

Library Director Report November 2023

Focus Areas:

Building Project (BP)

West Side Analysis (WS)

Organizational Development (OD)

BUDGET 2024

The 2024 Budget was approved. Our Operating budget passed as approved by the Library Board. The Capital Budget passed as approved by the Library Board with the exception of an additional \$2M added to the construction of the Imagination Center in the Mayor's Executive Budget, and an amendment to the Capital budget by Alder Madison adding another \$45K to our keyscan project so we could complete the updates at the three remaining libraries, Central, Ashman, and Monroe. These updates are necessary to match up with the same system as the City and the remainder of the other MPL facilities.

Overall the budget process went rather smoothly this year. In fact it was approved in one night. A loooooong night but at least it was one night.

Huge thank you as always to our Budget Team in preparing the budget, and to the Library Board for your support.

IMAGINATION CENTER (BP)

We continue to inch closer to the completion of the design development process. The interior details are beginning to be decided and the features of the space are being finalized. It is an exciting and engaging space with areas of warm wood and some pops of color. The flooring will be intriguing with a pixelated pattern of flooring tiles. And plenty of natural daylight with the park almost jumping into the building. It was a long wait for the community, but it will be treasured for even more years.

I met with Tammy Ocampo and Carissa Christner, MPL Youth Services, on site at Reindahl Park to help visualize where outdoor youth activities could be located, and the possible scope of programming. With such a large expanse of space it will be a unique opportunity and challenge on how to approach outdoor activities.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW (OD)

The Care Plan will be finalizing the Strategic Plan and presented a next to last draft for your input. .

The RFPs for the Operational Assessment are being reviewed with a decision to come in early December.

ULC ANNUAL FORUM (OD)

I attended the 2023 Urban Libraries Council (ULC) Annual Forum in Seattle with Tana Elias, and Conor Moran. This was the first year to have the Library Directors/CEOs combine a session with the Directors/CEOs of library foundations. It was an engaging discussion led by a panel with directors of both libraries and foundations from Chicago and Seattle. In comparing notes with Conor after the session, we agreed we do it well in Madison. The relationships and lines of communication are just as good if not better in some ways than what was shared by the panel. Foundation leadership in attendance at the ULC Annual forum is very new, so I was happy to see that Conor was able to attend the conference.

I agreed to the City's HR department request to share flyers with the job posting for my position at the event. I did field a few questions about the position, talked to some promising candidates, and generally gave those interested in learning about the position what is great about Madison, both as a city and its amazing library system.

WEST SIDE COMMUNITY ANALYSIS (WS)

No update to report.

LIBRARY BOARD

We will be welcoming two new Library Board members at the December meeting. Salud Garcia (District 18) and Genevieve Carter (District 3). Thank you for offering your service to the Board and your community.

Unfortunately, the December meeting will also mark the departure of long time Board member, Cindy Fesemyer. As a working librarian and now as a library consultant, Cindy had that level of experience to bring to discussion at meetings, particularly during some difficult budget decisions. What stood out for me during her tenure was her strong voice and support for equity and intellectual freedom. Strong values that she stood by even in difficult times. Thank you so much for your service.

CLOSURE AND TRANSITION

I have started to develop plans for my departure, and transition to new leadership. Krissy Wick has agreed to the Library Board's request to accept the interim Library Director role as my remaining time is coming to a close. I want to thank Krissy for taking on this role. It is difficult to be in an interim position, especially when it is with new leadership coming onboard. She is extremely knowledgeable about our operations, and her years of service at MPL will be an asset as interim. Plus her extensive institutional knowledge to share with the new director will be important.

I have been working on creating an archive of documents, both paper and electronic, and will be working with the Library's IT team to preserve emails and other private documents for the next Director. I have discussed my transition with the Mayor and she has agreed to pass on the discussions we have had about MPL's future considerations with the new director. And I have communicated to Mayor Satya that I will be willing to meet with her and/or the new director if they seek my input.

I will be out of the office a lot at the end of 2023 and the beginning of 2024, in order to use my remaining leave balance. I do not expect to leave the City except for a short trip to Colorado at the end of November. Despite being in "vacation status" I will still be available to staff and the Board by email or phone, and I will come in if needed, as I can always make some adjustments to my leave.

My last day in office will be February 1, 2024, with the exception of coming back on February 22nd for my last Library Board meeting. My official last paid day will be March 1, 2024.

UPCOMING

Travel to Colorado November 28 – Dec 2nd. Common Council Holiday Brunch on December 2nd. City Leadership Gathering on Dec. 6th. CEO's of Tomorrow on Dec 10th.

I am planning to attend the December, January, and February Library Board meetings.

MEETINGS, COMMITTEES, TEAMS & MORE

City

Mayor's Management Team
Mayor Check-in
Deputy Mayor Check-in
Common Council Budget
Lakeview Lease Review with City Real Estate

MPL

Library Management Team
MPLF Board Meeting
Meeting with MPL Foundation Executive Director
MPL Foundation Board Meeting

ULC Director/CEO Call
Operational Assessment review
Meeting with Alder Latimer Burris
November All Staff Town Hall
Lakeview Lease discussion
SCLS All Director's meeting
Site visit with Youth Services at Reindahl Park

External

ULC Annual Forum
Tribute to Richard Swanson (former LB member)
Art Exhibit at Pinney Library
Central Friends of Library meeting