



Northfield Library Board

MEETING MINUTES RECORD

Meeting: Library Board Retreat 2017

Date: July 12, 2017

Location: Northfield Public Library
Conference Room

Start time: 5:30 p.m.

Adjourn time: 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Samuel Demas, Ryan Redetzke, Tammy Hayes, Jane McWilliams, Liz Reppe, Dan Riehle-Merrill, Sarah Weeks, Maggie Epstein, Cynthia Terry, and Debra Ehret Miller

Members absent:

Others present: Teresa Jensen (Staff Liaison), Becky Novotny (Clerical Liaison), and Bill North (FFOL)

I. Dinner and Icebreaker	Icebreaker: Chair D. Riehle-Merrill asked the group to all think of two truths and one lie about themselves. Each person took a turn sharing their two truths and one lie with the group. The group then guessed which statement was a lie.
II. Discussion: Library Strategic Plan	T. Jensen passed out copies of the draft of the Library strategic plan. The initiatives of the plan are: 1. Underserved Population Services 2. Early Literacy Focus 3. Increase Public Awareness 4. Technology 5. Responsible Stewards For each initiative there are five categories for which are addressed: 1. Desired Outcome 2. Key Outcome Indicator 3. Target 4. Strategic Initiatives 5. Action Steps T. Jensen pointed out that the Library Board is part of the plan under increase public awareness and technology partnerships. D. Riehle-Merrill asked for T. Jensen to explain what the plan assumes. T. Jensen stated that for seniors there is a population out there that sometimes comes into the library, but many times are in care facilities and cannot get to the library. The plan is targeting the senior community and bringing library services to them. J. McWilliams asked how much the library works with the staff at the retirement homes. T. Jensen stated that staff is working with the activities directors and are not going in unadvised as to what the facilities are looking for. J. McWilliams asked if the senior organizations are partners with the library or what groups are considered partners. T. Jensen said partners have similar missions and are whom the library collaborates with, such as Northfield Promise and the Book Bike. The NAG is another group that we have worked with to co-write grants for which we will target daycares. T. Jensen said there is not a specific definition of partner, but organizations that we work with on a regular basis are considered partners. T. Jensen stated that the library is still struggling to make connections with the Latino population. The library is hoping to hire a library assistant with fluency in English and Spanish that will be a 32-hour a week position, so they can get benefits. This is being done in the hope that it will bring in more applicants. T. Hayes asked how much of the collection is in Spanish. T. Jensen said we have more material than what is going out. It is a current collection, but they still aren't being checked-out. Another underserved population that the library is looking to target is daycare centers and home-based daycare providers. The library worked with the NAG on a grant to bring library services, art, and education into daycare centers. D. Riehle-Merrill asked what challenges will be faced and how will they be addressed in the next three years. T. Jensen stated that a big thing will be staff turn-over. Many of the professionals currently working at the library are looking to retire. They will be looking closely at the succession plan. Several things that will be key to have

	in the library to continue to provide library services are a Spanish-speaking staff liaison, someone that knows technology extensively, public relations, and graphic arts. All these parts are missing or the library staff is struggling with and will be needed in the future. Other challenges are continuing to work with the City to make sure that they recognize that what the library does is important. T. Jensen's position as IT director helps to give awareness to other directors in the City as to the importance of library services, because they all need IT, but they don't all think they need libraries. S. Demas asked if there other departments within the City that the library can collaborate with to do outreach to the Latino community. T. Jensen stated that when the library had someone on staff that spoke Spanish there was an increase in the population of Latinos that came into the library. Several directors in the City are going through training right now called GARE, which stands for government alliance on race and equality. T. Jensen stated that the police department does a lot of outreach. T. Hayes recommended talking with Healthfinders in Northfield. They have many volunteers there that are bi-lingual. S. Demas also suggested the Community Action Center. D. Riehle-Merrill asked T. Jensen to speak to the parts of the strategic plan that the Board is a part of, how they can support the plan as a whole, and if there are parts of the plan that will take a lot of work to do. T. Jensen stated that one of the goals for the Board is to be advocates for the library and to identify as members of the Board. T. Jensen asked those that came down to Riverwalk, with the BookBike, if they felt this was an effective way for the Board to connect with the community. M. Epstein said that she mostly spoke to people that she knew, but it was good for her to re-affirm with them that she was part of the Library Board. She didn't think she needed to be there the entire time for that particular event. T. Jensen said that the City Council, and the City Administrator, Ben Martig, have appreciated the Board speaking at the city council meetings. It has been a great public awareness on the part of the library. J. McWilliams stated that she did not feel particularly useful at Riverwalk. There are so many people there and so many booths that she doesn't think the bike gets seen. She thinks a t-shirt and brochures to hand out would be beneficial, making Board members more identifiable as they walk around and direct people to the book bike. She suggested having the monthly library calendar to hand-out.
III. Library Board Community Outreach	D. Riehle-Merrill said in thinking about their role as Board members, in terms of their connection with the community, he sees two functions: 1. Promoting public awareness about services. 2. Advocacy. He asked T. Jensen what is the Board's purpose as far as community outreach goes and what do they actually need to do. For example, with the BookBike, is that the best venue for them to be doing community outreach. He also asked what the Board can do to increase public awareness; are there parts of the public that aren't aware and how do they reach them. T. Jensen gave examples of going to organizations and talking about the library and representing the library at City Council meetings. B. North asked if there is the capacity for people to get library cards at the BookBike. T. Jensen said that yes they can. She said that the library has about 18,000 active cards, which is great with a population of 20,000 except that they aren't all being used. B. North asked if it would be possible to see what geographical areas of Northfield are using the library to see if there are parts of the city that are less connected to the library. He suggested having a challenge between various areas of the town, over a period of time, to use their library cards and then the winner would get a picnic or some type of prize. D. Ehret Miller sees four specific areas of the strategic plan where the Board is involved - advocacy, general public awareness, partnerships, and their own Board representation. T. Jensen said that at one point they were talking about having a strategic priority just for the Board to work on. She asked if the Board would like to have an initiative just for the Board to focus on. D. Ehret Miller didn't think that the Board necessarily needed a specific initiative, but just clarity as to where they fit in and what their actions steps are. There is a lot of crossover in the initiatives on the plan and some parts might fit better under different categories. For example, the Board representation might fit better under something other than awareness. B. North asked if there is a connection between the library and the Northfield school board. T. Jensen said that would be a good idea and appropriate for the Board to reach out to them. The library staff is connecting with teachers at schools, but not the school board specifically. T. Jensen stated that it would be good to make a list of the organizations in town and look at what the value would be to do outreach with those groups and the library Board. D. Riehle-Merrill stated that since the Board isn't meeting in August it might be a good time for committees to connect to talk about issues they didn't get to address.

