

Library Director Report July 2024

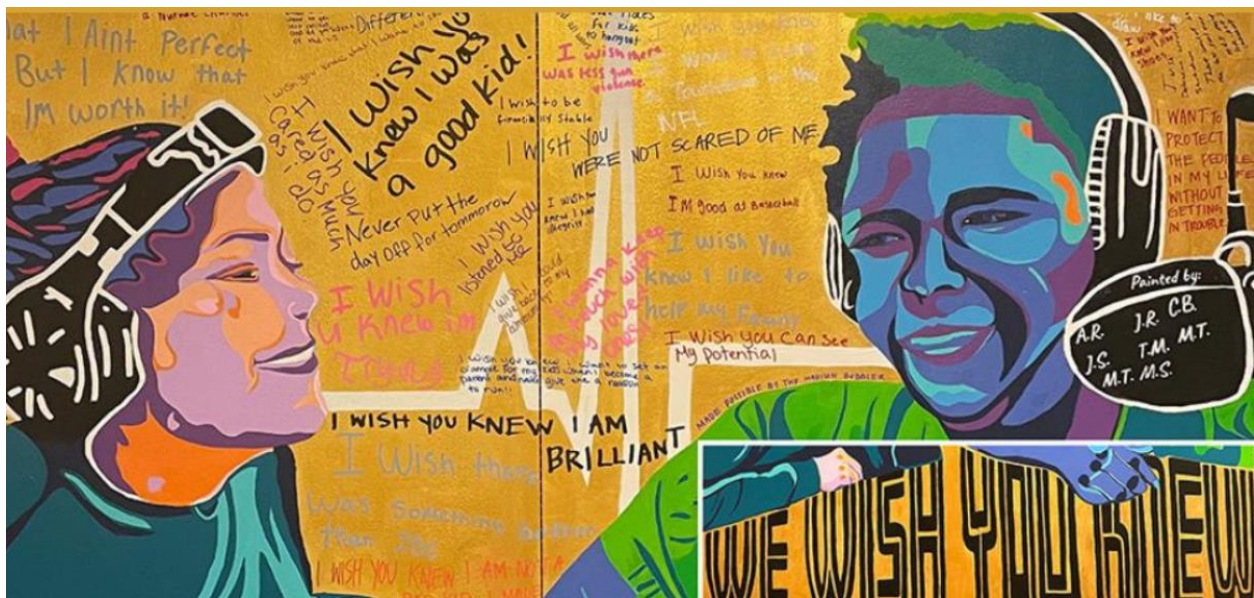
Prepared by Tana Elias, July 31, 2024



Summer Is Popping with Community Programs!



Parks Alive - Held in parks across Madison, Parks Alive events are a chance to visit your local park, listen to music, participate in fun, family-friendly activities, enjoy free food and get to know your neighbors. This citywide initiative is part of the [City & County's violence prevention initiatives](#) by fostering community connections and connecting residents in key neighborhoods with city services. The Dream Bus has or will participate in 14 Parks Alive events, with library staff tabling at additional events. Dream Bus is assisted by summer Maker Intern Yaritza (pictured left). Photos by AASPIRE Intern Isabel.



Making Justice – Some of the library's most impactful programs are ones that aren't open to the general public. This new mural, "We Wish You Knew," greets visitors to the Dane County Juvenile Detention Center. Bubbler artist Maria Schirmer-Devitt worked with youth at the Center to paint the mural and

include kids' handwritten wishes, including "I wish you weren't scared of me; I wish I felt safe in my house; I wish there were safe places for kids to hang out; I wish there were other places for us other than JDC for our mistakes; How big can you dream if you knew you couldn't fail..." I invite you to learn more about [the project and Making Justice](#).

Hybrid Meetings

There have been some requests to have hybrid Board meetings and Board meetings in non-library spaces. I've done some checking around the city and this is what we can currently offer:

- **Hybrid meetings** – City IT does not have the capacity to host hybrid meetings for all Type 2 BCC (board, commission and committee) meetings, and the Library Board (a Type 2 meeting) can not request that all meetings be hybrid, per Sarah Edgerton, City IT. If the Board identifies a special meeting that would benefit from the hybrid model, we can request City Media Team coverage in advance but there is no guarantee the request would be approved. We would also be limited to one of three City spaces fully wired for hybrid meetings.
- **Virtual meetings** – The Board can choose virtual meetings at any time, as long as we notice a meeting as virtual and have two staff members to manage the technical aspects of the meeting. The advantage of virtual meetings is that they are accessible to many with transportation, childcare or other barriers to attending in-person meetings.
- **In person meetings** – This has been the default meeting expectation pre-Covid. It allows for Board members to visit most or all neighborhood libraries in a three-year term but is also more restrictive for community attendance. While the expectation has been that meetings would be in libraries, we could also offer off-site meetings, but a call-in option might not be available in that case.

I'd recommend that the board discuss the pros and cons of each option at a board meeting, then vote to a) change any existing 2024 meetings if desired and b) recommend a plan for meetings for 2025. That plan can include a combination of virtual and in-person meetings based on topics of discussion, with hybrid requests for key meetings with higher possibility for public comment, like budget approval. See a forwarded email from Sarah Edgerton, City of Madison Information Technology Director, for a lengthier description of Type 1 and 2 meetings and City IT constraints for BCC meetings.

Budget Update

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway introduced her [long range budget plan](#) at Common Council on Tuesday, July 16. It spans five years and shows two different scenarios - one with a referendum in 2025 and one without. You can see those projections and gain more insight into the City of Madison's proposed plans to address the \$22 million dollar deficit in the Mayor's presentation to Common Council from July 16, 2024. The article [Madison faces \\$6 million in city cuts or referendum, Mayor says](#), (WKOW News 27, July 17), summarizes the presentation and includes comments from me about how each scenario would affect library service.

Upcoming important dates include:

- Aug 6 - Council hears public comment on referendum
- Aug 14 - we meet with Mayor's budget team to review the Library's budget
- Aug 20 - Council votes on referendum
- Oct 8 - Mayor's Executive Budget is introduced to Council – this will give us a sense of what we're facing in referendum/no referendum scenarios
- Nov 5 – if referendum is on the ballot, it will be decided on this election day
- Nov 12-14 - Council approves final operating budget for 2025

How can you advocate for the library?

- Register to speak at the August 6 Council meeting
- Contact [your alder](#) and/or allalders@cityofmadison.com
- Share our [budget one-pager](#) with your circles of influence
- Invite me to speak at or submit articles to groups you're affiliated with – schools, churches, professional associations, neighborhood groups, etc.
- Share the library's budget messages on Facebook, Instagram & email

Organizational Assessment Update

Our management team met with Advancing with Purpose to review the work of teams tasked with exploring possible organizational chart models and programming service models. We'll continue the work throughout the rest of the summer and update the Board on significant movements forward.

Imagination Center at Reindahl Park Update

We are expecting to finalize construction documents at the August 8 ICRP stakeholder meeting. At this time, the project - which was scheduled to go to bid at completion of construction documents - will be paused until the library's final budget is passed in November. This pause will give library management time to explore operational funding options with the Library Board and other stakeholders. In September, we'll bring more data to the Board to review service hour reductions, if needed, as well as envision how the Imagination Center will fit into the current delivery of library service throughout the City.

Planning for Possible Service Reductions

By the time of the July 11 board meeting, we'd heard from over 60 residents, library patrons, and staff members about our budget. We intend to survey community partners, library patrons, and review a variety of data points to make recommendations on specific programs and service hours that would be reduced if the full 5% reductions are needed.

At our August 1 board meeting, I'll review the types of data we intend to present in September and ask for your feedback on what other kinds of data or information you'd like us to consider or

present in bringing a plan forward for approval before the end of the year. This data will also be used in the discussions around our options for funding the operations of the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park.

Policy Review

One of the projects on my 1-year work plan is to institute a policy review schedule. Some of our existing policies haven't been reviewed for many years, and the library doesn't have stated policies in some areas where we should. Any library-specific policies need to be reviewed and approved by the Library Board. By contrast, City-wide policies are handled via City of Madison [Administrative Procedure Memoranda](#) (APMs). At the September board meeting, I'll bring forward a proposed schedule to review existing policies and propose new policies. See all current library policies at madpl.org/policies

Media Round-Up

It's been a busy news month! Here's a round-up of news articles the library was featured in during July:

- [In the Groove: The Madison Public Library's Growing Vinyl Collection Is an Eclectic Hit](#) (Isthmus, July 4, 2024)
- [Madison Public Library's Dream Bus Is Breaking Accessibility Barriers in the Community](#) (WKOW, July 9, 2024)
- [Madison Public Library's Naturalist-in-Residence Alex Booker: A Steward of Land and Community](#) (Madison365, July 10, 2024)
- [Madison Libraries Weigh Cutting Sunday and Evening Funding](#) (Cap Times, July 11, 2024)
- [Possible Cuts in Hours, Staffing, and Programs for Madison Public Libraries](#) (WISC-TV, July 12, 2024)
- [Naturalist-in-Residence Alex Booker](#) (WORT-FM, July 19, 2024)
- [Madison Public Library Expanding Its Reach of LGBTQ+ Resources](#) (NBC15, July 22, 2024)

And wow – it's already August! I wish you all a happy last month of summer. If you're looking for a reason to get outside, check out one of our [Naturalist-in-Residence](#) programs happening now through August 23.