bike to work, or if that isn't possible, ride around your neighborhood</p> <p><u>Orange Dog bike socks</u></p>	<p>Check something off your to-do list that you have been procrastinating</p> <p><u>Book of sticky notes</u></p>	<p>Eat a salad for lunch 3 days this week</p> <p><u>\$10.00 Zuppas gift card</u></p>	<p>Find something to color and sit down and color for 15 minutes</p> <p><u>Paint by stickers - dogs</u></p>





How It Works

- The Spring Into Action Challenge will run the entire month of March.
- Complete as many or as few activities as you like.
- Once you complete a challenge, mark the box and initial, you might also want to include the number of time you did the challenge.
- Once you complete a challenge you can put your name on a scrap piece of paper and put it into the jar for the drawing that corresponds with the challenge. The jars will be located on the "free staff table."
- Challenges can be done more than once, and you can enter the drawing more than once.
- If you are not coming into the building, let someone on EMT know what challenges you did, and how many times, and we will enter your name for you.
- A \$20.00 gift card to Miracle Hot Springs will be the grand prize. You can enter the grand prize (only one entry) if you complete at least 10 challenges.
- The prize drawing will be on Monday, April 5. You can still win if you are not present.
- Have Fun!!

