# Building a Common Agenda

WINNEFOX LIBRARY SYSTEM: VOICING YOUR SUPPORT

Sources of revenue: Wisconsin 2010

Source: Wisconsin Public Library Service Data 2010

Wisconsin Public Library Revenue Sources 2010

- Municipal Appropriation (58.5%)
- County Appropriation (23.5%)
- State Funds (7%)
- Federal Funds (<1%)
- Contract Income (<1%)
- All Other Income (9%)
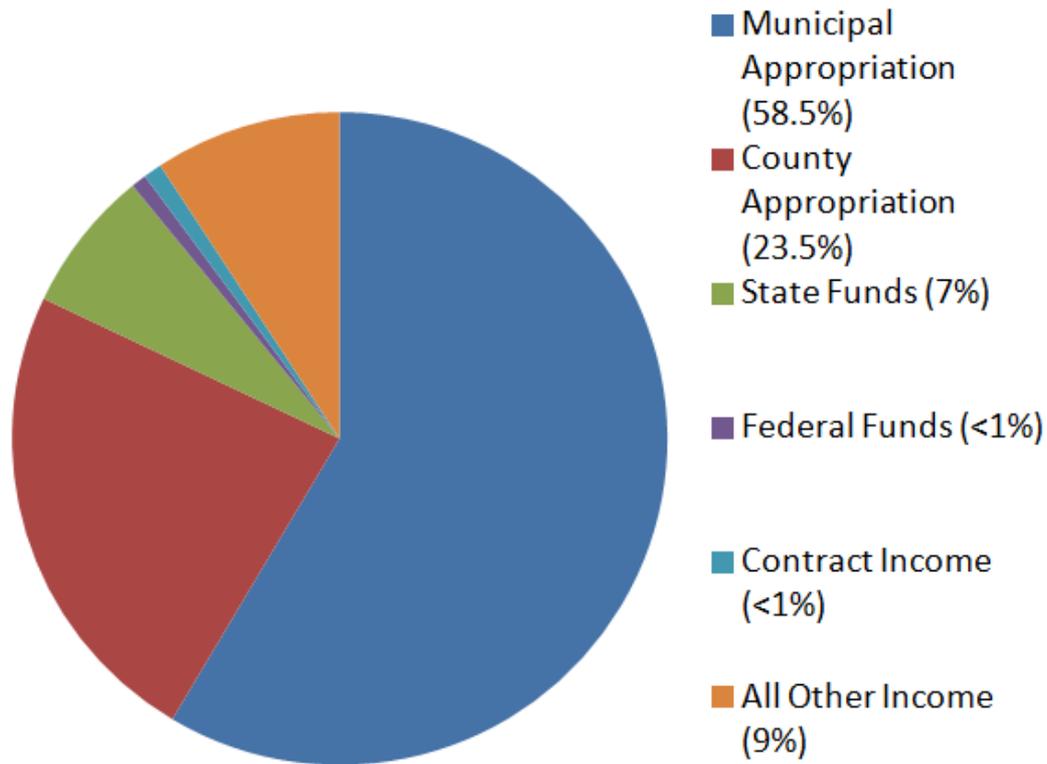
Creating a Common Agenda

- In general, do you feel your local and county elected and appointed officials support the library? How do you know this?

- Do you feel other library stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, business owners, seniors) support the library? How do you know this?

- **Are any of your key stakeholders currently involved (as volunteers or trustees) with the library or any of its programs?   Are any of their family members involved?**

It's human nature

- □ People/officials/legislators do things for *their* reasons, not yours.

- □ People/officials/legislators pay attention to the things that *they* love and value.

Identifying the priorities that others have on their agenda

The folks who have power over our existence

- **Municipal/village councils** (mayor, administrator, council members)

- **County board of supervisors** (county exec, supervisors)

- State senators and representatives, Governor

- Federal senators and representatives, President

City of Altoona's agenda

*The City of Altoona is a **full service community** with a balanced mix of residential, industrial, and commercial properties. Residents of all ages have adequate opportunities for **employment**, **education, recreation**, affordable housing, and enjoyment of area parks.*

--Comprehensive plan, 2009-2030

Altoona, continued.

Altoona maintains its unique identity as a vibrant city **welcoming new professionals, families, and entrepreneurs** *wishing to call Altoona home. The City maintains strong public infrastructure and a healthy economy serving the needs of both residents and visitors. Local leaders continue to* **work with adjoining towns**, *the City of Eau Claire, and Eau Claire County to manage development and* **the delivery of services for the betterment of the region.**

How to Bridge the Agenda Gap

☐ Provide credible, relevant information to build trust.

☐ **Know the mission, goals, and priorities of your decision-makers.**

☐ Find points of alignment for library and community agendas, i.e., local, county, state government.

☐ Understand how your decision-makers perceive public opinion.

Inside the Library

- Current/New Board Members
- Future Board Members
- Friends of the Library Board Members

Inside the Library:
Current & new library board members

What to do & talk about

- [ ] Provide a tour of the library
- [ ] Share your philosophy of service &
- [ ] Describe what you hope to accomplish as Director (shared vision)
- [ ] Ask about their reason(s) for serving/wanting to serve on the library board
- [ ] Their sense of the library's priorities
- [ ] [+ new member orientation]

Inside the Library:
Future library board members

- Recruit (input from staff, officials)

- Advertise (invitation to serve, position description; see page 15-16 of syllabus)

- Strive for diversity (age, gender, race & ethnicity, residence, income, education, employment)

- Mayor/village president makes the appointments but always provide a list of names from which to choose.

Inside the Library
Friends of the Library Board

- Follow the general format (with board members)
- Tour, discussion +
- Advocacy education
- Recruitment issues
- Conduit to Library Board

Municipality

- Mayor
- City/Village Administrator
- Council Members

Local Officials

What to do & talk about

- Call each person and set up an individual appointment.
- Provide a tour of the library
- Share your philosophy of service
- What you hope to accomplish (working with the board and staff) as Director, i.e. shared vision.
- Ask about their reason(s) for serving (in their respective capacities).
  - *People do things for their own reasons, not yours.*
- Their sense of the community's priorities
  - (Middleton 1986: Where is new library on list?)
  - *People pay attention to the things they love and value.*

Questions to ask candidates for office / local & county officials

☐ *What made you decide to run for office?* (The answer may allow your to learn if a particular official has a big-picture view or a narrow-interest agenda.)

☐ *What are the most important issues facing our county/city/village over the next few years?*

☐ (And if a statement about libraries hasn't been offered unprompted.) *Where do you place libraries on your list of priorities?*

The Goals You Want to Achieve

- Become known on a first-name basis (not just by a generic title)
- Get a sense of community & library priorities
- Identify your allies and adversaries

Follow the same procedure at the **county** level

- **County executive** (chief of staff or key staff members)
- **County board supervisors** who represent library's service area
- Chair of finance/personnel committee(s)
- Township officials

Chamber of Commerce

MIDDLETON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- **Executive Director**
- **Board of Directors**
- **Member Gatherings**

Chamber of Commerce

- Executive Director as portal to the business community

- Connections among Chamber, Library, and Friends Boards (+volunteer links)

- Participation in Chamber events (breakfast meetings, after-work gatherings, committees)
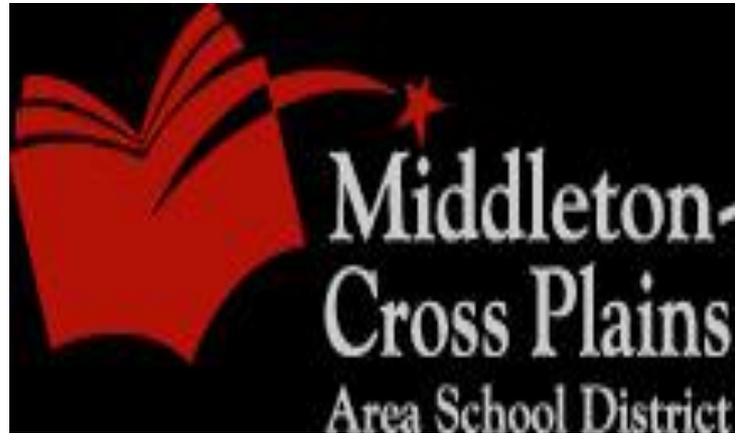
- **Superintendent**
- **Library Board Liaison**
- **School Board Members**
- **IMC Librarians**
- **Reading Specialists**

School District

- Superintendent's views of libraries in general and library cooperation in particular.

- Chapter 43 provision

- Board members: allies/adversaries

- Individual school contacts

- Example of "end-around"