



MEAD LIBRARY

710 North 8th Street
Sheboygan, WI 53081
920-459-3400

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Ryan Sorenson, City of Sheboygan

FROM: Garrett Erickson, Library Director

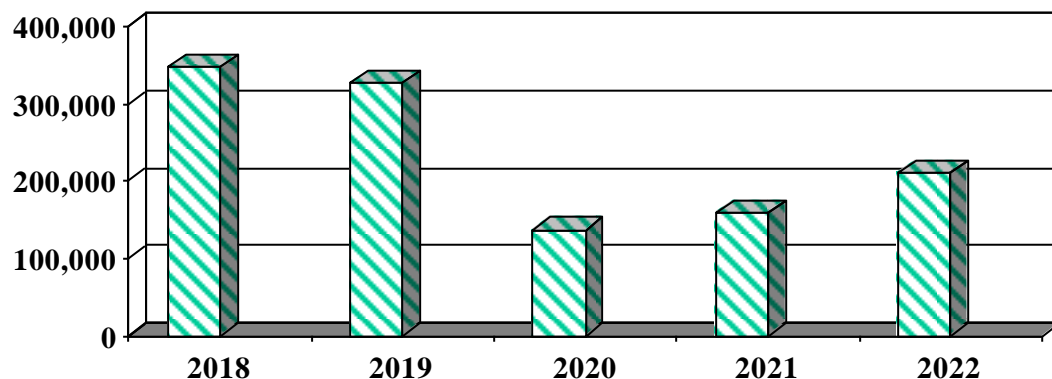
DATE: February 17, 2023

SUBJECT: 2022 Annual Report

Mead Public Library is a gathering place for the entire community and a hub providing access for all residents to information, lifelong learning resources and technology. The library staff are committed to serving the community, knowing well that many people depend on the library and the variety of services it provides. Some of those community-wide services include: Internet access and assistance for job seekers, homework help for school-aged youth, a safe place for kids to gather after school, early childhood literacy programs for pre-school children, reading and research services for adults and shelter for the homeless.

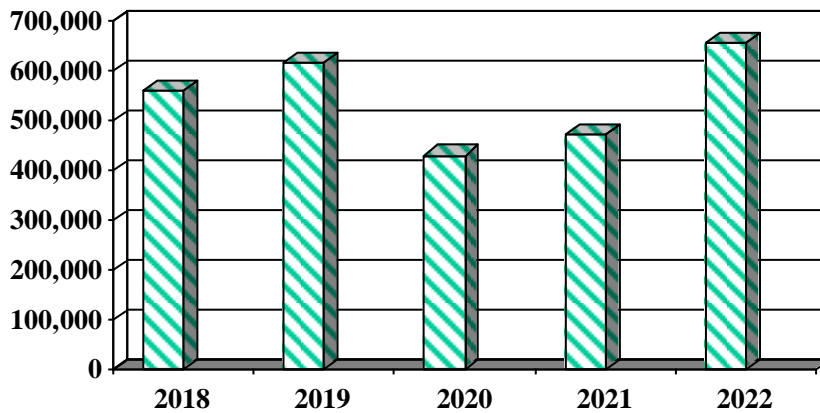
In 2022, 210,285 people visited the library, up significantly from 158,800 in 2021. Annual visits continue to bounce back substantially from the low levels seen during the pandemic.

Annual Library Visits



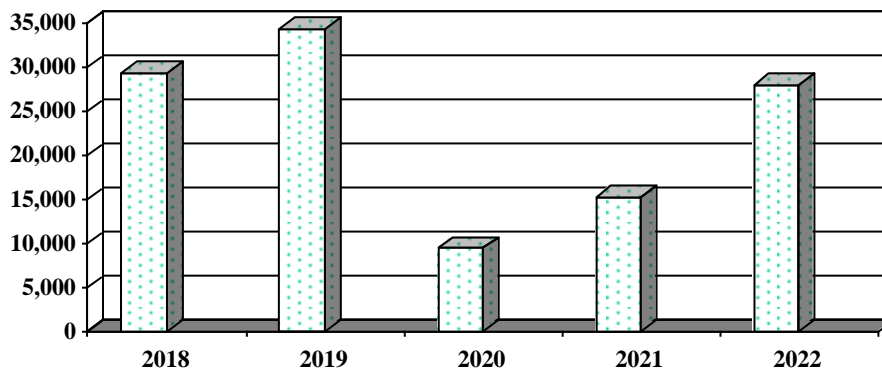
In 2022, library users checked out 654,048 items, which included books, audiobooks, CDs, DVDs, E-Content, magazines as well as digital downloads.

Checkout of Combined Physical and Digital Materials



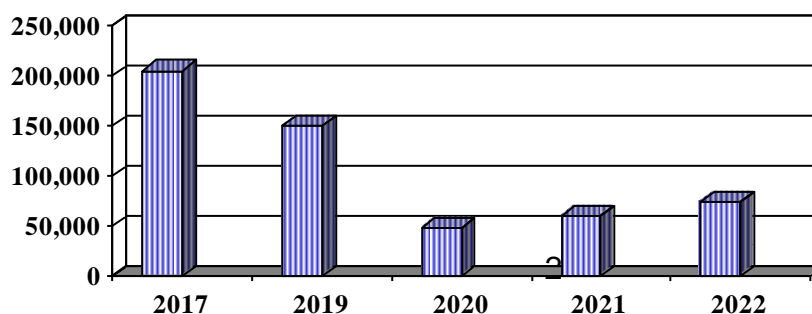
The library offered 849 classes, workshops and events that attracted 26,609 participants. These programs were hosted both virtually and in person during 2022.

Classes, Workshops and Events Attendance



Free Internet access continues to be among the most important resources offered by the library, since many members of our community cannot afford the increasing cost of home Internet service.

Internet Sessions



2022 Highlights & Achievements

- Mead Public Library celebrated its 125th anniversary of serving Sheboygan residents through a series of events throughout the year
- The Friends of Mead Public Library celebrated its 50th year anniversary of promoting volunteerism at the library as well as fundraising to help supplement the library's operating budget
- Statistically, after two very difficult years due to the COVID pandemic, the library continued to climb back toward pre-pandemic usage patterns. Mead already surpassed the pre-pandemic number of material checkouts. The number of visitors to the library is still down a bit, as is the number of programs that were offered in 2022. We anticipate that as the number of programs offered increases, the number of visitors at the library will follow suit.
- The Library's board, administration and entire staff participated in initial discussions to update the library's strategic plan. The plan is expected to be completed in early 2023.
- Library administration partnered with an architectural firm that specializes in library space planning to create a long-term plan for optimum space usage. The plan will create a roadmap for future library management to consider as spaces are redesigned with future trends and maximum flexibility as top of mind.
- The library also launched an internet radio station featuring a 24-hour music stream and has begun producing podcasts on local topics in an effort to fill the void of local media coverage in the area. The library also partnered with the city's planning department, North High School and the John Michael Kohler Arts Center last summer to broadcast the Thursday night Levitt Amp Concert Series to local residents on 91.7 WSHS-Sheboygan. This coming year, library staff will begin airing original content produced in the studio at Mead Public Library on 91.7 and online.
- The library continued to struggle at times with its unofficial community role in providing daytime shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness, and those struggling with addiction, mental illness and other challenges. The library does not have social workers on staff to deal with these issues, but continues to advocate for a wider community response.
- The library partnered with the DPW to launch the city's new Sidewalk Poetry Program. The program will transform city sidewalks into an open poetry book, with original poetry stamped onto public sidewalk squares slated for repair throughout the city. The goal is to inspire moments of surprise, reflection, empathy and gratitude as residents and visitors make their way along the streets of Sheboygan. The first sidewalk poems are slated to be installed in 2023, with annual rounds of submissions and installations in subsequent years.

- The library was a part of City of Sheboygan's job classification study which began in 2021 and was completed in 2022.
- The library staff took advantage of the various training opportunities offered by city administration in the areas of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB), Emotional Intelligence and Leadership.

2023 Library Goals

Complete department strategic planning process –We expect to complete the process of updating the department's strategic plan in early 2023.

Complete architectural study – Library administration has been working throughout 2022 with an architectural firm that specializes in creating futuristic interior design plans for libraries. Once completed and approved by the library board, the plan will provide a roadmap for physical layout changes to the library for the next 10-20 years, with the intended purpose of better space utilization and subsequent better service to the community.

Finalize staff reorganization – As the various internal teams have downsized due over the years due to limited budgets, the teams have become unbalanced from a management perspective. The library's public-facing service staff now significantly outnumber those doing process-type work in backrooms. Subsequently, the library has re-aligned its table of organization to be more balanced moving forward.

Implement new Vega Software – Mead Public Library is the flagship of the Monarch Library Consortium which consists of 30+ libraries in Sheboygan, Ozaukee, Dodge and Washington Counties. The stated purpose of the Monarch System is the sharing of materials in order to give residents a larger pool of resources to select from. The underlying software that the libraries use to share resources will be migrated to a new platform in 2023, which will be a major undertaking.

Update job titles and descriptions –The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is in the final stages of standardizing library job titles and job descriptions across Wisconsin. It will be in our best interest to follow these recommendations so Mead job titles and descriptions fit into future state salary surveys and postings for open positions.

Implement outdoor locker system – With the permission of the library board, the library foundation, and possibly city planning and DPW, the library may implement an outdoor locker system that would allow community members to pick up physical items outside of the building and outside of normal library business hours.