



Committee Report

The Blue Mountains Public Library

Report To: The Blue Mountains Public Library Board
Meeting Date: July 20th, 2017
Report Number: SPC.17.07
Subject: Strategic Planning Committee Report
Prepared by: Strategic Plan Committee
Committee Members Odette Bartnicki, Willi Wildman

A. Recommendations

THAT The Blue Mountains Public Library Board receive Strategic Planning Committee Report SPC.17.07 entitled Strategic Planning Committee Report

B. Overview

THE existing *Strategic Plan 2015-2018* was written by a committee of the previous Library Board and staff of the Library, in part based on reports of two consultants dated 2008 and 2009, with some community input. The 2015-2018 Strategic Plan was approved by the previous board on December 17th, 2014.

A process of review and revision of the Strategic Plan was begun by the current Library Board in December 2016, with a revised draft brought forward at the February 16th, 2017 meeting. Further review and revision was recommended.

At the May 18, 2017 Library Board Meeting, The Blue Mountains Public Library Board appointed Odette Bartnicki and Willi Wildman to join the Strategic Planning Committee, with Chair McKean participating ex officio.

On June 7, The Blue Mountains Library Board received Strategic Planning Committee Report with Actions, Report BMP.17.01 and adopted the following single strategic plan goal:

The Library Board, together with our CEO, Staff and Community Members, will work collaboratively together to strengthen, build and maintain positive, respectful relationships and communications.

The Board directed the Strategic Planning Committee to engage in a series of community consultation meetings to invite community input regarding actions specific to this goal. A series of community consultation meetings were advertised through the Library Website, posters, and notices inserted into books upon checkout at both L.E. Shore Memorial Library and Craigleith Heritage Depot. Community meetings were scheduled to provide multiple opportunities for participation from community members and user groups at both Library sites in morning, afternoon, evening and weekend meetings as follows:

June 16	Following regular board meeting at Town Hall	
June 26	6:00 pm	L.E. Shore
June 29	2:00 pm	Craigleith
July 2	1:00 pm	Craigleith
July 2	2:00 pm	L E. Shore
July 4	10:00 am	L.E. Shore
July 5	6:00 pm	Craigleith

ADDITIONAL input specific to the goal was also invited through the Library website, or by submitting suggestions in writing at either L.E. Shore or Craigleith Heritage Depot, or to Board members directly. Board members also met with all Library Staff on June 21st, and the Museum Advisory Committee on June 27th. Members of the Arts Advisory Council were invited to provide input through Willi Wildman, Library Board and ACC member, as well as through Community Meetings or via the website.

The meetings were attended by small groups of people from across the Town of The Blue Mountains, many who attended meetings at various times and place multiple times.

Although the Board directed that input gathered should pertain to the specific goal of strengthening, building and maintain positive, respectful relationships and communications, many other suggestions, comments and questions were also recorded. All of the suggested actions are seriously considered. Many of the suggestions were helpful, some have already been addressed, and others could be carried out immediately. Overall, the dialogue between the board and the patrons was thoughtful and respectful. This dialogue will continue and hopefully be imbued with a spirit of good will from all parties.

LIBRARY Board Members learned some very important information that we can act upon to improve relationships and communications. We learned that:

- Many members of our community and patrons of the Library do not currently access the websites of the Library or our Social Media, and therefore do not receive all the Library communication that currently exists.
- Many who do use the websites have not 'subscribed', and therefore do not automatically receive newsletters and other updates. A subscription is required under anti-spam legislation.
- Many members of the community do not understand that the Town of The Blue Mountains Council, not the Library Board, appoints all Library Board members as per the Public Libraries Act requirements, and that the buildings and property are assets of the Town. There are decisions that are not the purview of the Library Board that impact upon the Library.
- Many community members do not understand the role of Library Board under the Public Libraries Act, and the scope of duties prescribed for individual Board Members and the Board as a whole.
- Some members of the public want to understand the legally mandated grounds for which the Board moves into Closed Sessions, and the topics that Board Members can and can not discuss publically and why.
- Some members of the community do not understand the mandate of public libraries and the kinds of programs and services that are, and are not Library functions.

- The current population for the Town of The Blue Mountains (Statistic Canada 2016) is 7025, with 6477 households. There are currently 1690 households in the Thornbury area and 2612 households in the Craigeleith area. Future growth under current zoning will see Thornbury grow to 3840 and 8750 in Craigeleith.

However, for the scope of this Strategic Planning initiative, the Strategic Planning Committee analyzed all of the community input for actions specifically related to the identified goal of working collaboratively with our CEO, Staff and Community Members to strengthen, build and maintain positive, respectful relationships and communications in order to benefit our Library.

C. Actions

The Strategic Planning Committee request that the Board adopt the following actions to support and enhance ***positive, respectful relationships and communications***:

- (1) Consider location and times for future Library Board Meetings
- (2) Notify the community of the Library email address through various media to facilitate communication with the Board and/or individual Board Members. Hard copy mail for Board members may also be left at the Library for distribution by the CEO.
- (3) Develop policy regarding acknowledgement of public correspondence and response to public questions and deputations, including explanation of subjects protected under privacy legislation.
- (4) Provide opportunities for future community input regarding Strategic Planning and significant decisions of the Board impacting the Library community.
- (5) Demonstrate respect for the history of L.E. Shore Memorial Library and Craigeleith Heritage Depot by maintaining the distinct names of both facilities under the umbrella of The Blue Mountains Public Library System.
- (6) Organize Board Members to share responsibility for attendance at Library events.
- (7) Investigate alternatives means of communications to reach stakeholders who do not use Library websites. Develop a communication plan together with CEO and staff.
- (8) Educate the public regarding subscribing to email newsletters, etc.
- (9) Develop and communicate clear policy regarding relationship/behavior expectations in the library and post signage in the library.
- (10) Investigate potential of electronic message boards for L.E. Shore & Depot to inform the public of what's happening in the library to conform with Town by-laws.
- (11) New patrons of the Library will be offered a brief orientation to the physical layout, programs, services and communication forums by library staff.
- (12) Provide information to enhance the understanding of the community regarding the Library Board's legal mandate and limitations, as appropriate.

D. Summary

It is the sincere hope of the Strategic Planning Committee that efforts of Board Members, CEO and Staff, and members of the community to engage in this process of consultation will set the foundation for ongoing positive, respectful relationships and communications upon which we can build a stronger Library for the people of The Town of Blue Mountains.

Respectfully Submitted,

Name: Strategic Planning Committee

Committee Members: Odette Bartnicki, Willi Wildman