

**Library Director's Report**  
**July 2020**

**RESTORATION OF SERVICES and REOPENING LIBRARY BUILDINGS**

We are maintaining the status quo on restored services. The Call Center, Curbside Delivery, Book Return, and Public Computing will continue, but we are beginning to collect sufficient data on the services to look at options to improve on the services. The primary areas we are examining are the hours and days of operations. We may need to adjust our operations based on staff capacity.

MPL is working with the Municipal Court system to allow individuals to use libraries as a place to “appear” before the court using virtual connections provided by the library. This will be by appointment only in coordination with the courts. We are also providing libraries for absentee early voting and ballot collection.

In my June report I noted that we were looking to pilot a plan for allowing patrons to enter our libraries to retrieve their own holds. With the recent spike in COVID-19 cases we are placing the pilot on hold until further notice.

**BUDGET 2021**

I presented on MPL's 2021 CIP to the Mayor and her budget team. The CIP budget was left intact as presented at this time. I did have a follow-up meeting with Mayor Satya, Eric Knepp, Director of Parks, Rob Phillips and Bryan Cooper from Engineering about the Imagination Center project. The Mayor agreed to allow us to proceed as planned with the pre-design and estimation work so we can provide an accurate representation of the needs of the facilities and operating costs associated with the project. Engineering is currently preparing an RFP on the pre-design work to be released in August, with a review of the proposals in October.

My presentation to the Mayor on MPL's proposed Operating Budget will be August 13<sup>th</sup>. I'm not sure if this will work to our advantage or not, but we are scheduled on the last day of budget presentations to the Mayor. I will be advocating very strongly for the restoration of our reductions. MPL is an essential connector to the community especially during the pandemic to aid those most in need. City IT, Community Development, and now the Municipal Court is looking to libraries to assist with extending their respective department's reach into the community. We will be a key resource to the MMSD as they navigate virtual education during the pandemic.

In a slight departure from previous budget presentations, all Department Heads are invited to all Operating Budget presentations over 3 days. Because of our last day slot, I may get some insight into the process.

Although I remain positive that we will have funding restored, there remains considerable work to address the consequences if the level of reductions currently proposed do stand. We will need to gather community input, with an equity lens, to determine how our staffing resources will need to be deployed, and what operating hours will allow us to sustain an effective delivery of services within those staffing capacities and budget limitations.

## **2020 CIP FUNDS**

The Library Board's resolution to approve Finance to reallocate funds from a 2020 MPL CIP project to a proposed Downtown restoration program ended up to not be necessary. The Common Council did not approve the program that the funds were intended, so the funds remain in place as if nothing happened. The project will still require us to carryover funds to 2021 to complete the LED conversion, but any carryover will be handled in the typical end of year adjustment made with Finance.

## **ROSEMARY LEE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT INTERNSHIP (RLCE)**

Despite the many limitations during the pandemic, Hannah Stewart, our RLCE intern, completed her report of an overview of program options to improve access to government services through remote or virtual means. Although the concept would seem tailored to our current pandemic conditions, the idea was developed pre-COVID. The report will reflect addressing access in a way that is not just about the limitations due to the pandemic. This study represents an opportunity for residents to have greater access to City services and better opportunities for civic engagement under normal or any disruptive conditions.

Hannah did an excellent job of researching and gathering information from a variety of City agencies within the short time of 10 weeks to prepare the almost 30-page report. We were hoping to have input from the community, but the timeframe and pandemic conditions did not allow for this to happen. The framework of the report will allow us to continue gathering additional information from City Departments and engage in community conversations. Hopefully, this report will act as a springboard for improving access and increasing civic engagement opportunities.

I did thank and congratulate Hannah on her achievement, and shared that she set the bar exceedingly high as the first intern in the RLCE program. At this time, Hannah is still working to finalize the report. I will be including the report in the September Library Board packet, and hopefully we can accompany the report with a presentation at the September meeting as well. I would like the Library Board to have an opportunity to ask questions of our intern or Kevin Englebert, who was the executive sponsor, about the project.

I want to thank the Madison Public Library Foundation for establishing this internship and their continued support of the innovative work of MPL.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

I have been in preliminary discussions with Dr. Daniel Schroeder, CEO of Organizational Development Consultants, to provide consultation on reviewing the library organizational development and planning needs. I will be meeting with him to review the scope of his proposal and to discuss the possibility of incorporating a racial equity lens into the organizational development process.

## **RACIAL EQUITY CHANGE TEAM (RECT)**

The Library Board will be receiving a report from the RECT at the August meeting. It will contain several recommendations to the Board, but it will also contain updates on how MPL is addressing some of the racial equity needs within the community and our organization. This report is in response to the Board's request to remain updated on how MPL is addressing equity. I will continue this practice within the Director's report to keep the Board updated on any of the new or improved developments of MPL addressing racial equity needs. Our goal is to make a difference within MPL, within City of Madison, and within our community.

The RECT has announced for MPL's staff of color the formation of an affinity group, Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC). I view this as an excellent extension of the recent RECT led discussion groups reserved only for staff of color to have a safe space to share and support each other.

I have been participating in the City's planning process for how future racial equity training classes will be structured within the City. It has proved to be greatly beneficial to work with the many RE experts within the City in developing these plans and it has increased my understanding of the importance of incorporating RE in our planning processes and decision making. It will be a major influence in my discussions with ODC in our organizational development plans.

## **STAFF SAFETY**

During this pandemic, staff safety and the safety of our patrons remains our top priority. We closely follow the messaging from Public Health and monitor the current research related to library materials and recommended handling practices. Currently we quarantine all materials for at least three days before staff and the public gain any contact with the items. This is all coordinated with the SCLS delivery system and our inhouse handling procedures. The three-day quarantine practice has become the standard for libraries. Our Health and Safety Workgroup recently performed a complete review of our processes based on some new research released that the virus was able to be detected on some specific materials for a possible four days. Based on the very limited possibility that these conditions would exist and coupled with the quarantine practices used within the delivery system and our own quarantine practices we were confident to maintain our current three-day quarantine procedure. I have discussed this decision with colleagues across Wisconsin and the nation and it is in alignment with other libraries.

Additionally, we continue to message and reinforce the need for staff to frequently wash hands and always properly wear a mask when working in our libraries. I also encourage staff to maintain this practice outside of work. So far, the requirement for our patrons to properly wear a mask has been followed with few exceptions. We continue to support staff by providing signage and providing scripts to use with public to communicate the requirement of masks while using our facilities.

## **STAFF RECOGNITION**

At a recent Town Hall staff gathering we shared several comments from the public about their joy and thanks for the restoration, despite limited, of some of our services. It is one of the most missed aspects of our work with the separation we all face of not having those personal interactions with our patrons. One of the features of our curbside service that some patrons called out was our "CSA-Style" request

option. Just like a typical CSA where you get an assortment of produce, your MPL CSA will provide an assortment of materials hand-selected by MPL staff. Users of the service are delighted with the variety and the serendipity of what will show up in their bags.

## **UPDATE ON MEETINGS, COMMITTEES, & TEAMS**

### **City**

Mayor's Management Team  
Mayor's Human Service Committee  
Performance Excellence Transition Team  
Racial Equity & Social Justice Strategic Planning  
Deputy Mayor Check-in  
Digital Inclusion Team\*  
Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Planning Team\*  
Funding and Recovery – Government Services  
Team\*: Co-sponsor of the Policies Team and the Communications Team

### **MPL**

Library Management Team (meeting weekly)\*  
Administration and Communications Check-in (Nightly)\*  
All Staff Town Hall (bi-weekly)\*  
Budget Convenings

### **External**

South Central Library System Library Directors  
Dane County Directors  
Wisconsin Resource Library Directors with DPI (bi-weekly)\*  
Urban Libraries Council Directors (weekly)\*

\*Represents either a new assignment/meeting or the frequency of the meeting has changed since the COVID 19 crisis.