

Library Director's Report September 2020

RESTORATION OF SERVICES and REOPENING LIBRARY BUILDINGS

I have started discussions with Library Supervisors about making our buildings more available to the public. I have been closely monitoring and been in contact with libraries that have been open or are beginning to reopen more to the public, and it is working well. It is becoming a major equity issue, since the current level of services we are providing is still heavily dependent on our patrons having devices to go online or use phones. Looking at the data and talking to staff we can see the current barriers in place have an equity impact on our patrons. I believe we have excellent workplace safety measures in place and that if we continue to follow those procedures, we will be able to safely reopen our buildings to more services and uses. It will begin with small steps.

I have also been discussing with supervisors about the possibility of varying services and hours between locations. Some libraries may benefit from early opening hours, we may have a "senior" hour, some libraries are better positioned for in-person hold pick up, or perhaps even patron browsing.

MPL has been in discussion with MMSD, Schools Without Walls, and other community groups about addressing their needs. There is a major need for space, which outside of Central Library, is not a resource we have readily available, but we are doing the best we can to help. We will also be working with the City to help coordinate space.

CITY PILOT

The mayor has asked MPL to pilot a City policy that is being considered for staff temperature checks as staff enter the workplace. I have been in contact with other libraries that have implemented this practice and the process will be led by our Health and Safety workgroup.

GRANT UPDATE

We received confirmation from IMLS that our proposal for supporting our Call Center operation was not successful. To be noted in their message, they received far more requests than they had funds.

"Thank you for applying to the IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries program. We regret that your application is not among those we can fund through this special opportunity."

"We received 1,701 applications requesting \$409,251,399 and were able to award 68 projects totaling \$13,800,000."

BUDGET 2021

The Finance Committee did approve an amendment to our CIP to move the Imagination Center project from 2023-2024 in our proposal, to 2022-2023 in the amended CIP. The mayor's executive budget will be coming out on Oct 6th. I will be providing an update to the Library Board after its release. I am hopeful that we will have some funds restored. I have been talking to a few of the alders and there continues to be good support for the library, but the budget conditions are making it difficult for them to decide what they will need to prioritize.

WISCONSIN BOOK FESTIVAL

This would have been the time of year that we might have had a visit from Conor Moran describing all the wonderful authors and events coming up for the Wisconsin Book Festival. If we cannot get Conor, we can direct you to the web site. <https://www.wisconsinbookfestival.org/> Throughout 2020 we have had some amazing authors. Conor has been working with other book festivals and we are gaining access to far more authors than we could have scheduled for in-person appearances. I do miss seeing the crowds and meeting the authors, but it has been extremely enjoyable still to listen to their stories and learn about their writing. I would encourage all board members if you have not tried one of our virtual author events, it is a must see. In addition, most of the previous presentations are recorded, so if you have one of those, "gosh I wish I would have known this person was presenting," you can probably go back and view the archived version.

LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

The process for filling the vacant seat on the Board is ongoing. Laila in the Mayor's office has been providing periodic updates. Official letters of renewal should have been sent to Lisa and Eve by this time.

STAFF RECOGNITION

Typically, I will highlight an individual or group of staff in my monthly report. For September I am sharing a message that I delivered to all staff on September 17th recognizing everyone's hard work and dedication so far in 2020. The significance of September 17th is that day was supposed to be our annual Staff Day. I would add it is also a day that includes a thank you to the Library Board for your service and your support of our work. And a special thank you is always given to the Madison Public Library Foundation; whose generous donors make so many more things possible in our service to the community.

September 17, 2020

MPL Staff, I'm not sure if many of you realized or perhaps even knew that today September 17, 2020 was to be our annual Staff Day. Of course, we can't gather in the same way we have in the past. With our Town Hall meetings we do get "sort of" a chance to see each other, but it is still not the same as everyone getting together in person to share our accomplishments and learn together.

One thing that does remain unchanged is my thanks for your dedication and hard work. If I had been standing in front of all of you this morning that would have been the start of my message. And this year it means even more than ever--with the challenges of COVID, the many changes to our work and workplaces, and yet you continue to find ways to maintain your commitment to our services to the community as best as we can.

I had the opportunity today to participate in the Mayor's weekly press briefings and provide an update of what MPL has been doing since we closed to the public since March 17th. I was amazed by the number of accomplishments, new services, and the level of creativity and innovation happening within our organization. So many of you contributing in so many ways!!!

I am hoping that in 2021 we will be back in person for our Staff Day, but whether we are or not, I know MPL will continue to make a difference for our community no matter what the challenges or conditions. You all do amazing work!!

Thank you

Greg

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.