

Library Director Report January-February 2021

President Request

Update on clearing records under fine free initiative.

22,678 patron records (68%) have been cleared, totally \$271,820.01 in waived fines. There remain 10,000+ records to clear, but they represent only \$2,314.28 in fines. 5,274 cards have been unblocked by waiving the fines on the record. Some blocked cards will remain, due to being expired, or having additional non-fine related charges of over \$20 on the record.

RESTORATION OF SERVICES and REOPENING LIBRARY BUILDINGS

Through break outs sessions at our bi-weekly Town Hall meetings and organizing staff focus groups we have been gathering staff input on how we may begin to plan for expansion of access to our facilities. The sessions that I attended was highly informative and staff shared many ideas and concerns. The need for our resources continues to be important to our community and we will continue to keep the safety of staff and public as our top priority, so it is a challenge. Reaching a “community herd” condition may not be achieved until late 2021 and that will be dependent on vaccine supply. So, we need to be creative and perhaps only have options based on a library’s capacity which will vary by location. In addition, we will need to continue to advance our out-of-building options to connect the community with our resources.

NEW PILOT PROGRAM

As just previously mentioned of exploring innovative ways to connect beyond our facilities we recently launched an expanded delivery service to our Home Services program and deliveries to in-home daycares. Home Services is adding some additional clients that are finding themselves at home due to the restrictions of the pandemic. Youth Services is guiding deliveries initially to Latinx in-home daycare, taking full advantage of our extensive Spanish language children’s books. Home Services continues to operate out of Central Library, but the daycare service is tapping the new collections that had been established at the new Pinney Library. The pivot we had to make was to determine a new way for us to make the deliveries that had previously been carried out by volunteers or staff. We accomplished that by enlisting the services of Union Cab. Union drivers come to Pinney and Central for pickup and make the home deliveries and if needed pickup materials to return to the library. We are entering our second month of the pilot and it has worked extremely well for our patrons. Plus being able to provide support to a local company is a bonus. This pilot was made possible with funding from the Madison Public Library Foundation.

IMAGINATION CENTER

After an extensive deliberative process, JLA was the recommendation sent to Common Council by the selection team. In joint session, Madison Parks Commission, and the Library Board both

voted to refer approval of the selection to the Common Council. Board of Public Works approved the resolution at their February 17, 2021 meeting. It will now move back to the Common Council on February 23, 2021 for final awarding of the contract to JLA.

COVID SAFETY UPDATES

Library staff who have close contact with the public (primarily those working with public computing) were added to a City standby list for vaccination if they chose to opt-in to the list. The list is managed by Public Health of Madison and Dane County. It is being used for making sure if there is any remaining vaccine at the end of the day, they can contact the list to get someone in to make sure the doses reach an arm. The list is quite long, and the current priority is Metro's 290+ bus drivers on the list, so it will not be a quick path for library staff to get vaccinated.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ODC has started the process of organizing and sharing the data collected from our system-wide survey of all library staff. The information has been shared with the Management Team and we will be forming a set of focus groups, each of them facilitated by ODC leaders. We are hoping to get participation in the focus groups from all levels within our organization. I am hoping to organize a presentation on the findings when we have completed our focus groups.

RIPPLE PROJECT

The Ripple Project is a program organized by Dane County Libraries as part of the Beyond the Page. The program just started and will carry through into 2022. The learning and exchange sessions are led by August Ball from Cream City Coservation and Consulting (Milwaukee, WI) with the common theme of racial equity throughout all Dane County Libraries. The goal of the Ripple Project is to leverage libraries to engage communities in meaningful reflection and dialogue about race. In addition to offering free public programming, library staff participate in diversity, equity and inclusion training. I have attended all of the programs and they have been very well organized and presented. We have several MPL staff in attendance and the recorded sessions are available to all MPL staff.

CHECK-IN WITH THE MAYOR

In somewhat the same way every library employee has a check-in with their direct supervisor I recently had my first official check-in with Mayor Satya. We discussed reopening or expansion of public access to libraries (which is a major focus with all public facing City agencies). We also reviewed how MPL has pivoted our services during the pandemic and how that will make MPL better positioned in 2021 for meeting the needs of the community. That included a discussion about digital inclusion. We also discussed "COVID fatigue" that many of us are experiencing on some level. By coincidence, my check-in followed two prior meetings that day with Wisconsin Representatives Hong and Subeck, so we discussed those meetings and the Governor's budget that had been released the day before.

LIBRARY LEGISLATIVE DAY

The Wisconsin Library Association organizes an annual Library Legislative Day in mid-February around the time that the Governor's budget is being released. This year I was joined by Library Board trustees Eve Galanter, Jaime Healy-Plotkin, and Jolynne Roorda. My meeting with Senator Roys' office coincided with both Eve and Jaime, and it was well received. Just as Sen Risser was a strong advocate for libraries, I believe Sen. Roys who filled Sen Risser's seat, will carry on with strong support of libraries. I also met with Rep Hong and Rep Subeck. I have known Rep. Subeck since her Common Council days and her support for libraries has continued to her Representative position. We discussed the newly released budget and touched on MPL's work in pandemic conditions. This was my first time to meet with Representative Hong to discuss her support for libraries. I found her to be a very enthusiastic supporter of our work and we discussed a variety of community needs with an equity lens.

MEETINGS, COMMITTEES, TEAMS & MORE

City

Mayor's Management Team
Mayor's Human Service Committee
Mayor Check-in
Performance Excellence Transition Team
Racial Equity & Social Justice Strategic Planning
Deputy Mayor Check-in
Digital Inclusion Team
Funding and Recovery – Government Services Team: Policies Team and Communications Team
Funding and Recovery-City Vaccine Team
Subtle Acts of Exclusion Team
City Vaccination Team
TeamCity Change Leadership
Common Council
Board of Public Works
Community Develop meeting on digital inclusion at Tree Lane Apartments

MPL

Library Management Team
Administration and Communications Check-in
All Staff Town Hall
Browsing Focus Group
ODC consultant meetings and focus groups
Family Connect

External

South Central Library System Library Directors
Dane County Directors
Wisconsin Resource Library Directors with DPI
Urban Libraries Council Directors
District 9 Candidate forum
Meeting with District 17 CC Candidate
Library Legislative Day

