



## 2022 Library Visit Interview Form

**Library Name:** Madison Public Library – Lakeview Branch

**Certification Grade:** 1

**Date of visit:** 10-25-2022

**Library staff present at the visit:** Carra Davies

**SCLS staff present:** Rose Ziech

**Amount of time spent at visit:** 45 min (virtual)

**[Please limit this section to the answers to the specific questions, and include as much detail as possible. Report other information or observations in the “other information” section below.]**

1. How are you and your staff doing?

OK. Pleased to have low turnover. There have been a lot of mental health issues with patrons, and it's triggering mental health issues for some staff. Trying to figure out how to respond to drug use, homeless issues, children needing services, and food insecurity. The job includes more social work than in the past. But, they have a solid team who show up and care about each other. They are taking the time and doing what they can to make sure staff are safe & supported.

2. What are the next projects (big or small) on your library's to-do list?

The library did a lot of renovation while it was closed for COVID, and they still have money left from a donor to spend. Tech improvements. Displays that show upcoming programming are getting replaced.

Figuring out patterns for programs and reading the community. Haven't had great program attendance, so they are working to find those who are comfortable attending programs in person and marketing to them. As an example, they held a community supper which was well received – it was enjoyed by people who crave in-person activities. They also hold some virtual book groups that are attended by people who never would have been able to attend if it was only in-person (such as patrons who are blind or homebound). Some wanted to meet in-person, but when they tried it, no one showed up, so they are keeping it virtual.

3. Are there service changes or new services from the last two years that you plan on continuing?

The adult services librarian took on being the seed librarian, which complements the library's garden. They plant some of the seeds to have examples for patrons to see what they grow into. Patrons can take free packs of seeds home to plant, and the packs are no longer barcoded as this seemed to be a barrier for people. They are holding a program about planting prairies with native plants, with a demonstration garden at the library planted by a

patron who also provided the seeds.

They provide food, afterschool snacks with the local kids, teens & tweens. It gets them in the door & creates rapport that they can lean on when, in the future, there may be behavior issue, which they can resolve more easily if they already have a relationship with the kids.

Warner Park and the Community Center are nearby, so they work with them. They want kids around but it's such a small space that a critical mass can lead to some conflict with others who may be applying for jobs or using the quiet reading space. The park helps as a release valve to balance active and quiet spaces.

4. How can SCLS help?

She asked staff for suggestions and they came up with things they appreciate more so than specific suggestions. (See Other information.)

5. Is there anything else you'd like to share or discuss?

Their library is in some ways the best of both worlds – they are small enough to be very closely connected to the community, but have the backing of a large library and system (and the budget that goes along with that). Working on the geographical edge of Madison, they feel close to communities like Waunakee and Sun Prairie too.

**Other information gathered at the visit (interesting tidbits, general impressions of the library, or alternative topics):**

Mentioned in reply to “How can SCLS help?”

- Thankful for the tech help line and impressed with responsiveness, talking through how to do things and switching out equipment quickly.
- Like being on SCLS committees and hearing what's going on at libraries around the system.
- Like the consortium. Patrons are still impressed to be able to find a title in LINKcat located someplace far away, like Adams County, and be able to pick it up at their library 3 days later.

Since it was a virtual visit, I asked Carra to “paint a picture” of what the library is like.

- Lakeview is one of the smallest Madison branches (only Monroe Street Library is smaller). Its 10K sqft and one of the last rented spaces.
- Willy Street Coop North moved next door. Family Dollar is on the other side, and there is lots of crossover with customers from both businesses visiting the library. The library is more of a “one stop shop” with the mall businesses.
- They have really spiffed up the past few years to make the library brighter & cleaner.
- Their reading room has a nice view of the garden in back and a fireplace, so it's a nice, “quiet sanctuary” place to sit and read. A challenge is that the reading room also doubles as their programming space and a meeting room that community members can use for free public events. They try to make sure they are meeting both needs.
- Small study rooms, 4-5 occupants, get a lot of use.
- The library is “bustling.” Gov. Tony Evers recently got a COVID shot there at the vaccine clinic.
- Staff (other than Carra) numbers 12: 6 part time pages, 6 permanent staff.
- There is a shared office that 4 people share, with no doors between them, so they are constantly negotiating who needs the space for phone calls and virtual meetings when others may also need to be there.
- Carra works from home about half and half. She prefers to be on site at the library, but lives

close enough to get there quickly when needed.

- She became a supervisor in 2020 but has been at Madison Public Library for 12 years. The job includes a lot of middle management problem solving, resolving disputes, acting as a liaison with patron and staff concerns. She sees lots of joy in her role though too. Works with the Friends of Library. And the North side has a different (good) vibe, with lots of patrons feeling a sense of ownership with the library. Like “Cheers” —everyone knows each other’s name, and it helps to be on friendly terms when a patron is having a bad day and they have to ask them to leave, and the patron returns again on a good day, and that relationship can continue.
- More instances of drug use in bathrooms. They have Narcan but haven’t had to use it in the library (though they did have someone ask to take the Narcan because it was needed somewhere outside the library, and they gave it to them).
- We didn’t want to end the conversation on that note, so we talked about Read to a Dog. They train the dogs with a treat behind the pages so it looks like the dog is really listening and engaging with the book, but they are also looking for a treat. (I never knew that.) Everyone loves the Read to a Dog program!