

Library Director Report October 2022

Focus Areas:

Building Project (BP)

West Side Analysis (WS)

Organizational Development (OD)

PUBLIC HEALTH

Dane County is now at a LOW COVID-19 Community Level. In the most recent report from Public Health to the Mayor's Management Team, Public Health did suspect contributing to the low number of cases may be due to under reporting since many people are self-testing at home and not reporting if they test positive. Which prompted this reminder: If you do test at home, and test positive, please report your test result to Public Health to help them maintain an accurate status on COVID conditions in Dane County.

BUDGET 2023

The presentation of the Library's Executive Budget to the Finance Committee went well. In a shift from past budget presentations this one only received a couple of questions. I have not received any communication about pending amendments to our budget. Typically alders will contact me in advance of making an amendment or their intent to do so. We are getting closer to the final adoption of the 2023 Budget with the first of perhaps three sessions beginning on November 15, 2022.

IMAGINATION CENTER (BP)

Schematic design continues on the facilities and grounds for the Imagination Center. Last month I mentioned some siting shifts to preserve additional mature trees near the buildings, and that has been achieved. It did create a substantial shift within the library's interior, but the current layout still retains the programming elements we need.

The number of design meetings has greatly increased due to additional technical meetings for mechanical, electrical, and other logistical issues for the building's physical functions.

Rynn did host two recent information sharing gatherings. The first was held at Reindahl Park in conjunction with an AnjiPlay activity. In addition to the activity, a food truck with free tacos was available to attendees. The app. 30 attendees were predominately young families of color. Some major points learned from the conversation that took place: The majority of attendees were unaware of the project, but excited about having this resource for their neighborhood. They saw this project as giving their children more options. And they also felt the addition of the library and the activity it would bring to the park would make the park a safer place. The other gathering was for older adults organized with the assistance of NewBridge, a Madison non-profit that works with older adults. Some of the attendee's messages focused on accessibility and mobility related features for the grounds and the facility. They mentioned comfort being key since they may tend to stay longer, and perhaps access to drink or food via vending. They also mentioned transportation issues with making it to the Imagination Center. Although that is not directly related to the facility it may be something we could consider for connecting older adults to services that could get them to the center. Rynn will be working with the project stakeholders to develop future informational outreach to the community.

WEST SIDE COMMUNITY ANALYSIS (WS)

No update for October.

WISCONSIN BOOK FESTIVAL (WBF)

The 2022 WBF came back with the majority of the talks being in-person once again since the 2019 festival. It was a joy to see so many people returning and adding to the festivities of the event. A couple of the in-person sessions drew overflow crowds and one of our virtual events drew a national/international crowd. The attending authors (and booksellers) were extremely pleased to see the level of purchases of their books, especially when they could sign for the buyers. I regularly heard from attendees how good it was to be back in person. One of my personal favorite events was the final one with Cody Keenan, Obama's speech writer, and Pete Souza, White House photographer during both Obama terms. I got to spend some time with them before and after their presentation. The insider stories were a delight to hear, and as I was walking Cody out he shared that he had been on a plane for the last 9 days for authors talk, and this was by far his favorite since he was able to combine Pete's photos with his stories.

The four days of WBF drew just under 2500 attendees, bringing our total WBF attendance for 2022 to almost 8400. And there are still 5-6 events left in 2022!

BCYCLE PARTNERSHIP

For just over a year now we have partnered with BCycle to support their Community Pass program. Anyone with a MPL library card can check out a fob and a bike helmet for one week and use BCycle for free during that time.

Mayor Satya recently sent me a link to an article from a national publication which mentions MPL's participation in this program.

<https://nextcity.org/urbanist-news/bike-libraries-are-increasing-access-to-bikes-across-america>

[BTW, the article has a picture of Eve Galanter checking out a BCycle.]

We also received a recent report from BCycle about how the program has been going.

Hi Everyone - just wanted to send a note, I was looking at the numbers today and was shocked to see, we've had 1,300 trips so far this year with the Community Pass!! Since we launched the program in Sept. 2021 we've seen a total of 1,500 trips. The program is certainly taking off and I look forward to continuing to see the community take advantage of such a great opportunity. Thanks again for your partnership in this, we really are making an impact.

Have a great weekend,

*Helen Bradley
General Manager – Madison BCycle*

LIBRARY DIRECTOR CONTRACT

Thank you to the Library Board and to Mayo Satya for your continued support by granting me the privilege to continue to lead MPL. The renewal of my five year contract was approved by Common Council at their Oct 11th meeting. The contract is retroactive to my start date of September 4th and will continue to September 4, 2027. It has been an exciting, challenging, and rewarding 10 years, and I am looking forward to continue working with the Library Board, our amazing MPL staff, my City colleagues, and the community we serve.

TRAVEL TO KANIFING

Mayor Satya has invited me to join a group to travel to the City of Madison's sister city of Kanifing, in The Gambia. The group is composed of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Alders, City staff, Wi State Representative, and a few other community representatives. I am excited to be participating in the visit since prior to the pandemic I had been working with the Madison Kanifing Sister City Team on developing plans for a library in Kanifing. In fact, property had been secured for the facility in Kanifing, but the pandemic put everything on hold. This trip may renew the project, and perhaps I will be able to visit the potential site and meet with the community. Another possible attendee on the trip is hoping to arrange for a visit to another library in a village some 30 miles away to see how that facility is working.

I will be leaving Madison on Nov 25. Our time in The Gambia, with one side trip to Senegal, will be from Nov 27 to December 4. We are able to bring someone along on the trip so Bev, my wife, will accompany me. Since our flight requires a connection through Brussels, Bev and I are planning to take a short vacation in Brussels on our way home and return to Madison on Dec 8th. Now we just have to figure how to pack for possible 40 degree temps in Brussels and 100 degrees in Kanifing.

Except for the accommodations being provided by the host city while in Kanifing, all expenses for flights, etc. are personally paid for by those traveling. I may not be able to call in to the Dec 1 Library Board meeting based on connectivity, and that it will be 10pm in Kanifing, but I will leave the possibility open.

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
Meeting with Common Council Chief of Staff
HR Meeting to discuss hourly and seasonal workers

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 review
Meeting with Sequoya Staff

External

Meeting with the recruiter for the Foundation's Exec Director vacancy
Election Chief Inspector Training
Wisconsin Resource Library Directors
Urban Libraries Council Director/CEO Calls
Digital Equity Leaders Network
Wisconsin Book Festival
Literacy Network Luncheon (Actually in Sept., but missed in last month's report)
UW- School of Information Accreditation visit
Meeting with ALA Accreditation Advisory Board
UW-Madison Chancellor's Luncheon
Dane Arts release for the 2023 Art Poster and calendar
Meeting with Wayne Young on Gambia Library Visit
Meeting with OPN Architect about Gambia Library Project