



Prospect City Hall



Library Committee members Tom Willis, Ruth O'Daniel, Carol McAllister, Paul McAllister (chair), City Administrator Ann Simms, Councilmembers Sandy Tucci and Sandra Leonard and Mayor Todd Eberle

# Great Practice Profile: City of Prospect

## CITY'S LIBRARY LEASING PROGRAM WORTH CHECKING OUT

by Terri Johnson, Senior Marketing and Communications Manager

A few years ago, residents of Prospect, Kentucky, had to drive 10 miles to Middletown or pay \$24 to use the Oldham County Library in Goshen. City leaders contacted the Louisville Public Library about locating a branch in Prospect, but it wasn't feasible.

In 2002, then-Mayor Lonnie Falk, along with the City Council, decided to create Prospect's own lending library by leasing books.

Now the library, which is located on the second floor of Prospect's City Hall building, not only provides books but also gives the mayor, the city clerk and other officials a chance to visit with citizens they may not regularly see.



Deputy City Clerk Holly Clark scans books for checkout.

Prospect Mayor Todd Eberle gives Mayor Falk and longtime Councilmember Sandra Tucci credit for the library, which, when originally created, was called a "reading center."

Tucci said the vision of the city is to provide services that the residents need and want.

"Not everyone is interested in the same things. Some people like soccer, some like fireworks, some like reading," she said. "We try to provide something for as many people as possible because everything adds to the quality of life in our city."

Tucci researched options and recommended a library leasing program.

Through a contract with a book supplier, Baker & Taylor, the city is able to lease more than 40 books a month — a selection of new releases and best sellers. They can keep the more popular books for extended times and send back the ones that are not being checked out. Baker & Taylor provides books to municipal and school libraries across the nation.

One of the best things about leasing is that the books come and go. Storage is not an issue, and the book collection is always current.

The library is now a city service with a budget of \$10,000, which pays for the

book leasing, computer software, licenses, upgrades and general supplies. The library supplements its budget with book sales twice a year. The money is used to purchase about 150 books and books on CD annually. The library also accepts donations in four primary areas: adult fiction, nonfiction, youth fiction and children's books.

**"We try to provide something for as many people as possible because everything adds to the quality of life in our city."**

— Councilmember Sandra Tucci

The facility is open during regular city business hours with extended hours until 6:30 p.m. one night a week. Books are checked out at the front reception desk at City Hall.



Library committee member Carol McAllister in the children's corner of the Prospect Library

The library software is similar to that used in other libraries. It tracks who has books and provides a "date due" receipt for the borrower at the time of checkout.

Residents can keep up on the latest acquisitions on the library page on the city's website and in Prospect's regular community newsletter.

"We often have people come in as soon as we post a list of new books," Tucci said.

City officials enjoy the interaction with people who come in to check out books, including a number of retired people as well as young mothers and children.

The library features a children's section with kid-sized tables and chairs as well as children's art. Other sections of the library have tables and chairs and several big soft chairs for reading. Mayor Eberle said the facility is comfortable and easy to access.

The location in City Hall is adjacent to a scenic wooded park area. Library Committee Chair Paul McAllister (a

volunteer) said folks will often check out a book and head outside to read.

"It's a nice way to get to know people," said Deputy City Clerk Holly Clark. "Instead of expressing a concern, they're checking out a book. Something positive."

The library is run by a committee of volunteers, which includes a former college librarian and also includes two Prospect councilmembers, Sandra Leonard and Sandra Tucci.

Book checkouts are free for residents of Prospect, and there is a onetime fee of \$12.50 for non-city residents.

Councilmember Sandra Leonard said in 2010, about 1,600 people checked out books. "That's not bad for a city of just over 6,000, but we would still like to do better."

Former Mayor Falk passed away in 2006, and the library was renamed in his memory.

"I think Mayor Falk would be pleased with how it's continued to grow," Eberle said. "It's a positive experience we can give our citizens." **KYC**

**Information and Contacts:**

- Mayor Todd Eberle
- Library Committee Chair Paul McAllister
- Councilmember Sandra Leonard
- Councilmember Sandra Tucci
- Deputy City Clerk for Administration Holly Clark
- City website: [www.prospectky.com](http://www.prospectky.com)

*Get contact information for any of the city officials and employees mentioned in this story at [klc.org](http://klc.org) > Members > Member Directory — just enter the name of the city.*

**FAST FACTS**

- Provides a leisure service at no charge to residents
- Serves citizens of all ages from children to retirees
- Engages volunteers with city
- Leasing option is affordable and prevents space and storage issues
- Brings people into City Hall for a positive experience

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