

Interim Library Director Report January/February 2024

Thank You!

A big thank you to the staff (especially Heather Gillespie) who helped to plan some very special events in January and February, including the Barb Dimick memorial event, Susan Lee's (informal) retirement party, and Greg Mickells' retirement party. Planning meaningful experiences like these takes a lot of work, and the efforts of all involved are greatly appreciated.

Winter Weather

In January, the City was able to test out its new Emergency Operations format as we experienced two major snowstorms and a polar snap in the same week. The new Library Board policy, which aligns the Library's opening and/or closing with City offices was hugely helpful for Library staff, giving us much more lead time for messaging and planning than the previous process. It also helped us to reinforce the City's "stay off of the streets" messaging to keep people safe. I know there are always concerns about the population experiencing homelessness during these events, so I have been talking with Sarah Lim from Community Development and the Library Management Team to come up with some options for how we could help if any of the shelters reach capacity and have to turn people away.

City Budget

The 2025 Budget process is beginning much earlier this year, due to the size of the projected deficit. City Finance has produced a four-part series explaining the budget and strategies that can (and cannot) be employed to help. For those who missed the emails, the full series can be found here: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/budget/2025-budget/2025-budget-outlook> In order to give all of the departments instructions on how to build their 2025 budget requests, the Common Council began their discussions on February 13 (that meeting can be viewed at the same link above), with follow-up slated to continue at the March 5 meeting.

Imagination Center at Reindahl Park

The design development phase of the project is complete. After reviewing the updated cost estimates, we have been working with City Engineering and the design team on some value engineering in order to keep the project within budget. We will also submit these plans for approval with the Urban Design Commission on February 28. Once we complete these steps, we'll move on to the construction document phase.

Strategic Priorities

Staff have been having thoughtful conversations about our priorities, our goals, and the tasks that are necessary to turn our goals into reality as we move into the goal setting and work planning phases of strategic planning. Using the strategic priorities as our guiding document, Library Management Team has been energized to see how our continuing projects and data collection are aligning with the priorities we have outlined and are excited to get work plans down on (digital) paper. City of Madison Organizational Development recently made space for

the Library within some of their work planning training, and staff have already commented on how useful both the trainings and the tools provided have been.

2023 Year in Review

Liz Boyd and Tana Elias have done a wonderful job highlighting our 2023 end of year data via Facebook. The slides caught the attention of journalist, Samara Kalk Derby, who featured the library in an article in the *Wisconsin State Journal*: https://madison.com/life-entertainment/local/madison-public-library-most-popular-2023/article_de4e9124-b93c-11ee-ac33-e3ff412e3f60.html

Results Madison

And, speaking of data, the Results Madison project is continuing to progress throughout the Library and other departments. Lori and I are currently reviewing our chart of accounts to make sure that we will be ready to move our budget from five categories to seven in the 2025 budget process, and I will work with Isis and Alyssa to get a presentation about Results Madison on one of our upcoming meeting agendas so that everyone on the board knows what to expect and why we're making the changes.

DPI Annual Report

One of the other ways we use data at the library, is, of course, to submit our annual report for the Department of Public Instruction. A huge thank you to Liz Avery, Lori Suiter, Tana Elias, Molly Warren, and Margie Navarre Saaf for working together to create the report (and to Susan Lee for walking everyone through the process before she left!) You'll find a mostly-final draft in your Board packet; we'll continue to work with Tracie Miller at SCLS to double-check and finalize data from Feb. 15-22 and will review any changes made since Feb. 15 with you at the Board meeting before asking for your approval of the report.