

Billings Public Library
February 4, 2017
9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

Present: Chair Stella Fong, Vice Chair Bernard Rose, Sue Bach, David Darby, Cheryle Fisher, Jennifer Quinn, Roger Young, Gavin Woltjer, Library Director; Kathy Robins, Information Systems Coordinator; Mary Murphrey, Administrative Coordinator.

Public Comment

None

Chair's comments

Fong welcomed Darby to the Board.

Fong reminded the Board about One Book Billings.

Review previous BPL Strategic Plan

Woltjer reiterated the timeline for the strategic plan process.

- January – June 2017
 - Board Retreat
 - Outline 2018-2021 Library Strategic Plan
 - Outline Community Forum
 - Conduct Community Forums
 - Compile Community Forum Responses
- July & August 2017
 - Write strategic plan
- September & October 2017
 - Make amendments/re-write strategic plan
- November & December 2017
 - Finalize strategic plan
 - Present strategic plan (Board, Foundation, FOL)
 - Present strategic plan (City Administrator and City Council).

Woltjer noted that he would like to use the “Imaginelf” strategic plan as a model and asked the Board their thoughts on the plan. The Board noted likes and dislikes for the plan.

Likes:

- Starts with core values – mission statement, vision statement, guiding principles
- Goals derive from core values
- Each set of concepts fit on one page
- Brevity
- Measureable
- Some community-likable language is important so that citizens will enjoy reading it.

Dislikes

- Style is too cutesy/artsy “manifesto” – should be more business-like
- The beginning fluff was off-putting.

Woltjer noted that the Library’s current plan did a good job on discussing guiding policies, a mission statement and vision statement. Darby noted that the goals in the current plan are functional areas, instead of goals.

Woltjer asked the Board for contacts information for individuals or organizations that can be the Library’s strategic partners.

Suggestions included:

- Customer service/concierge trainers
- Small businesses or entrepreneurs
- Families
- Schools in the county
- Clergy and churches
- Community 7
- Western Heritage Center
- Yellowstone Art Museum
- Yellowstone Genealogy Forum
- MSU-B
- Rocky
- Paul Foster, Director of International Studies at MSU-B for the International ideas forums
- Homeschoolers
- College athletes – Billings Mustangs.

Woltjer asked what the Library does well that needs to be continued. Comments received included:

- Programs
- Bookmobile
- One Book Billings - expanded
- Book Nook
- Food for Thought
- Senior programs
- Read to a dog
- Beautiful building, comfortable place with pretty landscaping
- Admin team on 2nd floor
- TECH Lab
- Port in the storm for many residents
- Computers
- Wi-Fi
- New books

- Collect emails and get rid of paper newsletters
- Ideas for programming are cutting edge – Dating 101, Read to a Dog
- Bookmobile
- Children’s library services – story tower, attractive area
- Tween book discussions
- Community room – AV
- Montana room displays
- Montana Library 2 Go.

Woltjer asked what the Library doesn’t do well and what it needs to improve on. Comments received included:

- Marketing – library use value calculator on website, targeted programs and resources
- YouTube videos – how to from our experts, interviews with patrons, after-program interviews
- Podcasts
- Montana Room – disseminate that information on the internet
- Montana Room table is not utilized
- Connect Montana Room with Genealogy Room
- Digitization Room
- More involved with public service organizations like exchange club and rotary so that we target our outreach efforts to them. Target our programming to organizations.
- Customer service
- Parking payment system
- Parking lot snow removal
- Parking lot lighting is not good at night
- Security – better customer service, awareness of issues, knowledge of how to proceed
- Disaster plan cheat sheet
- Local resources and experts for programs
- Big names for programs
- Collaborate with a more varied selection of community resources
- Independent access to community garden
- Public perception that the building is not secure
- Pulling weeds
- Targeted databases for strategic areas such as small business incubator, Chilton manuals
- Getting people into the library when they go to the community room.

Woltjer asked for suggestions on if the Library could incorporate any idea, service and/or program in to the overarching concept of what the library is, what would it be? Comments received included:

- Forum series - International affairs program in Billings
- Civil discourse opportunities - Healing divisions over disagreements
- Center of knowledge – is there a way to include “the real facts”?
- Provide a framework to the community
- Foreign language teaching
- Library knowledge moment – partner with TV stations to have this
- Groups that are think-tanks
- Classics collection – make the collection work for local interests – petroleum industry, agriculture
- Computer at a coffee shop that has a librarian interface for answering questions
- Connect to high schools through teachers – provide a pathway for students to come to the library through their teachers – educators are not resistant, they are overwhelmed
- Reach out to homeschoolers
- Reading assistance for children
- Calendar on a reader board – “Tonight” sign – sign for what is going on today
- Display Books and resources to connect to programming
- Marquee outside
- Education: Pre-school, reading tutor, High School diploma
- Science Lab on wheels: Bookmobile of STEAM activities
- Billings Burning Man
- Technology petting zoo – local IT people show stuff and tell parents how to monitor online activities, i.e., Disney Circle.

Woltjer then asked what the Library is doing that it should stop. Suggestions included:

- Newsletter – stop it? Get it out to more people?
- Peter Fletcher program
- Story Tower time for only children.

Establish Community Forums

Woltjer noted that he would be available to oversee five community forums at the Library. He asked for the Board’s input and help on any additional forums.

Establish Community Forum questions

Woltjer asked the Board for suggestions on the types of questions that should be asked at the forums.

Brainstorming session

Woltjer asked the Board who the Library is and what does it want to become? Some suggestions were:

- Technology
- Outreach
- Statistics
- Customer service

- Cultivate the arts.

Adjourned at 2:55 p.m.