

McMahon Public Safety & Municipal Management Group

Ray Maurer
Kelly Valentino
Mark Rohloff
April 21, 2026

WHITEWATER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Recommendations

Project Introduction

Provide analysis and advice of the appropriate level of staffing, organization, and operation for the Public Library:

- Documentation and data review
- Interviews of library employees and Library Board Members
- On-site observations
- Relevant comparative analysis

Project Scope

- **Conduct an overall operational assessment of the Library including management structure and practices.**
- **Review staffing levels and the ability of staff to meet those demands.**
- **Evaluate potential effectiveness and efficiency improvements.**
- **Review department mission, vision, future goals, strategic plan and previous studies.**
- **Review budgetary constraints.**
- **Identify other issues and opportunities recognized during the analysis.**

Department Summary

- DEPARTMENT STAFF INCLUDES

- 1-Library Director
- 1-Assistant Library Director
- 1-Youth Services Librarian
- 1-Programming and Makerspace Librarian
- 5-Public Services Clerks
- 1-Circulation Assistant
- 2-Technical Services Clerks
- 1-Library Associate
- 1-Historical Data Intern

Department Strengths Identified by Staff

- Library staff has a strong customer service focus
- Organizational skills of the Assistant Director
- Regular review of department policies by staff and the Library Board
- Dedicated, welcoming team of staff members with positive attitudes
- Relationships with the community
- Daily spreadsheet detailing staff duties to focus on
- ADA compliance improvements with the new facility
- Good internal communication
- Support of City Manager and elected officials
- Department managers identify and capitalize on staff strengths

Department Strengths Identified by Staff (Continued)

- Library operations changing/adapting and staying up on trends
- Recent collaboration with the school district where the student list is shared with library staff and students receive a free library card for life
- Gift cards provided to staff for Sweet Spot Café was very much appreciated
- Significant cross training has been provided to all staff
- Training on the processes and procedures for the new building has been great
- “We are the Best Library around here; WE GET IT RIGHT!”

Department Strengths Identified by Library Board Members

- Programming, events and Makerspace
- Remaining flexible during the facility renovation
- Intergenerational programming
- Staff and how they relate to the community
- Capitalizing on the library being a strong presence as a place to gather
- Programming experience of Sarah and Hunter

Opportunities for Improvement Identified by Staff

- Director to clarify direction and focus for the department and staff
- Appears to be gaps in staff training; consider refresher trainings on policies, safety and procedures
- Evaluate the daily reconciliation process completed by the Director for very small amounts of money
- Consider acceptance of credit/debit cards
- Encourage staff members to be open to change
- There are excessive internal emails on procedures, policies, etc. “information overload” for staff causing messages to be overlooked or never read. This also leaves no room for explanations/questions
- Develop ways to increase attendance at teen and adult programs
- Short-staffed if someone calls in sick or is on vacation

Opportunities for Improvement Identified by Staff (Continued)

- Staff doesn't know when someone enters the facility as the entry is out of sight and the security cameras are not all operating. The teen space is not visible to any staff other than the Programming and Makerspace Librarian
- Internal communication needs improving as some staff are told things verbally, while others are not included in those conversations
- Is the actual front desk too high – does it meet ADA? Not enough outlets at the front desk
- At times, a mass email is sent to all the employees to correct behavior of one employee. This should be addressed directly between the supervisor and the staff member
- Concern about the City pay system as some feel new hire pay was increased recently but existing staff either didn't get pay increases or not sufficient to keep up with the new pay rates

Opportunities for Improvement Identified by Staff (Continued)

- Is the current system utilized with the school district to get all the students into the library software program the most efficient or is there something better out there? (Milwaukee County system appears to be more efficient)
- Continue to make additions to the community rooms including tablecloths and other soft touches, especially for rentals and programming
- Currently only have 1 full-day, all staff training, typically in March, which isn't enough
- Consider alternative messaging options about the library and its offerings for varying audiences and nationalities
- Assistance with shelving at times when this gets backed-up

Opportunities for Improvement Identified by Staff (Continued)

- Evaluate the need for 3 staff members during the evening, are 3 necessary or could some of that staff time be better utilized during busier days/times?
- Should purchasing be centralized to 1 individual including programming supplies? Would allow for programming staff to have more time for programming
- Can a notebook be placed at the front desk, similar to lifeguard logs at public pools, so staff can document important issues/incidents that occur during their shifts to keep all staff in the loop?

Opportunities for Improvement Identified by Library Board Members

- Need to engage “mid-life” citizens and seniors, show them what the library has to offer
- Additional diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff, how to work with diverse populations
- Additional staff needed to expand programming
- Customer service training for all staff
- Research the possibility of having library books/items cataloged by a vendor

Recommendations

- Improve security at the front entry and throughout the library by ensuring all the existing security cameras are operating properly. Provide adequate training to staff on camera operations. Consider installing a large monitor at the front desk where all cameras can be viewed at the same time by staff
- Provide training on generational differences in the workplace, as well as training on diversity, equity and inclusion
- Consider closing the library at 7pm or 7:30pm Monday-Thursday to allow additional time for shelving, as well as shifting the extra hour to the morning for regularly scheduled staff meetings and/or training opportunities. Consider additional hours past 5:30pm on Friday evenings as it was noted that Friday mornings are slow, but Friday evenings are busy
- Schedule bi-weekly or monthly staff meetings for all staff members, allowing all staff to receive the same message, updates and procedures

Recommendations (Continued)

- Consider installation of a self-checkout station
- Re-evaluate the need for 2 Public Services Clerks at the front desk at all times. Review the new hourly library patron data to determine when 2 staff may be necessary. This could also be affected if/when a self-checkout station is installed
- Consider developing a full-time marketing/graphics position in collaboration with other departments (Economic Development/Planning, Park and Recreation) to take advantage of multiple funding sources including CDBG funds, Friends of the Library annual contribution, etc. This will lessen the marketing burden on the Assistant Director, Youth Librarian and Programming and Makerspace Librarian and enable these staff members additional time to focus on existing and new programming. This position could expand community outreach for the departments, write grants and work closely with the Friends groups.

Recommendations (Continued)

- Consider developing a part-time Building Supervisor position to be on-site for community room rentals outside of regular library hours. Cost to be offset by additional room rental revenue
- Expand promotion of the available hours for community members to rent the community rooms outside of regular library hours
- Explore additional partnerships with UW-Whitewater, Whitewater Unified School District, and local businesses/professionals for increasing volunteers, programs, interns, presentations and other potential services
- Provide library-focused customer service training for all staff

Recommendations (Continued)

- Utilize various free or low-cost training opportunities offered by Cities & Villages Mutual Insurance Company (CVMIC) and the Wisconsin League of Municipalities, including New Supervisor training for the Assistant Director as well as performance evaluation and goal-setting training for both the Director and Assistant Director
- Evaluate the home delivery service and its operations
- Schedule programming staff to provide additional programs in the evenings and weekends, less hours scheduled during the 8:30am-5pm weekday timeframe
- Research the possibility of having library books/items cataloged by a vendor
- Expand collaborations with the Park and Recreation Department for programming

Recommendations (Continued)

- Evaluate if an assistant is necessary for the Children's Librarian or if it is a matter of having her do less cataloging and marketing by implementing other recommendations
- Evaluate the need for an additional Public Services Clerk or shelving assistance once the recently hired staff member is on board and if other recommendations are implemented
- Continue to offer community outreach services such as the food pantry which is supported greatly by the annual city employee food drive

Questions / Comments