

Strategic Planning Meeting with Bruce Smith of WILS

January 12, 2016

5PM at City Hall

Attending: Bruce Smith, Shaun Bollig, Sandy Whisler, Erik Beaver, Gerard Saylor, Dean Sanders , Sandy Whisler.

Bruce went through the data collection process and results. Bruce filed several questions on the data collection and whether the customer response provided a good enough sample.

Bruce discussed comparisons to similar sized libraries. There are some differences including LM's small number of computers. But, WiFi is becoming more important than public computers.

Goals Discussions

Goal #1. Space.

Parking solutions. A decision is dependent on whether the library will expand in future years. There are six parking slots and one handicapped slot. The house will be torn down in 2017 and parking could expand to that area.

- Study and meeting space.
 - The board discussed the best use of current space. Should the meeting room keep its configuration? The room was used 521 times in 2015 but most of those reservations were small groups or people. Could the stage space be used as meeting space? The stage is mostly storage for old chairs. Once the chairs are replaced maybe a folding door could be added to the stage and an ADA lift installed to go from floor to stage level.
 - Study tables on main floor. Add dividers to two of the three current study tables and also route for power and data for customers.
 - Look into using the storage room as a conference room. We would need to find space for the items currently kept in storage. How much of the storage material is rarely used or seasonal? Could those seasonal items be kept off-site at another City location?
- Building expansion. We have to start expansion plans. The budget may or not hold up for expansion but we have to plan ahead for the possible project. We will start informing the public, discuss building needs, begin fundraising, gather public input, establish the library as a community center, examine old expansion plans, etc. Dean mentioned how building timelines can be very quick. The elementary school was completed in 15 months from bid openings to opening day.
- New cleaning person starts January 18. Need solution for repairs and maintenance.

Goal #2. Marketing

- Bruce says: Marketing is a common theme with libraries. Bridges just hired a new marketing person and LM could use her expertise to get started.
- LM should work with a marketer to develop a marketing plan.
- What is the plan? What are we offering and selling? How promote to the public at large?
- Avoid library lingo. Example: DIY v. databases. Learning resources v. databases. What is a “database” to the public?
- Developing a brand. The book brand is changing. Rebrand to show everything we have.
- Columbus PL created a community events calendar that pulls from the schools, clubs, rec. department, city, etc. The library is seen as the host of the calendar and as a community center. LM should research how Columbus created the calendar.
- LM needs to research libraries that have effective marketing plans.
- Main St. could also provide assistance.
- Shaun says: the library is the longest running business in LM. The same business has been in the same building for over 100 years. Longer than any church or bank.
- We need to reach the non-users.

Goal #3. Programming.

- Suggestions include Skyping with authors. Teens teaching tech to seniors. Gaming clubs for children: Minecraft. Maybe start euchre or sheephead clubs. An opportunity to children to get together away from school. More MOOC classes.
- The library should be a destination. We need to provide reasons to visit the library.
- Gale Courses. Selling ideas: package specific courses with a program. Hand sell the courses at the program. Show the skills you can learn from Gale or Rosetta Stone. Online program notices should also link to database content.
- The importance of offering intellectual discussion. Discussions of important events and themes.
- Organize travel discussions. Invite people to speak about the experiences.

The new strategic plan needs benchmarks. The Board should have quarterly review for milestones.

Minutes by Gerard Saylor.