

Brooks Memorial Library

Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee, Sept. 28, 2021

Present: Kate O'Connor, Howard Burrows, Karen Tyler, Ann Varilly, Jane Southworth, Lindsay Bellville, Leo Schiff, Jeanne Walsh, Gabe Pofcher, Starr LaTronica

Ann called the meeting to order at 4:32 in the Community Meeting Room. Minutes were approved as written. No changes to the agenda and no public comments.

Continuing Business

Next steps in planning process

We discussed the process, including frequency of meetings. "The community sets up pillars on which you can build a plan," which might include new service priorities. "Hoping we'll get some surprises."

Timeline proposal: Winter, January-May. Paper and digital. Also going out into the community and meeting people where they are. Winter into spring can reach people as they get out into the community again after the cold season. Take advantage of digital forums as well as in-person forums. Should a press release go out during the holidays? No, let's make it a New Year announcement.

Engage a paid consultant? We might want somebody to process gathered information and turn it into a plan. If so, that person should be totally familiar with the library world. A planner could even be remote, not on-site. However, we might want somebody who gets involved sooner, to help us decide what data is acquired and how it's acquired: somebody involved through the whole process. It could help us take a more visionary approach. Let's explore this with possible consultants, including scope of work, cost, etc. We could bring it to the Finance Committee when we have a sense of cost. Consultants might be most effective at identifying problems/questions rather than solutions—if so, they might be most helpful early in the process. That might also depend on how prescriptive we want the final product to be. We engaged in a long, related discussion about the role of the library. When we create focus groups, let's start with the staff: if you had unlimited resources, what would you do?

New Business

UVM interns

There are possibilities for cooperation with Planning Department / VISTAS, using data and survey tools to enable this strategic planning process. Interns could draft a potential survey, and then a paid consultant could review that and make further suggestions.

Action item: We will aggregate a list of potential consultants by email. Please send to Starr by next Friday, 10/8. These can be specific people or general categories, e.g., VTLib consultants.

Next meeting: Oct. 26th, 4:30 pm