



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 67457, **Version:** 1

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### Title

Authorize acceptance and appropriation to the 2021 Operating Budget of a Madison Public Library Foundation Grant for Amplifying Community Voices in the amount of \$150,000.

### Body

WHEREAS, Madison Public Library (MPL) submitted an application to Madison Public Library Foundation (MPLF) for grant funds to develop a plan for remote service delivery in Madison; and,

WHEREAS, pre-pandemic MPL began investigation of expanding access for civic engagement and services by providing remote virtual connections at MPL libraries; and,

WHEREAS, this work was followed by a more complete analysis of needs and opportunities by the 2020 Rosemary Lee intern, reporting in a white paper "AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY VOICES: A Plan for Remote Service Delivery in Madison", describing the disparities to marginalized populations to gain improved access to city services and increasing opportunities for civic engagement; and,

WHEREAS, a major focus of the research was the elimination of barriers, there will be a direct partnership with City of Madison Information Technology to provide technical assistance, and potentially will include other City agencies to vet accessibility issues or other associated equity concerns; and,

WHEREAS, planning and inventory of existing equipment will begin in October/November 2021 with a completion date by July 2022. The end date was determined to be in alignment for the City to allow access to hybrid Board and Commission meetings with both remote and in-person participation estimated to begin in June 2022; and,

WHEREAS, Amplifying Community Voices is designed to enable remote participation in city government meetings, as well as deliver city services at Madison Public Library locations. In particular, this initiative seeks to eliminate barriers to access for underserved populations. The program will allow for the Library Board, other City agencies, or community organizations to conduct hybrid meetings. The need for hybrid meetings has been clearly supported by the increased civic engagement witnessed during the pandemic when virtual access to City meeting was established. Some of the barriers under the current model remain for citizens who do not have adequate connectivity or digital literacy to remotely connect to City meeting. By expanding access to neighborhoods will help reduce that barrier and address an equity issue. Event staff, programming staff, and other frequent users of the technology will be trained in functionality and trouble-shooting; and,

WHEREAS, The primary goal of community access to civic engagement and learning opportunities directly aligns with MPL's strategic lens with Community at the center of that lens. For example, a neighborhood association would be able to provide a combined in-person and virtual access to community members to improve participation. Additionally we can expand the reach of library programming beyond our buildings. The value of this capacity has been demonstrated in our current virtual Wisconsin Book Festival programs, and it may allow for live streaming of children's programming to day cares or other creative uses of the technology; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed outcomes of this project is To have the capacity to provide remote access to City meetings and services at library locations. To create a scalable model so this technology configuration could be implemented in any of our libraries that have appropriate space. Potentially this could also be configured

and managed by MPL outside of our buildings to extend opportunities. This service will also greatly improve MPL's capacity to expand access to our programs with virtual delivery of content with broadcast quality and to connect community agencies to improve their reach to the populations they serve.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2021 Madison Public Library Operating Budget is amended to appropriate \$150,000; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Madison Public Library is authorized to create the necessary 2021 Operating Budget amendment to add the appropriation of grant funds.