



106 Washington Avenue, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901-4985

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 20, 2021
TO: Oshkosh Public Library Board of Trustees
FROM: Jeff Gilderson-Duwe, Library Director
RE: Implementation of OPL Phase Two Re-Opening Plan

The analysis in this memo makes two assumptions:

1. The Library Board has approved the proposed revision to the Phase Two Re-Opening Plan; and
2. The seven-day rolling average number of confirmed-plus-probable COVID-19 cases reported in Winnebago County **and** the 90-day average of that number show a decreasing trend from January 8, 2021 through January 27, 2021 (report to be shared at time of board meeting).

Additional reasons to consider implementing Phase Two services after January 28, 2021:

- If we think of the library building as akin to a “big box” retail store or supermarket, we believe the use trend that these businesses are seeing of “find what you need and leave” will apply here as well.
- The library – especially the second floor – is a big space with enhanced exterior-to-interior air exchange enabled by our HVAC system. Over the months, understanding of the transmission of the coronavirus has come to focus on airborne droplets. We believe that, with proper masking and physical distancing observed, the chance of contracting COVID-19 through airborne transmission in this building is very low.
- The library building’s posted occupancy limit is 783 people. We believe it unlikely that we will see as many as 78 people (10% of the limit) in the building at one time, much less 196 (25%). During Phase Two, library staff will conduct regular floor counts to monitor whether sub-areas of the building are becoming overcrowded; if warranted, access to these areas may be restricted.
- Chief Stanley concurs with me that, at this time, the case trend is “moving in the right direction,” and that community compliance with safety precautions is good.
- Access to the library for browsing may, for some patrons, ameliorate the mental health effects of social isolation and cabin fever during the winter months.
- Access to the library building will allow those of our patrons without permanent shelter to have a place to warm themselves and rest awhile.
- As more members of our community become vaccinated, we hope and expect the case rate to begin a marked and sustained decrease.

Action Requested: Consider recommendation – if the data trend warrants – of implementing Phase Two services as soon as is operationally feasible after January 28, 2021.

“A Library in Every Life”