



## 2022 Library Visit Interview Form

**Library Name:** Stevens Point (Portage County Public Library)

**Certification Grade:** 1

**Date of visit:** 8/30/2022

**Library staff present at the visit:** Larry Oathout

**SCLS staff present:** Mark Jochem

**Amount of time spent at visit:** 1 hour

**[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?**

Staff as a whole are doing well. The library (central and branches) experienced a large amount of staff changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff experienced stressors brought on by the pandemic and the adjustment period in the more normal times. As COVID-related restrictions eased, the number of behavior-related challenges greatly increased. This presented a steep learning curve, especially for new staff members. Larry reports that after months of experiencing increased patron behavior issues, things have quieted down a little bit.

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

Many of the big-projects the library as a whole (central and branches) revolve around finances. The Stevens Point location lease expires soon and the city would prefer the library move to another location. Leases at other branches are stable as far as locations are concerned.

The County Board Finance Committee wants all county departments to create a prioritization list of future projects, and to rank and quantify the value of services. Larry explained that this is going to be an especially challenging undertaking for the library as services and projects are complex. The County has set a deadline for this task of December 2022.

The library is looking at workflows of various departments as services change. One area, circulation was cited as an example, with approximately 30% of checkouts happening at self-checkout.

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

The library is altering some of the pandemic-related service changes. The library saw a decrease in curbside pickup appointments. The Stevens Point location has approximately 5 curbside pickups per week. The service will remain, as it is not too staff intensive. Decreases in virtual programming reflects a greater interest for in-person from patrons. Keeping both virtual programming and in-person programs requires quite a few staff resources.

Programs that will remain include the “Lit Loot” – a binge box with books in a theme and a prize of

some kind. The boxes are very popular with patrons, often “selling out” as soon as they are available. Adjacent to the “Lit Loot” is a partnership with Worzalla Publishing to furnish books from the *Wimpy Kid* series.

The library is also starting a “Dungeons and Dragons” on-going program for adults.

**4. How can SCLS help?**

Keep doing what we’re doing. SCLS is a good sounding board for ideas. Nicole, Youth Services Librarian, very much appreciates the Youth Services Check-in meetings. Staff like the opportunity to discuss happenings in libraries and getting new ideas. Larry appreciated the technology advice from Craig he received early in the pandemic regarding virtual meeting equipment. As a whole, SCLS staff expertise is valued.

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

Larry reports feeling a little “bogged-down” by the number of committee meetings and mentioned the Multi—part DVD meetings as an example. The Local Holds Pilot has not presented too many concerns. One consideration Larry mentioned was treating large libraries with branches as one library. For instance allowing local-holds materials be transferred between branches.

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