



## 2022 Library Visit Interview Form

**Library Name:** Monona Public Library

**Certification Grade:** 1

**Date of visit:** 10/6/2022

**Library staff present at the visit:** Ryan Claringbole

**SCLS staff present:** Kerri Hilbelink

**Amount of time spent at visit:** 50 min

**[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?

Things are OK. It's finally feeling like things are coming back to a pre-pandemic state. Ryan said that they are still only at 75% of their pre-pandemic circulation numbers, but it FEELS like things did pre-pandemic. Their Circulation supervisor left 2 weeks ago, so there has been some shuffling of duties. Staffing the desk is pretty “to-the-bone”. They have a new person that should be starting in November. They've been doing a lot of work with DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion). Lots of building projects: duct cleaning, HVAC work, lockers. Municipal funding is a concern – the next couple of years may be difficult.

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

- Strategic Plan - During their recent in-service day, they started their next strategic plan. Technically, they have another year of their current plan, but they're starting work on it in year 4 because so much has changed.
- Website - They are looking at updating their website. It is currently hosted through the city, but they are looking at moving it to SCLS (they talked to Rose about this possibility a while ago. I suggested it's no rush, as we're still working our way through the Drupal migrations).
- DEI stuff is really big. Trying to keep it as a high priority.
- Programs – The City has a contract with Nehemiah, and the library is working with them in parallel with the City.
- Circulation – Looking at the numbers, Ryan thinks Monona is in pretty good shape in circulation per capita, but they are always trying to improve the numbers.
- Outreach – They'd like to experiment with outreach and try to get non-traditional users to become regular library users.

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

- Continue to do curbside. They currently have about 3-4 curbside pickups per day. This is not a “huge lift”, and the people who use it really appreciate it.
- Video games.
- Lockers – new service. Ryan expressed appreciation for SCLS’ part in coordinating the lockers.
- Tool Library – They almost inherited a tool library, but that fell through. In talking with the board and city government, there were liability concerns related to the power tools, so the library wanted to break up the tool library into power vs unpowered, but the organization with the tool library wanted to keep it all together. They still would like to explore this.
- Take and make kits. For youth services, their provision of the kits is pretty constant. For adults, it’s tied to programs.

4. How can SCLS help?

- SCLS is always very helpful for fixing problems, especially technology-related.
- Can SCLS figure out how to do a substitution program for libraries that need help with staffing?
- This one is not a big one, but it would really help them if other projects come up --- revoke the ladder policy. It was difficult to coordinate with the City of Monona IT folks when the APs were installed a few years ago. Could there be rules or guidelines that would enable SCLS staff to go up on ladders safely?

2 concerns with recent changes which he asked me to pass along (I shared the details with Vicki):

- Not in favor of the multi-part DVD changes. This was approved by majority for newer items, and conversation will start soon for older items. Ryan notes that he has never had any complaints from patrons about single discs. He said it seems like more work to have DVD collections handled in 2 ways – some as discs and some as seasons. He had heard one anecdotal account of a patron expressing concern that they can’t watch the whole season in the loan period.
- Not in favor of local holds changes. He wonders if there is data to back up the benefit of these changes.

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

Ryan is curious whether SCLS could look at libraries and see what they’re doing for activism and advocacy around social issues, see what the differences are in what they’re doing, and share the info amongst the libraries. He said he doesn’t know how SCLS would feel about being “pro” or cautioning against it.

I asked about whether Monona has gotten any negative feedback about their efforts (“not much”). Ryan is interested in “what are libraries allowed to do?”

This led me to ask about book challenges. Monona has had 2 related to disapproval of books on display. The patrons were informed of the library’s process. One patron followed up and went through the process - - staff ended up agreeing and moving the book from YA to Adult. They have updated their policy so the people making the request have to be a member of the municipality ---

the thought being that municipal dollars are used to purchase the materials, so residents of the municipality should have the say.

Ryan is very happy with the Envisionware self-check equipment. He noted that their sorter conked out and didn't replace it. This hasn't been a hardship, but circulation numbers have been declining anyway. If they ever increase, Monona may revisit this.

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