

LIBRARY REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL COMMITTEES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT

I. Unit of government submitting this report:

Name of Library: Morton Public Library

Address of Main Library Office: 315 W. Pershing St. Morton, IL 61550

II. Information about our Library

1. We are located in Tazewell County. There are 11 libraries in our County.
2. The population of the territory in which our Library is located is 17,711 (as of 2020 census).
3. The library has 22 employees, including full-time and part-time employees. The Library has 7 Trustees serving on the elected, non-partisan Board.
4. Our annual budget for FY23 is: \$1,056,000.
5. Our Library's equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for 2023 is \$535,509,534.
6. The Library building is open 61 hours per week during the year. In FY23 the library provided 3,012 hours of in-person, onsite service. The library's digital collections and electronic services are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

III. Information about Our Committee

Committee Members:

Board President: Laura Turner
Trustee Heather Thompson

Trustee Kim Gryl

Trustee Jeff Keach

Trustee Ed Riesberg

Trustee Emily Ropp

Trustee Tracy Hilliard

Library Director: Alissa Williams

Library District Resident: Shannon Killion

Library District Resident: Beth Bradford

Dates that our Committee Met per 50 ILCS 70/23:

First Meeting: June 14, 2023

Second Meeting: April 10, 2024

Third Meeting: May 15, 2024

IV. Core Programs or Services Offered by our Library

Our Library offers the following core services and programs:

- Collection of materials for loan and/or in-library use serving all ages:
 - Regular and large print fiction and nonfiction books
 - Downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, music and film
 - Audiovisual materials such as DVDS, Blu-Rays, and CDs.
 - Audiobooks on CD and Playaway
 - Periodicals, including newspapers and magazines
 - STEM kits
 - Puzzles
- Interlibrary loan borrowing covering the entire state of Illinois, including university libraries
- Professional information, research, reference and referral services (in-person, by phone, by email)
- Outreach services for teachers, seniors, and senior living centers
- Preschool storytimes offered four days per week
- Regular schedule of programming and events for all ages
- E-newsletters for library information and programming news
- Free public notary services
- Free public wi-fi access (inside and outside building)
- Computers for public use
- Meeting rooms and study rooms
- Play areas
- Access to 11 online subscription databases for research purposes.
- Printing, scanning, faxing and photocopying
- Summer reading for all ages
- Two book clubs for adults, plus provide support for 10 book clubs
- Local History Collection keeps documents, photos, objects and books of historical interest about the village and residents of Morton. Includes access to historical newspapers, yearbooks and obituaries. Most resources are available digitally.

Other core services/programs we could possibly provide:

The library provides all core services assumed of a public library and as required to be reported to the Illinois State Library and the federal Institute of Museum and Library services including: visitation (a facility to house staff and collections), circulation of materials, programs/events, public access computer usage, and reference transactions.

To be considered, library services, such as a bookmobile, or branch and tangential services, such as passport and license plate sticker renewal, would need to be closely evaluated related to staff and financial resources available.

V. Awards and Recognitions

Our Library has received the following awards, distinctions and recognitions:

- \$20,000 Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities Grant – 2024
- \$2,000 Ameren “I love my Library” gift program – 2023
- \$18,000 American Rescue Plan Act Grant from State Library – 2021
- \$2,000 Back to Book Grant from the Illinois State Library – 2018
- \$25,247 Per Capita Grant from Illinois Secretary of State – annually

VI. Intergovernmental Agreements

We partner with or have Intergovernmental Agreements with the following other governments:

Entity:	Services Offered:
Morton School District 709	Library Cards for Teachers and Students
Bethel Lutheran School	Library Cards for Teachers and Students
Blessed Sacrament School	Library Cards for Teachers and Students

Consortia/Membership Agreements:

- Resource Sharing Alliance Consortium (RSA) – membership provides patrons access to the holdings of 96 member libraries, which decreases hold wait times and provides access to more than just our local collection. No one library can afford to purchase all the materials its patrons need. The sharing of items, rather than the library purchasing titles not owned or additional copies to fill patron demand resulted in an annual savings estimated at a minimum of \$582,000. RSA also provides membership in eRead Illinois, allowing our patrons additional access to digital materials via the Boundless app.
- Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) – Membership provides many benefits including access to RAILS Delivery system, which transfers books between libraries across the state. The Morton Public Library receives 41,592 items per year and lends approximately 27,600 items per year via RAILS Delivery. The library mail rate for a sending a single book through the United States Postal Service is approximately \$3.47 for the first pound, and an additional .66 cents for each additional pound. This delivery provides an approximate savings of

\$241,000 in postage. Morton Library staff use RAILS email listservs to share ideas and solutions with other librarians from across the state. The library has also taken advantage of RAILS negotiated group discounts to purchase items from three different companies, saving the Library hundreds of dollars in expenditures over the last several years. Additionally, staff members participate in RAILS networking groups and continuing education programs.

- OCLC Membership – Through this membership patrons have access to request materials the Library or RSA members do not own from the collections of 70,000 institutions. Last year the library borrowed and lent more than 14,905 items via non-RSA interlibrary loan services, with those transactions being more cost-efficient than purchasing, processing, and storing the title. The sharing of items rather than the library purchasing items it does not have resulted in an annual savings estimated at a minimum of \$238,480 (though likely more, as many items borrowed through this method are rare and higher cost)
- Explore More Illinois – membership allows library patrons free and discounted admission at a variety of Illinois cultural and recreational attractions. In 2023, patrons reserved 54 passes with the top three attractions being a free general admission pass at the Peoria Riverfront Museum, \$2 off at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and the Wheels of Time BOGO admission. This results in a savings of approximately \$1700 for our patrons.
- ADML Consortium – the ADML consortium provides access to ebooks and digital audiobooks via the Libby app.

VII. Community Partnerships

We partner with the following organizations:

- Tazewell Co. Master Gardeners: keep front garden beds maintained, provide education
- Morton Park District: hosts three Little Free Libraries at different parks, and two Storywalks on park property, collaborates on community wide events such as Harry Potter Day, produced joint summer programming guide, and allows use of facilities when events are too big for our meeting rooms.
- Morton Community Foundation: holds Endowment Funds that benefit the library and also participate in community grant cycle.
- Morton 709: we host afterschool book clubs at all four elementary schools, we provide an assembly each year for summer reading and we visit the junior high twice a year to do booktalks in classrooms.
- American Association of University Women: we provide space, registration and publicity for their monthly Girls Excelling in Math & Science (GEMS) program, as well as promote their community book club. They provide a donation to our Summer Reading Endowment.
- Morton Chamber of Commerce: We are the sponsor of the Information Tent for the Morton Pumpkin Festival
- Greater Peoria League of Women Voters: we co-hosted Candidate Forums for local elections

VIII. Review of Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures, Training Materials, and other Documents

We have reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the Library in order to evaluate our compliance and to determine if any of the foregoing should be amended.

- State laws applicable to Libraries
- Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1 *et seq.*)
- Policy on public comment
- Designation of OMA officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))
- All Board Members have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))
- Schedule of Regular Meetings of the Library Board (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 *et seq.*)
- Designation of FOIA Officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
- Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))
- List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Library Control (5 ILCS 140/5)
- Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))
- IMRF Total Compensation Postings (5 ILCS 120/7.3)
- Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official (50 ILCS 105/4.1 *et seq.*)
- All applicable officials have filed statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5 *et seq.*)
- Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(C))
- Our Intergovernmental Agreements
- Our budget and financial documents
- State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1 *et seq.*)
- Our budget and financial documents

What Have We Done Well? (List any budget/levy freezes or reductions in the past decade; list new programs or services offered to residents over the past decade; list any ethics ordinances adopted; timely FOIA compliance; responsiveness to public; list any new intergovernmental agreements; list any increase in number of library patrons served, etc.)

- Since 2003, the Library has received \$96,116.33 from the Morton Community Foundation in grants. This has provided for book displays, wireless network, portable sound system, literature racks, an outside book return, digitalization of history room collection, furniture for our teen area, furniture for our children’s program room, a bike repair station, STEM kits and a display system for art exhibits.
- Summer Reading participation in 2023 was at an all-time high
- Circulation counts are up to pre-COVID levels
- We implemented a new marketing plan to better reach patrons and have increased engagement in our email marketing efforts by 21%
- Implemented Preschool Pathways – an intentional laddering of developmentally appropriate programming for ages 0-5 and offering storytimes four days per week.
- In the last decade we have begun our Home Delivery service and regularly visit three local senior living centers. We deliver books to 16 residents who can’t visit the library due to health and mobility issues.

- During the pandemic we developed a Book Valet program, offering to deliver materials on hold curbside and we have continued this program.
- We utilize volunteers to help us catalog items in the history room and run our ongoing book sale which brings about \$5,000 in revenue annually.
- Collaboration with other libraries on best practices. Because libraries are not in competition with one another, they are more willing than the private sector to share best practices and collaborate on joint programming. We utilize block booking to secure lower pricing for summer performers and collaborate on joint marketing efforts such as hosting a joint booth at Peoria-area events like Ignite Peoria and the Peoria Area Homeschooling Convention.

IX. What Inefficiencies Did We Identify/What Are our Next Steps?

The Committee identified no substantial deficiencies or important areas of significant improvement pertaining to the material reviewed. As a library we annually review the standards set forth in Serving Our Public 4.0. When doing this, we identify any areas that we are inefficient at or need to improve on and address them. Therefore, we feel we are always looking for weaknesses as well as ways to improve our library services. We also believe the Decennial Committee (and subsequent Decennial Report) and other unfunded mandates are inefficient. This impacts our services and programming and duplicates other reporting requirements.

X. What Can We Do Better or More Efficiently?

The Morton Public Library District is a responsive, responsible, and fiscally stable organization that addresses inefficiencies when we find them. Therefore, we feel there are no other improvements we can make at this time. One step we can address is contacting our local legislators and library associations regarding unfunded mandates and changing laws that hinder our ability to do an efficient job.

XI. Studies on Governmental Efficiencies

In preparing this report, we reviewed several studies on local government efficiency. These studies show that the average local government in Illinois serves 1,800 residents compared to the national median of 2,850 individuals.

We also found that smaller municipal governments tend to tax less, spend less and borrow less than larger municipal governments. Townships have had a smaller increase in taxation according to Wendell Cox (2016). They have a propensity to have good working relationships with each other and work to reduce costs by sharing services. The library is no different. According to Wendell's study, the smallest municipal governments had the lowest median local tax revenues per capita.

Illinois has between 8,500 and 9,000 units of local government, of which close to 6,000 are considered special purpose governments. Illinois has the highest number of units of local government in the U.S., with Texas the only other state with more than 5,000. Illinois local government entities include public library districts, but also include school districts, park districts, fire protection districts, airport authorities, road and bridge districts, street lighting districts, cemetery districts, and more. Public library districts, such as Morton Public Library District, account for 350 to 390 of the special purpose governments and less than 5% of the state's special purpose governments. Road and bridge districts account for nearly 1,400, and fire protection, drainage, and school districts each have about 850 to 900 districts.

Tazewell County has 9 public library districts, though other public libraries exist in the county and are part of another local government entity (e.g. Pekin Public Library is a municipal library as part of the City of Pekin). In total, 12 public libraries (as defined by 75 ILCS 5/, 55 ILCS 5/, and 75 ILCS 16/) are located in Tazewell County.

XII. Our Committee's Recommendations Regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:

As stated previously, we feel the library has good accountability and efficiency.

However, there are a few items to be addressed:

- Unfunded state mandates hurt our ability to be efficient, causing unnecessary time and expense to implement.
- Newspaper posting requirements. The newspaper is no longer the most effective way to provide public notice. Websites and social media are cheaper and reach more people. Permitting the library to post the information on its website or social media pages in lieu of newspaper publications would reduce costs.

Submitted by: .
Alissa Williams
Library Director
Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee
Morton Public Library District

Date of Committee Approval of Report: May 15, 2024