

## **Library Director Report September 2022**

### Focus Areas:

Building Project (BP)

West Side Analysis (WS)

Organizational Development (OD)

### **WELCOME**

A hearty welcome to new Library Board members Yeonhee Cheong, Mathias Lemos Castillo, Tom DeChant, and to Cindy Fesemyer returning for another term. Your commitment and service to Madison Public Library is greatly appreciated. I have been working with library staff to bring better organization to our onboarding process and to provide you with a background on MPL and your duties as a board member. We hope to continue this beyond the onboarding stage and introduce more updates to the entire board. It will be done in conjunction with an onboarding process being developed for new alders. We hope to include videos that highlight the purpose and vision of MPL at a later date. So for now, welcome aboard the MPL team.

### **IN DEDICATION TO**

As I shared in a post to the Library Board, it is with extreme sadness to report the passing of Barb Dimick, long time MPL Library Director of 17 years, and leader for youth services for a combined over 30 years of service to MPL and the Madison community. She was responsible for a number of building projects most notably the renovation of Central Library. I applaud her accomplishments and forever remain thankful for the solid foundation she left MPL to continue to build upon. The MPL Staff Association and Library Management recognized her leadership and many contributions by contributing to a fund to plant trees in her honor. Barb's family will be working with our Foundation to determine a suitable way to recognize her that is yet to be determined.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

Dane County is now at a Medium COVID-19 Community Level (Community Level has been shifting between Medium and High, which was expected by Public Health). The most important message I have been sharing with staff and I share with you is to be sure to get the new bivalent booster if you are already current with your other shots. In addition it is important to get your flu shot. They can both be given at the same appointment.

### **BUDGET 2023**

The Mayor's 2023 Executive Operating Budget will be released Oct 6, 2022. We did not incur any amendments to the 2023 Executive Capital Budget, which is always a good sign. I will be presenting to the Finance Committee on Oct 17<sup>th</sup> on our operating budget. There will be a short period after that date for Finance Committee to introduce any amendments to the Executive budget. Ending with the final Adoption of the 2023 Budget meetings by Common Council beginning on November 15<sup>th</sup>. [Then we get to begin to work on our 2024 budget.]

### **IMAGINATION CENTER (BP)**

Schematic design continues on the facilities and grounds for the Imagination Center. We have started the process of bring in more MPL staff to help inform the project. We have also discussed a major realignment of the facility to save additional trees that will also enhance the function of the building. Operating in conjunction with the schematic design is the Parks work on their Master Plan for Reindahl

Park. The Master Plan is more global in its scope covering how the entire park space will function, but it will include the Imagination Center.

### **MPL FOUNDATION UPDATE**

It is with mixed feelings that I report the departure of Jenni Jeffress as the Executive Director of the MPL Foundation. It is a huge loss, and we will miss her expertise and passion for supporting MPL through the Foundation. She has been with the Foundation since 2010, and in those 12 years she has grown the Foundation and raised millions of dollars. When I arrived in 2012, the Foundation was giving the library on an annual basis from \$25K to \$30K. That gift has grown to be in the hundreds of thousands on an annual basis. All of this in addition to the millions raised to support our building projects. I said it was with mixed feeling because I am also delighted that she has this tremendous opportunity to remain in Madison and lead the Rennebohm Foundation. This appointment affirms how talented she is with her philanthropic expertise. We wish her all the best in her new journey.

### **WEST SIDE COMMUNITY ANALYSIS (WS)**

In the August report Rynn Kerkhove had been finalizing a new version of Tell Us packets to begin distribution to the neighborhood libraries. That task was accomplished and she has started to work with library staff to begin to collect community input. She has been working with Ariel Robinson at Meadowridge and she will be hosting a Tell Us engagement conversation with residents from that neighborhood the evening of October 10th. She will be hosting a table at the Westside Community Market every Saturday morning through the end of the season starting October 8th.

Rynn continues to reach out to other organizations and neighborhood associations to schedule presentations in the coming weeks. She will also be attending the Catholic Multicultural Center Hispanic Heritage event with Tammy Ocampo to promote the Tell Us project.

### **WISCONSIN BOOK FESTIVAL**

A reminder and an invitation to the Library Board that our annual Wisconsin Book Festival is coming up from Oct 13-16. Although we host programs throughout the year these dates represent full days of authors and several events at Central Library. The festival was preceded by some amazing events including an overflow crowd of over 400 in attendance for the new David Maraniss book, and an equally exciting and well attended presentation by Jason Mott, winner of the 2021 National Book Award for Fiction.

Spoiler alert: We have an exceptional closing event to the festival on Sunday with Cody Keenan, President Obama's speechwriter, who will be joined by Pete Souza, the White House official photographer during the Obama presidency. A can't miss opportunity to hear about the many stories during their assignment to these two important roles for the Obama administration.

### **STAFF DAY (OD)**

Thank you to the Library Board once again for approving the closing of all libraries for one day to allow everyone to have the opportunity to attend Staff Day. I would also like to thank the Board members who were able to join us during the day. Two new Board members, Mr. DeChant and Mr. Lemos Castillo, were in attendance despite not yet having attended a regular Board meeting. I quickly put

them both to work with the Our Madison self-portrait project. They were later joined by Cindy Fesemyer and Eve Galanter.

I want to recognize and thank the many staff that contribute to the planning and implementation that makes our Staff Day a tremendous success. I overheard several staff during the day sharing that it was the best staff day ever. Indeed it was exciting to be back together in person for the first time since 2019. It was especially important that our focus throughout the day was on self-care and recognizing the difficult path we maneuvered over the past 2 ½ years and to reward the resilience of our staff dealing with the pandemic. And it was especially meaningful to be in Central Library since the completed renovation was the initial reason to bring everyone together to celebrate that accomplishment. Our presence in Central Library was also appropriate to take the time to recognize Barb Dimick and her tireless efforts to make that renovation possible. As I shared with staff in my address to them, we constantly focus on our community and how important they are as we provide our services and resources, but today it was all about each of them. Take the time to recognize your dedication and hard work, and celebrate yourself for all you do for MPL and your community

## **MEETINGS, COMMITTEES, TEAMS & MORE**

### **City**

Mayor's Management Team  
Mayor Check-in  
Racial Equity & Social Justice Strategic Planning  
Deputy Mayor Check-in  
Mayor's COVID-19 Taskforce  
Finance Committee Meeting  
Budget Contacts Meeting  
Common Council Meeting

### **MPL**

Library Management Team  
All Staff Town Hall  
MPL Foundation Grant discussions  
Imagination Center Design Team  
MPLF Board Meeting  
Lakeview Lease Review  
Wisconsin Book Festival Steering Committee

Meeting MPL Foundation Executive Director  
Meeting MPL Budget Team  
Royster Corners Condo Association  
Budget Team meeting on 2023 CIP  
PlayLab Planning Session  
Meeting President Madison Parks Commission  
Presentation to MPL Foundation New Member Orientation

### **External**

Wisconsin Resource Library Directors  
Urban Libraries Council Director/CEO Calls  
Digital Equity Leaders Network  
Wisconsin Book Festival Release Event  
DMI Annual Celebration at Monona Terrace  
Donor Thank you with the WBF Jason Mott Event  
Wisconsin Latino Chamber of Commerce Event