City of Stoughton

Additional Staffing Request Form

General Information

Date:	07/13/22
Director:	Jim Ramsey
City Department:	Library
Requested Position Title:	Circulation Supervisor
Status:	☒ 40 Hours ☐ 30 Hours ☐ 24 Hours ☐ 22.5 Hours ☐ Other _____

Directions:

Before adding a new position to our budget, we need to justify the significant additional expense. Increasing headcount is an important and expensive decision that can only be funded with anticipated increased productivity, expense reduction, and/or additional revenues.

The Employee Cost Summary will be completed by the Director of Human Resources & Risk Management once this form is received.

Justification

Give a specific explanation regarding why the proposed position is critical to the operation of your department; Attach proposed or existing position description and organizational chart.

This is an existing position at 30 hours per week. Our request is for an increase of 10 hours for a total of 40 hours per week.

The Circulation Supervisor is one of four supervisors who, along with the Director, comprise the Library's Management Team. This position is responsible for supervising, scheduling, and staffing the library's busiest public service desk. The supervisor is also in charge of training, scheduling, and supervising the library's shelvers. The department is the largest in the library, with approximately 10-12 employees, depending on how many shelver positions happen to be vacant. Yet the Circulation Supervisor position is the only supervisory position that is not full time, a situation unique among City departments.

A survey of peer libraries in Wisconsin confirms that Stoughton Public Library is an outlier in this respect. Even smaller libraries that circulate fewer items have full-time Circulation supervisors. (See attached)

The Circulation Supervisor is crucial to the efficient functioning of the public library in that she ensures the timely processing and movement of library materials in and out of the building. Perhaps most importantly, the supervisor provides superior customer service to the hundreds of patrons who walk through our doors each day, as the Circulation desk is the primary point of contact for everyone who enters the library.

At only 30 hours per week, the supervisor is unable to maintain a consistent presence in the building in order to supervise and train staff and to provide quality customer service. The supervisor is responsible for deciding when to charge a patron for a damaged item, when to forgive charges, and when to set up a payment plan. These tasks can't be accomplished when the supervisor is out of the building, resulting in a poor customer service experience. At her current hours, our supervisor is able to assess damaged items weekly, at best, resulting in damaged items remaining on a library user's record long after the item has been returned, a major source of confusion and frustration for library patrons.

Our Circulation Department has fallen behind on processes required by our membership in a library consortium. (The South Central Library System includes 7 counties and 54 libraries.) To take only one example, the system's software creates reports of library patrons who are owed refunds for lost library materials. These reports are

then sent to the libraries which owned the materials in question. According to a report from April 27 of this year, our library has the fourth most unresolved refunds in a system of 54 libraries. These unresolved issues on library records lead to frustration and confusion for library users across the system, and there has been considerable pressure recently to clear them. At her current classification of 30 hours, our Circulation Supervisor is simply not able to process these and other reports to meet our responsibilities as a member of the South Central Library System.

Another important responsibility of consortium membership is participation in system sub-committees. This supervisor participates in South Central System's Circulation Services Subcommittee (CSS), a group charged with determining system-wide policies and procedures related to the lending of library materials. Having a seat on the CSS allows our supervisor to learn about emerging trends in technology/automation and to develop best-practices in customer service and department workflows. These meetings are held at a set time each month. Owing to her limited hours, our supervisor must choose between attending these sessions and meeting with her department's staff and the library's Management Team.

Over the next several years, South Central Library System will require all member libraries to attach Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags to items the library owns. Machine-readable RFID tags will facilitate increased automation and efficiency at the consortium's central sorting facility, as well as improve the experience of patrons using our automated self-checkout terminals. Most member libraries have already tagged their collections, but our library has not due to lack of staff hours. The Circulation Supervisor, along with the Technical Services Supervisor, would be the project manager for the retroactive conversion of the library's 80,000+ items to RFID.

Impact

If position is not approved, give specific departmental impact as well as impact to City services and other departments:

If this increase is not approved, customer service at the library's busiest service desk will suffer. Patrons may not be able to resolve charges on their accounts or inquire about lost/damaged items when the supervisor is absent. The supervisor will be unable to consistently supervise the work they have trained their subordinates to perform. As noted above, we will continue to fall behind on our obligations to our library consortium.

Because this is a demanding, public-facing position supervising the Library's largest department, the Library Board is concerned that at the current hours burnout will occur quickly and this position will become a kind of revolving door.

The current hours leave no time for future planning or development of new initiatives, such as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tagging of library materials. It is unlikely that our library would be able to meet our RFID tagging obligations without these additional hours.

Alternatives

List alternatives to filling this position: Give specific alternatives, i.e., restructure – attach additional documents, if necessary.

The library could reduce its open hours in order to increase the amount of time the supervisor is present, but the Library Board, not to mention the community at large, is unlikely to support this.

The supervisor could delegate responsibilities for assessing damages and charges to library assistants, but because these positions have even fewer hours than the supervisor, it would be difficult to find time off-desk to complete these assessments and follow up with patrons. This would also lead to inconsistencies and disputes with patrons as the decision of when and how to apply charges can be subjective.

The supervisor could resign from the Circulation Services Subcommittee, leaving our library without representation on this body. She could also cease holding monthly meetings with her staff, which is bound to negatively impact communication and department morale.

Submitted By

Director:

Click here to enter text.

Signature: **James Ramsey, Director** **Date: 7/13/2022**