

REVISION AND UPDATE OF THE HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP FREE LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2011 – 2014

INTRODUCTION

This document serves as the Haverford Township Free Library’s (HTFL) Strategic Plan Revisions for 2011 through and including 2014. The original Strategic Plan encompassed years 2006 – 2009 allowing for years of growth and change within HTFL’s structure and governance. The Strategic Plan Committee, that met in 2010, headed by Jeffrey Miller, President of the Haverford Township Free Library Board of Trustees, reviewed the original Strategic Plan and continued to recognize the following long-term goals of the Haverford Township Free Library.

The Goals of the Haverford Township Free Library are to:

- Increase community involvement in the Library
- Situate the Library as an active, vital community hub
- Improve availability and access to quality materials and services
- Ensure that the Library building/facilities fully support the mission and reflect community goals and needs

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Haverford Township Free Library was revised, accepted and approved by the Library’s Board of Trustees in December 2010 and adopted to read: ***“The mission of the Haverford Township Free Library is to provide residents of the Township of Haverford, as well as the public at large, with exemplary access to the broadest possible range of resources, programs and services that enhance and enrich their lives.”*** The Board of Trustees, Director and Staff recognized the fact that many customers from surrounding communities visit and utilize the Library’s services on a regular basis. Quality customer

service along with up-to-date technology and excellent programming is a key ingredient to the future of the Library in the community.

BACKGROUND

The Haverford Township Free Library (HTFL) continues to be one of the leading libraries of the Delaware County Library System (DCLS) and the only public Library in the Township of Haverford.

State funding has given HTFL many challenges over the last couple of years and into the immediate future. In 2009 public libraries had funding reduced 21%, and in 2010 there were reductions of 11%--32% in two years! The effects of the State cuts produced a challenge to the HTFL Board of Trustees who made a difficult decision to cut hours of public service from 66 to 53 in 2010 (most importantly Friday morning, in not opening until 1:00 PM instead of the original 10AM and Saturday closing at 2PM instead of 5PM). In 2011 a verbal agreement was made that the Township of Haverford would gift HTFL \$20,000 over and above the annual Township appropriation to the Library to reopen the lost hours on Friday morning and Saturday afternoon; the approximate cost of reopening those hours amounted to \$44,000 for staff costs. The Library's Board of Trustees agreed to take the remainder from HTFL's reserve fund. The Library reopened on the first business day of 2012 with the reestablished hours.

The 2006-2009 Strategic Plan, adopted and approved by the Haverford Township Free Library Board of Trustees in May 2006, was revised, with the revisions, adopted and approved on April 28, 2011. The previous three (3) year plan was met with measured success in terms of overall objectives and outcomes with few changes.

Main categories continue to fall under the categories of: Governance and Leadership, People Resources, Programs and Services, Marketing and Communications, Fundraising, Building Committee, and General Operations.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

To support effective ongoing operations and strategic growth, the Library's leaders must be fully informed, engaged, and positioned

Goal: Support and guide the mission of the Library

Objective A: Establish a distinct and recognizable physical and philosophical presence

Measures:

- Mission statement is a compelling and comprehensive representation of the Library's purposes and approach
 - ❖ Reviewed, revised and approved by HTFL Board of Trustees 12/15/10
- Increased positive response to building and Library space survey questions by 10% annually (per responses to customer satisfaction survey)
 - ❖ Survey must be completed every year—last one done 2008

Objective B: Improve internal and external communications between Board, staff, and community

Measures:

- Number of community activities Board members are involved in as reported back to the Board and documented in monthly meeting Minutes
 - ❖ Needs to be done!
 - ❖ Involvement on the School Board and School District is suggested
 - ❖ Involvement and attendance at monthly Friends of the Haverford Township Free Library Board Meetings
- Instances of Board attendance at staff and volunteer functions as reported back to the Board and documented in monthly meeting Minutes

Needs to be addressed:

--Improve internal communication

- ❖ *Establish Committee*

--Improve inter-trustee communication

- ❖ *Establish Google account for Board members to share documents, votes, etc.*

Objective C: Provide ongoing education and development of the Board

Measures:

- Board members can represent the Library thoroughly and knowledgeably to diverse audiences
- Library funding is improved as a result of Board involvement
 - ❖ Funding on state, county and local level cannot be controlled; funding through the annual appeal is mandatory
- Conference attendance by Board members is increased by 100%

Needs to be addressed:

--Annual Association Meeting

--Formal recruiting for members

--Definition of the Association and how to engage members—26,000 Library cardholders but only 248 Association members. How to encourage membership?

- ✓ *Develop an incentive package that includes a few free DVD rentals, greater access to committees, greater input on Library topics, guest speakers, or similar*
- ✓ *Develop an education campaign that better explains the role of the Association using information in the e-newsletter, press release to the Informed Citizen's Network, improved signage at the Front Desk, and information for the cable channel*
- ✓ *Invite greater activity by holding quarterly meetings, asking for people to join at the front desk, and attending civic/neighborhood functions to recruit members*
- ✓ *A Task Force for Association Advancement (TFAA) was created to develop an overall campaign and approach—members are Angela Gasparro, Christopher Blackwall, Gary Zlotnick*

--Board understanding of Library department functions

--Board members to attend a two hour tour each year

--Board members to tour a department each month to meet staff and learn the functions of the department

- ❖ *Motion made to adopt a strategic goal of educating Trustees on Library operations as below—PASSED (all in favor)*
- ❖ *Objective: Improved Board understanding of Library department functions;*
- ❖ *Measure: Board members attend a two hour tour of the HTFL operations to experience the “behind the scenes” mechanics of daily work flow and*

operation including, but not limited to a visit and shadowing of a staff member in each department

- ❖ *Recommendation: To assign Board members to upcoming Library events-adopted by consensus*

PEOPLE RESOURCES

HTFL commits to ensuring that the Library's staff and volunteers are well-informed, able to diversify and use their talents, and feel that they are integral to the organization and the services it provides.

Goal: To have an educated, friendly, secure, empowered, competent, prepared, and motivated staff

Objective A: To be well trained in areas of work

Measures:

- Standards exist for all Library positions
- Each staff person has a professional development plan that has been mutually agreed upon with supervisor
- Staff assessment shows overall improvement of skills base
- 80% of staff attend training events

- ❖ Director Responsibility

Objective B: To be customer oriented, internally and externally

Measures:

- Customer complaints are reduced by 50%
- Customer satisfaction is improved by 5% annually and expressed verbally and in surveys

Objective C: All staff feel valued

Measures:

- Evaluation by Director (and Assistant Director if applicable)
- Increased staff involvement on Library committees and activity
 - ❖ The position of Assistant Director does not exist at this time

Objective D: All staff are invested in the Library and its mission

Measures:

- Increased participation on Library committees and activities

Objective E: Engage the community, foster Library supporters and advocates, and encourage accountability

Measures:

- Number of volunteers increases by 5%
- Interest in membership on Board Committees persists
- Association members and attendance at the annual meeting increases by 10% annually

Needs to be Addressed:

--Christopher Blackwall, Board Member, notes that staff evaluations of the Library Director must be completed annually

- ❖ *How to proceed*
- ❖ *What modifications should be made, if any, based on experiences of the past?*

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The strategic plan focuses on programs and services in order to build programs that support the Library's mission, serve diverse audiences, and serve the community. HTFL seeks to understand its target audiences and to design programming that appeals to their interests, goals, and needs.

Goal 1: Create, develop, and provide entertaining, fun, and educational programs and services for all

Objective A: Provide programs that entice customers to return and refer

Measures:

- Usage grows by 10%
- 2 children's (ongoing), 1 teen (passive), 2 adult (1 ongoing; one special) programs are designed to target diverse audiences
- Customers indicate they like/value new/redesigned programs
- 3 technology-enhanced programs exist by 2009 timeframe
- 5,000 visitors in web-based community forum by 2009 timeframe

Needs to be addressed:

--Create evaluation for use following programs

--Attract different types through visitation of other venues

--Evaluate long-standing programs

--Need to have timely information at all programs for promotion of other programs and future programs

--Need to show steady improvement

Objective B: Develop and maintain collections that reflect the diversity of community interests and that promote learning and literacy

Measures:

- 3-4 pocket collections are established by 2009 timeframe

- Multimedia collection expanded by 10%
- Rate of collection usage increases by 5%

Needs to be addressed:

--Move from Dewey to Subject Classification

--Book Club in a Bag (consists of 8 soft cover copies of same title, a large print edition, audio version, author notes, discussion questions, etc; over 70 titles to be checked out by a single card owner for a two month period

--Children's collections now include Graphic Novels

GOAL 2: Be the community center for Haverford Township

Objective A: Promote a positive relationship with the community through the Library's programs

Measures:

- 5 outreach programs are implemented each year
- 1 new partnership with tangible benefits is established (per year)
- Master calendar is utilized by all programs and staff
- Hosted community meetings is increased by 2%
 - ❖ Recognition by community as a community hub

Needs to be addressed:

--Show steady improvement in quality, concept and attendance at every level of programming

--Christopher Blackwall, Board Member, stated that some Library users feel there is not enough notice or publicity of upcoming Library programs and events. Ms. Faris, Library Director, stated that events are planned no sooner than six weeks out and publicized for a month before with reminders in various formats. The group felt that information is "out there." See Marketing and Communications

--A Business Center is suggested on the Library's first floor. The approach is to contact local businesses, the HPED and Rotary Club to gather support and input. The group felt this to be a good idea and a way to help work-from-home businesses to get out and thrive.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Libraries have moved beyond their traditional roles and now must actively promote themselves. HTFL plans to effectively promote its services with a unified message and logo, attention to its internal spaces, and a focus on outreach and communications with different aspects of the community.

GOAL: Increase public awareness and promote a positive image of the Library as an enticing and exciting destination

Objective A: Promote and brag about the Library, to convey that the Library and its people are accessible both in the Library and throughout the community

Measures:

- Library branding is visible in 5 locations
- Customers can recognize Library logo on presentation
- Library has a comprehensive public relations campaign that reaches 10% of township

Needs to be addressed:

--Promotion of programs and services at township building, Library building, recreation department, Starbucks, Farmer's Market, Cable television

--Changed to Drupal with new web designer

--Maintenance of Blog

Objective B: Deliver informative, current communications about the Library's mission, collections, programs, and services

Measures:

- Targeted mailings/information distribution are implemented
- Public surveys show greater recognition of Library services
- Customer surveys indicate that customers can cite media spots and recognize varied communications

Items to be considered:

--Podcast

--You Tube

--Marketing and Communications greatly improved

--Public Service Announcements

Notes: has greatly improved!

FUNDRAISING

HTFL has promoted an ambitious agenda for change and growth; the plan can only move forward with new financial resources. The Library's leaders see the implementation of this plan as an ongoing process, not as a single project.

GOAL: Fully fund the Library and support its mission

Objective A: Establish ongoing funding to support general operations, and create reserves

Measures:

- New supporters are increased by 30% as entered into the donor management database, eTapestry
- Amount of funds raised increased by 10%
- Township grows the Library's budget by at least 3.5% annually

Needs to be addressed:

--Establish specific Annual Appeal goals

--Establish methods of follow-up throughout the year, e.g. postcard

--Establish connection to the business community—Annual Business Breakfast

--How to achieve stable funding and funding for future goals? (Discussion focused on how much money would be required over the next five years. It was agreed that the Library was not going to be in a position to build a new building and we should focus

on improving the existing facility. We are staying in this location. A whole building assessment and design analysis should be done to see what needs to be done, what can be done, and how much it will cost. An RFP should be developed to gather costs for the study. Mr. Zlotnick mentioned the idea of floating a bond to cover future renovations. The bond could be paid off through a temporary millage and passed through a voter referendum. Mr. Miller mentioned the possibility to have the entire Library income as a dedicated millage. Mr. Zlotnick was nominated to discuss the referendum idea with Commissioner Dan Siegel.)

--Educate commissioners through twice yearly breakfast—can be combined with Business Breakfast

Objective B: Create special project funding

Measures:

- 50% of funds needed for the new/renovated building are raised by the end of 2009 timeframe

Needs to be addressed:

--Annual Appeal follow-up letter

--Stable funding goals and methods

--Attempt to raise specific percentage of funds each year

BUILDING COMMITTEE

As the current Library facility is limited by space and by an aging infrastructure, HTFL seeks to provide a current, safe, and healthy facility that will enable the Library to fully reach its potential to serve the community.

GOAL: Have a top-notch, state-of-the-art knowledge and information resource facility

Objective A: Provide a modern facility capable of fulfilling the Library's programs and mission

Measures:

- Plans for new/renovated Library exist by the end of 2007—did not acquire property or support

Needs to be addressed:

--Establish a five (5) year plan

--Look at adjacent properties and parcels of land

- ❖ Look at renovations and improvements to make the current property a state of the art facility

GENERAL OPERATIONS

The Library requires an efficient, well-designed set of systems in order to support ongoing operations.

Goal: provide staff and Trustees the tools and resources necessary to meet the goals of organizational effectiveness and accountability

Objective A: Provide customers with clean, inviting, and comfortable space so that programs and services can be fully utilized

Measures:

Objective B: The Library is a safe and secure place

Measures:

Objective C: Library finances are well managed and transparent

Measures:

Objective D: Technology adequately supports organizational and departmental needs around data management and information sharing, access, and communications, while also allowing for expanded public access and engagement through high quality web site features.

Measures:

Objective E: HFTL uses the knowledge gained from evaluating its programs to improve effectiveness and better serve its constituency.

Measures:

Notes: Director Responsibility

Conclusion:

--See Strategic Priorities 2012

--Need to post metrics

Prepared by: Christine D. Faris, Library Director