

Committee Inventory Final Report

Executive Summary

Our library system has a large number of committees with the appearance of having a small number of people and locations involved. What we have found is that managers are more highly represented than frontline staff, some locations have disproportionately higher participation than others, and full-time staff are the primary participants. People participating on one committee are more likely to volunteer and be selected to be on other committees. Barriers to participation are a lack of awareness of opportunities, scheduling/time commitments, and not being asked to serve. Potential improvements to the process include increasing transparency in calls for participation, providing a list of active workgroups, and providing recommendations on how to encourage broader participation across the organization.

Overview of Stage One

The first part of this report covers the period from January 2019 to April 2021. A call for information was sent out by Executive Director Larry White with a link to a spreadsheet for all correspondents to add any committee work that they were involved in. The email went out on April 16th and the information was due on April 26th.

With concerns that we are not providing enough opportunities for staff to participate on committees, we decided to do an inventory of all committees we have had in the system. Our goal is to see who is serving and how often they have served in the above time frame, in hopes, moving forward we can provide opportunities to those who have not had an opportunity to serve or opportunity to serve recently.

Cleaning the Data

A total of 89 groups were added to the spreadsheet. We reviewed the groups that were added and determined some redundancy and some inclusion of groups that are not cross-functional committees. Groups were categorized by how the participants were chosen: selected, volunteered, or by position. Groups included in the position category included: Digital Outreach, Essential Social Media Team, and Operations Security Group.

We also had several groups that were originally duplicated based on the years in which they operated in. These were condensed into a single group where the participating employees had start and end dates to their commitments. The remaining groups in the volunteered and selected categories numbered 76. From this point, the remaining groups will be referred to as committees.

Individual Representation

The library system employed 451 employees as of May 10, 2021 based on the Staff Directory. Based on the data gathered from the spreadsheet of employees in committees, a total of 164 unique employees were included as participating in committees. Nine of the 164 are former employees, leaving 155 of 450 (34%) current employees having served on committees. We then reviewed the data for unique employees who are currently serving on a committee. There are 114 current employees with active memberships on a committee, reflecting 25% of our employee base.

We also reviewed the data for how committees identified who would serve on the committee. Some employees are serving on multiple committees. There are 152 employees represented by volunteering to serve on a committee; 70 employees were selected to serve, which includes 58 people concurrently serving in both types of committees.

There are 29 committees with active members. Committees are listed with as few as 2 active members to as many as 27. The median number of people on a committee is 8.

Job Title Representation

The library system currently has 83 occupied job titles according to the Staff Directory. Only 53 job titles (64%) are represented on the committee inventory. Job title representation varies from one person on one committee to a combination of 68 people and committees represented. Access Specialists (68) and Librarians (67) are most heavily represented on the committees listed. When unique individuals are accounted for, 35 Access Specialists and 22 Librarians have served on the committees represented. Access Specialists and Librarians are the top two occupied job titles after Library Aides. We have the most staff in the Library Aide job title, but only 2 are currently on or have served on committees. This is likely due to their part-time employment status.

Top Job Titles Represented	Total currently in System	Unique employees currently on committees	Percent of current employees represented
Access Specialist	88	20	23%
Librarian	56	14	25%
Access Manager II	12	9	75%
Engagement Manager	17	9	53%

The following is interesting but is less indicative of representation as we do not have list of all employees who were employed during the evaluation period, just those who were active on committees.

Top Job Titles Represented	Total in Employee list	Unique employees ever on committees	Percent of listed employees represented
Access Specialist	86	35	41%
Librarian	56	22	39%
Access Manager II	15	13	87%
Engagement Manager	17	12	71%

The next table demonstrates that staff in supervisory or management positions are well represented on committees. Only 14% of frontline staff as a whole are represented on committees even though Librarians and Access Specialists are relatively well-represented.

Manager/Frontline	Total in Staff Directory	Unique employees currently on committees	Percent of current in system represented
Manager/supervisor	92	65	71%
Frontline	359	49	14%

Department/Location Representation

The library system currently has 38 distinct locations/departments according to the Staff Directory, 22 of which are under Public Services. The department most represented on committees is Engagement and Program Services, with representation on 79 committees by just 6 people. There are 5 locations/departments not represented on committees: Business Office (BUS), Finance and Business Administration (FBA), Nicoma Park (NP), Outreach (OUT), and Wright (WR). If NP, OUT, and WR are rolled into their respective groups which already have representation, BUS/FBA would be the one department that has had no representation on committees.

Some locations have a higher representation than their size may indicate, while some larger locations have less representation than would be expected. WA and VI are on the higher side of representation, while DN and SO, both considered large libraries, have less representation with only 6 and 4 employees respectively currently serving on committees. The following table shows the locations with the greatest number of employees currently serving on committees. Representation ranges from 18% to 100%.

Location	# CURRENTLY on Committees	# at Location	% on committees
Village	10	23	43%
Collection Services and Development	7	39	18%
Warr Acres	7	19	37%
Belle Isle	6	18	33%
Downtown	6	26	23%
Engagement and Program Services	6	6	100%

When reviewing our top 10 largest locations/departments by number of employees, representation ranges from 11% to 43%.

Location	Count of Employees	# on Committees	% Representation
Edmond	43	5	12%
Collection Services and Development	39	7	18%
Northwest	35	4	11%
Downtown	26	6	23%
Midwest City	26	6	23%
Southern Oaks	26	4	15%
Village	23	10	43%
Bethany	23	4	17%
Warr Acres	19	7	37%
Belle Isle	18	6	33%

Our locations with the highest representation are also some of the smallest locations/departments.

Location	Count of Employees	# on Committees	% Representation
Engagement and Program Services	6	6	100%
Development/Vol. Serv.	3	3	100%
Learning and Development	2	2	100%
Public Services Administration	6	5	83%
Marketing & Communications	4	3	75%
Central Information Services	6	3	50%
Community Libraries	4	2	50%
Operations Administration	2	1	50%
Strategic Planning & Projects	2	1	50%
Village	23	10	43%

Overview of Stage Two

The second survey to staff went live on July 6, 2021 and closed on July 20, 2021. We asked participants base questions of name, position, work location, hours per week worked. We also asked about their interest in serving on a committee, how they would want to participate, and what has prevented them from participating if they have not been on a committee. Those who have been on a committee were asked which committees they were on, if they were a lead of the committee, and how much time they were spending on the committees. Finally, respondents were asked about how the system could support them in participating in committees.

As we reviewed the committees listed in the survey, we determined that we needed a consistent definition of what a committee is so that all the appropriate committees were recognized and evaluated, while groups not qualifying for the definition were excluded. The working/proposed definition is listed in Appendix A and in our summary of recommendations.

Evaluating survey results

Based on the previous survey results, we wanted to evaluate FTE status, term lengths, interest in serving on committees, as well as how to promote more interest and more people active on committees. In our second survey of staff, we received 134 responses. We did not take a count of how many employees were in system on the final day of the survey, but 430 has been a fairly standard number of active employees for the last several months and is accurate at the time of this writing. Using this number provides a 31% response rate.

Term Lengths

The system average for term lengths is 12.72 months. Known half-time employees average 12.31 months and known full-time employees average 12.67 months. Two part-time employees are averaging 23.4 months, with one of them serving continuously since 2019. Most workgroups appear to last for approximately one year, with little difference in term length based on FTE status.

Interest in Serving

We have significantly more people in full-time roles serving on committees. Based on available FTE information, only 7 out of the 175 employees (4%) worked less than full-time hours. Conversely, 96% of participants are full-time employees.

Hours Worked	Interested in Serving?		Grand Total
	No	Yes	
Full Time	10	90	100
Half Time	6	11	17
Part Time	10	7	17
Grand Total	26	108	134

Of those who responded, 108 were interested in serving on committees and 26 were not. Of the 108 who were interested, 47 of those (43.5%) said that they had not been able to serve yet on a committee. This number eliminates those who responded to the question but were not actually interested in serving. Responses in the Other category included employees that were new to the organization and were unaware of opportunities. Additionally, the time commitment can be a deterrent to new involvement.

If you have you not been able to serve on a committee since January 2019, why is that?	Total
I am not interested in serving on a committee.	10
I've been encouraged to focus on my current duties for now.	2
My position has not been eligible for any committees.	6
No one has asked me to serve or if I am interested.	18
Other	14
The meeting times/days don't work for me.	7
Grand Total	57

Time Spent on Committees

In our survey, we did not specifically ask participants to break out the amount of time they were spending on each committee, rather we asked the general question, "How much time are you putting in on each of your committees per month?" Because of this, we received varying answers with both detailed numbers of hours per committee and time ranges for all committees the person served on. To translate this data into more quantitative data, for any ranges of time provided, we used the average of the range. For example, if a person responded that they spent 4-6 hours on committee work in a month, it was translated to 5 hours per month. Qualitative data such as, "it varies," was not used in the calculations.

Based on these averages, staff who are on committees are spending on average 5.13 hours per month on committee work, with half-time and part-time reporting about one hour less per month spent on their committee work. The least amount spent was 0 hours per month, and the greatest amount spent was 35 hours per month.

FTE status	Average of Hours Spent/Month
Full Time	5.19
Half Time	4.33
Part Time	4.00
Grand Total	5.13

Encouraging Participation

Additionally, we asked managers of locations with higher than usual levels of participation how they encourage staff to participate. Takeaways from these responses follow:

- Managers need to think positively about committee work themselves regarding the benefits it brings to the employee and location.
- When managers encourage local participation in decision-making and feedback where appropriate, employees are more likely to volunteer for opportunities.
- Most often, staff will request of their manager to participate in a committee of interest. Occasionally, the manager will suggest to a particular staff member that they should volunteer.
- Peer to peer suggestions at the manager level for people to serve is rare based on the assumption that the direct supervisor will know better who is in a good position to serve on a committee.
- Managers agreed staff should have an opportunity to serve, but the desire to serve needs to be present.
- If an employee has trouble meeting our core competencies, they should not serve until they have improved in that area(s).
- Additionally, it was mentioned the option should be given to part-time/half-time staff to flex their time to be able to participate at meetings.

Analysis

What did we learn from this process?

- Our hypothesis that people who are already serving on one committee are more likely to serve on future committees was correct. We have 55% of employees who are currently on committees serving on multiple, active committees – we need to break out and be more diverse and provide opportunities for those who are not serving.
- The most populated job titles are also the job titles with the most numbers of people serving on committees.
- Public Services Access and Engagement Managers are highly represented on committees.
- Staff in EPS and the Manager of Access are on the most committees as they tend to lead the committees that pertain to their areas of involvement.
- The average term length for committee work is one year. This is similar for FT and HT members.
- The average amount of time spent on committee work per person per month is 4-5 hours.
- Most (96%) participants are full-time employees. We need to find ways to encourage and allow more part-time involvement.

- Time commitment, scheduling, and lack of awareness of opportunities are the biggest deterrents to participating on committees.

Recommendations

Based on all of the feedback provided, we have established some detailed proposals in Appendix A of goal metrics, standards for having broader representation, process to call and select participants, and transparency in purpose, participants, and outcomes. Highlights of those recommendations follow:

- Define a committee/workgroup for the purpose of this evaluation:
 - For Metropolitan Library System, a group of staff working on system-wide projects, who were appointed or assigned, to work across various departments to complete a specific function/task and approved by a member of Leadership Team.
- While committees do not need to be approved by the entire Leadership Team, a member of that team needs to be aware of the group to be formed and its purpose. There will be times that Leadership Team as a whole will need to establish or approve of a committee's formation.
- When seeking approval to form a committee, ensure that consistent information is provided in the request.
- Make a call for participants by email and intranet post using the same information in the request to form the group as well as how to volunteer.
- Staff volunteering for a committee will provide information about any current committees they are on, whether they have supervisor approval, and why they want to serve on this committee.
- As a system, we can empower local supervisors to allow staff to telework specifically to participate in a system committee to provide more opportunities for those who do not work Monday-Friday 8am-5pm. Follow the call for participants with an email and intranet post announcing who was selected.
- Prepare the participants for the work with expectations, goals, and deadlines for the group.
- Keep the Leadership Team member or group informed of progress as appropriate.
- Complete the work with a summary of the goal and outcome of the group.

Appendix A

Committee / Workgroup Recommendations

This document provides recommendations to move forward with system wide committees and workgroups. It is designed to create standards to ensure consistency and thoughtfulness. The document includes a definition of a committee / workgroup, how to create, considering participants, and steps to create a committee / workgroup.

Definition of Committee / Workgroups

For Metropolitan Library System, a group of staff working on system-wide projects, who were appointed or assigned, to work across various departments to complete a specific function/task and approved by a member of Leadership Team.

Note: if you are assigned a project that requires input from other departments where you reach out for assistance, that is not a workgroup.

Committee / Workgroup Life Cycle

Approval Process

To create a committee / workgroup, staff must have permission from a member of Leadership Team to request staff to serve from multiple departments. The Leadership Team member will review and recommend other departments that need to be involved.

The following items will be present in the request:

- Purpose
- Goal(s)
- Problem, if identified
- Suggested make up of workgroup participants, including maximum number of participants needed

Call for Participants

After approval from the Leadership Team member, the committee / workgroup lead must do a call for participants via email and an Internet post. Supervisors of potential participants will want to know:

- Potential time commitment, if known
- Eligible positions
- If they have supervisor permission
- If they are currently serving on any committee / workgroups
- Share 1-2 sentences why they want to serve on the committee / workgroup

The call should be open for a minimum of 10 days. The call should be clear on how staff are to add their name to the list of volunteers with the requested information above. This could be a simple email to a specific staff member.

Selecting Participants

When selecting participants, be mindful of other committee / workgroups the staff member is currently or has recently served as well as why they want to serve. We want to allow staff the opportunity who have not served an opportunity to serve unless they are considered a subject matter expert.

If someone requests to participate but may work outside the normal Monday through Friday 8am-5pm, consider ways we can get them active.

- Seek permission to allow telework, even if the position is not normally eligible
- Meet virtually
- Work in a shared document
- Have ongoing MS Teams conversations
- Consider whether email is more appropriate than a meeting

Announce Participants

Notify volunteers that they were not selected. For transparency, send an email and Intranet post of the participants that have been selected.

Send a separate email to the group to let them know:

- Workgroup members
- Make up of workgroup participants, including maximum number of participants needed
- Steps to proceed
- Meeting time selection
- How to prepare for the first meeting

Also share a document that includes the committee / workgroup's purpose, goal(s), problem, if identified, deliverables, timeline, anticipated time commitment, communication expectations, and meeting expectations (when, how often, how long, what avenue, etc.).

First Meeting

At the first meeting, the group will review what deliverables might look like, how to stay in communication with the group, and establish when and how often meetings will occur.

Committee / Workgroup Wrap Up

During the process, be sure to keep your Leadership Team person current on updates and how the workgroup is proceeding. Once the committee / workgroup is completed, write up a summary document for your Leadership Team person sharing the following information:

- Purpose
- Goal(s)
- Problem, if identified
- Deliverables
- Timeline
- Recommendations / Proposals
- What needs to be communicated to the system and how to communicate it
- What the implementation process and timeline might look like

Appendix B

Survey questions – 2nd survey

- Name
- Position
- How many hours per week do you work?
 - Get FTE status - FT, HT, PT, .75
- Do you have an interest in serving on committees?
 - How would you like to participate? (Committee member, Committee Chair)
- If you have you not been able to serve on a committee since January 2019, why is that?
 - My position has not been eligible for any committees.
 - No one has asked me to serve or if I am interested.
 - The meeting times/days don't work for me.
 - I've been encouraged to focus on my current duties for now.
 - Other: text box
- Are you currently serving on a committee on the attached list? Y/N
 - Which one(s)? Text box:
 - Are you currently a head of any of the listed committees? Y/N
 - Which ones? Text box
 - Are you currently serving on any committees not listed on the attached list?
 - Which ones? Text box
 - How much time are you putting in on each of your committees per month?
 - Enter committee and hours per month (text box)
- How could the system support you in participating on committees?
 - Text box