

Library Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

July 24, 2001

Town Hall

Meeting opened at 10:02

Committee Members Present: Karen Johnson, Katelyn Cooley, Cindy Kudlik, Gary Whitney, George Curran, Elaina Bergamini, Susan Tresch Fienberg

Absent: Andrew Cushing

Public: Paul Vogt

Minutes

The committee tabled approval of the June meeting minutes until the next meeting since members haven't had a chance to review them. The committee agreed that the PowerPoint summary of survey results and rural library trends will be posted on the town website along with the minutes of these meetings once they have been approved.

Activity Since Last Meeting

Since the last meeting, Susan sent out preliminary foundational statements (Mission, Vision, Values, Intended Impact) for the members to review. Gary submitted written feedback.

When reviewing survey results to answer questions raised at the last meeting, Susan identified eight duplicate surveys, most of which were submitted after Kate sent an email reminder. After removing the duplicates with the later time stamps, Susan updated the survey results in the summary slide deck slide and distributed the revision to the committee. Removing the duplicates generated nominal changes in the percentages.

Susan also generated results associated with subgroups of respondents, e.g. newcomers, long-term residents, people age 65 and over. Results were distributed to the committee prior to the meeting.

Mission Statement Revision

Gary's feedback: The mission or vision statement should reference collaboration with other libraries and other Grafton organizations. Gary also questioned whether the library should address needs beyond those met by traditional library functions.

George moved that we update the current mission statement. Cindy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

George moved that "strengthening the Grafton community" or something to that effect should be included in the revised mission statement. Katelyn seconded the motion, which passed with five

yes votes. Gary abstained because he questions whether the goal of strengthening the community should specific to the library.

Cindy suggested replacing “to advance lifelong learning and strengthening the Grafton community” with “to advance lifelong learning and community spirit.”

Several members also questioned whether the word “media” is generally understood to include books and literature, and recommended clarification on this score.

Based on this discussion, the working revision of the mission statement (not yet finalized or approved) is as follows:

To advance lifelong learning and community spirit by providing free access to literature, media, and programming that reflect local needs and interests.

Draft Vision Statement

Per Gary’s recommendation, the committee agreed that the vision statement (our “vision” of what the library will be in five years) should reference collaboration as a defining characteristic of the library in 2026. Per survey results, most members agreed that the vision statement should reference providing opportunities to meet with friends and neighbors. Gary questioned the need for the library to provide space for community gatherings, and others felt that the reference to providing facilities that accommodate “programs” was too vague.

Based on this discussion, the working revision of the vision statement is as follows:

By 2026, the Grafton Public Library will be a place where all members of the community feel welcome and well-served by resources, programs that suit local needs and interests.

To achieve this vision, the library will optimize its hours of operation, sponsor programs for all ages, promote awareness and utilization of all library resources, offer opportunities for neighbors to connect, collaborate with nearby libraries and town entities, and provide accessible facilities that comfortably accommodate quiet use of the library and group activity in keeping with the library’s mission.

This working version of the vision statement has not yet been finalized or approved by the committee.

Intended Impact

When discussing the draft intended impact statement, the committee considered various possibilities for documenting impact. Susan will confer with Elaina regarding the indicators we might track to hold ourselves accountable as we implement the plan and to inform any changes in activity or strategy that may be needed to help us meet our goals. A revised intended impact statement will be presented at the next meeting for discussion, together with proposed metrics for tracking progress.

Values Statements

When discussing the proposed values statements, the committee did not suggest any changes, though some may emerge as planning work continues and our thinking evolves.

Preliminary Brainstorm on Strategic Priorities:

Based on the discussion of the preliminary mission and vision statements, the committee brainstormed strategic priorities that will provide structure for the implementation plan. These include:

- Improving communications with Grafton residents and town entities in order to increase awareness of library resources and activities
- Pursuing collaboration with other town organizations and libraries in surrounding communities to advance the library's mission
- Utilizing volunteers to support programming
(George will research the rules pertaining to utilizing volunteers in a public library so we can make plans accordingly.)
- Increasing programming (reflecting interests indicated by survey results)
- Identifying and addressing facility issues that are barriers to the library's mission
- Pursuing grant funding to support library enhancements (media, programming, facilities)
- Optimizing hours of operation

Next Steps

Susan will work with Kate to begin drafting an implementation plan that translates these preliminary strategic priorities into concrete objectives and tasks. We will review and improve a draft implementation plan at the next meeting. This process will likely lead to further refinement of the foundational statements (mission, vision, values, intended impact).

Next Meeting

August 28, 10am-12pm, at the Town Hall

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 am