

Report on the Results of the Winter 2017 Survey Related to Renovation/Expansion of the Glen Lake Community Library

The Survey

In December 2016, the Glen Lake Community Library (GLCL) Board of Trustees authorized a survey of residents in Empire, Glen Lake and Kasson Townships about expansion and renovation plans for the GLCL. A survey was mailed to all boxholders in these townships on January 9, 2017 with a deadline of January 23, 2017. Hard copies were available at the GLCL in Empire and Maple City. The survey also was available online.

Who Completed the Survey?

Two hundred forty-four people responded to the survey, primarily through the mail or at the GLCL. The demographics for survey participants are:

- 52.7% live full- or part-time in Empire Township; 23.1% live in Glen Arbor Township; 17.3% live in Kasson Township; and 7.0% live in other townships (Cleveland, Platte, Benzie and Almira Townships).
- 19.3% live in 1-person households; 65.8% in 2-person households; 5.8% in 3-person households; 5.4% in 4-person households, 2.5% in 5-person households; and 1.2% in 6-person households.
- The largest number of respondents, by far, were 61 years or older, with the next largest group being 45-60.

Information related to participants' use of a library is:

- 96.3% of respondents use a library, while 3.7% do not.
- 91.3% use the Glen Lake Community Library; 32.2% use the Traverse City Library; and 10.3% use the Leland, Suttons Bay, Interlochen, Osterlin at NMC or Benzie Libraries or the GLCL at Maple City. Respondents may use more than one library.
- 31.7% use a library a few times a year; 22.2% use one at least once a month; and 42.0% use one more than once a month, with 4.1% never using a library.
- 29.1 % attend adult programs offered in Empire, Glen Arbor or Maple City about once a year; 12.5% attend 2-3 times a year; and 2.9 % attend more than three times a year, with 55.6% never attending.
- 11.5% attend children's programs offered in Empire, Glen Arbor or Maple City about once a year; 5.4% attended 2-3 times a year; and 4.1% attended more than three times a year, with 78.9% never attending. (This is not surprising given the age of many respondents, although some indicated they took their grandchildren to programs.)

What Library Characteristics Were Important to Residents When They Considered Renovation/Expansion of the Library?

Survey participants were asked to indicate how important various characteristics of a renovated/expanded library were. There seemed to be three approaches to how people filled out

this part of the survey: Some responded to all characteristics; some checked only the characteristics they felt were very important, skipping the other characteristics; and some responded to most characteristics, often not responding to characteristics with which they were unfamiliar and putting question marks by these.

How participants responded to the twenty-two characteristics is in a chart, below. However, the characteristics indicated as most important (the combination of somewhat and very important) were:

- Fiction books – 93.1%
- Non-fiction books – 92.6%
- Good lighting/windows – 90.6%
- Community information space – 82.3%
- Good traffic flow – 81.2 %
- Community multi-use room – 80.4%

The characteristics indicated as least important (the combination of not important at all and not very important) were:

- Tumblebooks – 88.1%
- Mango Languages – 85.4%
- Emagazines – 83.2%
- Coffee/tea availability – 67.0%
- Music/CDs – 58.0%

It can be noted in the chart below that for the first three, only 153 – 165 people responded. These seemed to be services with which some people were unfamiliar.

This chart shows the percentages of responses for each characteristic. The number by the characteristic (n=) indicates how many people responded to that characteristic:

| | Not important at all | Not very important | Somewhat important | Very important |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Fiction books (n=232) | 4.3% | 2.6% | 11.2% | 81.9% |
| Non-fiction books (n=230) | 3.9% | 2.6% | 10.9% | 81.7% |
| Children’s books (n=210) | 16.1% | 10.4% | 20.9% | 52.4% |
| Movies (n=216) | 10.6% | 13.0% | 28.7% | 47.7% |
| Recorded books (n=210) | 20.0% | 17.1% | 35.2% | 27.6% |
| Music CDs (n=205) | 26.3% | 31.7% | 24.4% | 17.6% |
| Newspapers/ Magazines (n=211) | 18.0% | 25.1% | 34.5% | 22.3% |
| Ebooks: Up North Digital Collection (n=193) | 26.9% | 21.8% | 25.9% | 25.4% |
| Mango languages (n=165) | 60.6% | 24.8% | 10.9% | 3.6% |
| Tumblebooks (n=153) | 65.3% | 22.8% | 7.8% | 3.9% |
| Emagazines: Zinio (n=160) | 59.4% | 23.8% | 11.9% | 5.0% |
| Comfortable reading areas (n=218)5 | 13.3% | 11.5% | 35.3% | 39.9% |
| Community multi-use room (n=215) | 11.6% | 7.9% | 35.3% | 45.1% |
| Children’s library area (n=210) | 16.7% | 5/2% | 22.3% | 55.7% |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Teen library area (n=200) | 19.0% | 12.5% | 30.0% | 38.5% |
| Computer/technology area (n=216) | 15.7% | 12.5% | 27.3% | 44.4% |
| Small work/study rooms (n=206) | 16.9% | 24.8% | 31.6% | 26.7% |
| Outside patio area (n=209) | 24.4% | 23.4% | 35.9% | 16.3% |
| Good lighting/windows (n=222) | 5.9% | 3.6% | 24.8% | 65.8% |
| Good traffic flow (n=207) | 8.7% | 10.1% | 37.7% | 43.5% |
| Coffee/tea availability (n=210) | 38.0% | 29.0% | 22.4% | 10.5% |
| Community information space (n=214) | 6.1% | 11.7% | 40.7% | 41.6% |

What New Programs Would Participants Like to See and How Can the Library Be a Better Destination?

Participants were asked open-ended questions about what kinds of programs they would like to see at the library that it presently doesn't offer, and how the library could be a better destination. Almost twenty-four percent of survey respondents answered either one or both of these questions, often mixing up the answers to each. For this reason, the following analysis takes all of the comments into consideration and groups them into themes.

Major themes related to improving library services and how the library can be a better destination are:

- Technology – Many participants asked for more programs about current technology programs and services, how to use common technologies like iPhones; coaching on common technologies; and new services, such as ability to use Word and Excel on library computers.
- More Adult Programs – While many specific programs were suggested, from cookbook clubs to movies with discussions, one overarching theme was that local resources should be used more often to provide programs, such as local authors and experts. There was also the overarching theme that programs should be on local history, art, music, and other local topics.
- Programs for School-Aged Children and Teens – Several participants suggested more programming for children over the age of 6.
- Hours – Although there was no common request related to hours, a few people would like to see the library open more hours and on different days than it currently is.
- Space for the Friends of the Glen Lake Community Library – A few participants would like to see some level of dedicated space for the Friends group.
- Distance services – A few people would like to be able to receive and return books closer to home. One person would like the Maple City library to have more and newer books and would like to see the selection expanded and rotated more often.

It is important to note that this section does not take into consideration the many very positive comments about the library, its staff, and services. Several people indicated they loved their library just as it is.

Summary prepared by Christine Nelson, February 15, 2017