

Franklin Public Library Strategic Planning Committee
Brainstorming Session Notes
April 28, 2010

Present: Jim Shiflet, Judy Roberts, Penny Woodcock, Susan Utley Weis, Barbara Roark, Dave Adam, Shirley Koehler.

Excused: None

Visitors: None

Move to accept the minutes of the March 25, 2010 meeting after correcting for one typographical error: Jim Shiflet. Judy Roberts seconded. Minutes accepted.

We began with a wrap up of additional thoughts regarding the Operations area discussed at the last meeting.

Shirley noted that we only have “guestimates” of our on-going maintenance needs. Should we have someone physically check the roof, boiler, etc. to see when we truly need to repair/replace?

Barbara noted that there is a need for tile repair in the front lobby, carpet cleaning in the Fadrow room, and chair cleaning in the computer area.

It was suggested that we have the library conduct an annual maintenance review and update the maintenance schedule every three years. The committee may want to make a recommendation to the Library Board for funding this review.

Parking lot: Should we offer family parking close to the entrance (as Sentry used to do), so children aren't darting between cars in the parking lot?

Security system: Do we want/need something more extensive than what we have? This may need to be addressed in conjunction with any extended hours or reduced staff levels. Consider hiring a security consultant to provide a plan.

We then moved on to a discussion of Community Service:

At the original Strategic Planning meeting in October, 2009, Community Service was broken into 5 categories: Education, Entertainment, Services, Programs/Classes, and Technology. These are the library's core services.

With so many different functions, how should FPL convey all that we offer? The Wisconsin DPI has recently changed the category that libraries fall under to the Department of Libraries, Technology and Community Learning to reflect the changing purpose of libraries in today's market. Should the name of our library be changed to something like Franklin Library and Learning Center?

Should we separate “library” from “learning center”?

We need to offer something for many different types of patrons, while understanding that financial constraints will prevent us from being all things to all people. Can we develop a separate, for-profit section of the building where we can offer different services, such as a coffee shop? The more patrons we attract, the more support we will generate in the community.

Community Service - Education:

Discussed partnering with other entities to offer services. Some of these have been done successfully in the past, some are new. Examples include:

- Having a CPA/tax preparer come in around tax time to help answer tax questions.
- Offering tutoring to students. We would need to partner with schools so as not to interfere with their homework clubs. We would also need to require background checks on volunteers, since they would be working with children.
- Reinvigorate the middle-school library tour program to develop that market (public, parochial, home-school).
- Continue the Health & Wellness programs currently in place.

Community Service – Entertainment:

The FPL Adult librarians are required to offer a total of 20 events per year (4/year each). The Children’s librarians offer on-going programs year round. We currently have 17.2 FTEs. To offer additional programs we may need to hire another person to focus specifically on programming. Some Entertainment ideas discussed include:

- Having First Stage Theater, Milwaukee Ballet, MSO, Florentine Opera run mini-programs.
- Having local or national authors come in for readings or book talks.
- For successful entertainment programming with a “wow” factor, appropriate staging/seating/lighting should be developed; this ties in to Physical Space planning.

Community Service – Services:

- Consider making meeting rooms available off-hours.
- Consider developing a sound studio/recording studio. This is something the high school music program is very interested in and there is currently no inexpensive option for local talent. It could be a niche to draw in groups with historically low library usage while also offering the potential for revenue generation.

Community Service – General:

- Should we reprioritize library resources to meet different needs or to try out new ideas? For example, consider designating one computer in the library as an Information Station, with featured links rotating on a regular basis. For example, one week the topic could be “How to use the FPL website”, another week could be “Ancestry”, etc.
- The FPL website could use further development. What else should we offer on the site?
- The most heavily used sources of information about the library are currently the library flyer and city newsletter. How can we save money by reducing printing/ mailing costs? Could the TV info screens be moved lower, perhaps to eye level, to draw more attention? (There are significant wiring and physical constraints that would need to be addressed.) Could we develop a way for patrons to walk in to the library and see the library schedule for the entire week? Could this also be on the website?

Follow up for next meeting:

- 1) Barbara will bring the list of services and programs currently offered by the library.
- 2) Jim will bring a Kindle to demo as we discuss the Technology portion of Community Service. He will also investigate Nooks and report back at the next meeting, including whether items purchased for Nook use can be shared and used concurrently among multiple Nooks.
- 3) All committee members will review whether there are topic areas we have not given enough coverage to. If we need to make funds or planning requests to the Library Board, we should do so by August 2010 to meet the budget cycle for this year.
- 4) Barbara will forward the Library Mission Statement to committee members and Dave will include them in his Summary Notes.
- 5) Barbara will find out if we can determine the amount of wireless usage at the library.

Next meeting we will continue discussion of the other areas of Community Service not touched on at this meeting.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 26, 2010, 6:30 pm.

Motion to adjourn: Susan Utley Weis. Shirley Koehler seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.