

FRANKFORT PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
FRANKFORT PUBLIC LIBRARY
September 6, 2024
3PM

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:02PM.

II. Roll Call

Present: Trustee Look, Trustee Knutson, Trustee Stenoish, Amanda Kowalcze, Melissa Rice, Jessica Nawrocki, Rebecca Cerf, and Nicole Suarez.

Absent: None

Also Present: None

Citizens Advisory Committee: None

III. Introduction of Visitors

None

IV. Minutes for Approval

Melissa Rice motioned, and Trustee Knutson seconded to approve the Minutes from the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on May 29, 2024. Two corrections were made to the Minutes. Jessica Nawrocki attended the May Meeting, and was not absent as indicated. Additionally, the word “seconded” was mistakenly written as “sectioned”. Motion Passed.

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

A. Strategic Plan Quarterly Assessment

1. The Committee discussed highlighted items from April to June 2024 to encapsulate strategic plan progress in three categories: Completed, Selected In Progress, and Selected Up Next. When applicable, each item also contains Next Steps for future evaluation.

2. Two of the completed progress highlights concern the programs and outreach that the Library offers. First, the Committee discussed events and programs that promote community togetherness. Programming surrounding the Solar Eclipse in April was specifically highlighted. The Committee also decided to include information about the Summer Reading Program, which is for all ages and everyone in the community, and the IL Road Scholar Event that highlighted

National Parks, particular ones local to the Frankfort Area.

3. Another completed progress item was partnering with local organizations to enhance the Library's presence in the Community. The Committee felt this item should include information about the Library's partnership with the schools, particularly work towards an Intergovernmental Agreement with SD161 for educator cards. Other highlights included the Community Showcase, partnerships with organizations for Friday on the Green events, the mobile DMV program with the Secretary of State's Office, and the collection bins that the Library hosts for area organizations. The Committee decided to hold the Bluegrass Festival and the Fall Fest Parade for the next quarterly report, as those events were in July and September, respectively.

4. Additional highlighted completed progress includes building maintenance projects, such as the installation of the loading dock safety rails.

5. As part of the goal supporting staff training and onboarding, the Library Board of Trustees approved a new version of the employee handbook. The Committee also decided to highlight safety training, such as the CPR training staff had in May. A focus on the staff's commitment to professional development, including attending webinars that support improving and expanding Library services was also selected as an area to highlight.

6. The Committee discussed how Library Staff had found a solution to make a program more accessible. A community member wanted to attend a program on card games, but due a physical limitation, it was difficult for them to hold cards. The Library purchased card holders, so that the community member was able to participate. The Committee discussed that this should be included in the advertisement for similar programs, so that if others have limitations that they are concerned may make the programs inaccessible, they know the Library is happy to find options and accommodations. The Committee agreed this should be highlighted as supporting the Strategic Plan goal concerning access for all.

7. Finally, the Committee included a section on how the Library responded to the new statewide database offerings by reassessing database offerings and reallocating budget resources. One new database that was discussed was Learning Express, which includes ACT Test Prep. Trustee Look informed the Committee that the State had transitioned back to the ACT Test from the SAT Test, so this resource may be in high demand. The Library should get the word out about this resource now, since students will be looking for resources. Staff are also working on reorganizing how the databases are displayed on the Library website to make them more inviting to patrons. The State is not yet promoting the new database program, because they are still onboarding libraries and smoothing out geolocation accessibility issues, however the databases are already live and working for our community members.

8. For selected In Progress Items, the Committee discussed how a new partnership with Will County Green to collect reusable batteries for recycling supports our initiatives to improve sustainability and stewardship. Library staff are hopeful this program will be expanded to include single use batteries in early 2025.

9. The Committee included an update on the Library's In Progress item of making material organization changes to make the collection more browsable. Although the Youth Biography project was completed, additional relabeling projects were placed on hold during staff changes in the Technical Services Department.

10. The Committee greatly expanded on an In Progress item concerning Memory Care services to the community. Previously, the Committee had reported on a partnership with a Girl Scout to develop Memory Care Kits. Staff have been inspired to learn more about service to community members with dementia and memory care issues. Staff are investigating ways to expand programming, provide resources, advertise resources at area medical facilities, and much more. Staff are trying to find a balance between offering more, and not overwhelming staff or having to turn people away. Trustee Look mentioned that years ago there was discussion of using trained professionals as volunteers who could assist with Library programs and offerings, based on their area of expertise. Perhaps expanding beyond staff to groups like the Friends could provide more support, in order to offer more to the Community.

11. The Committee discussed which select Up Next items should be included in the quarterly report. One item discussed was how changing Web Accessibility Standards means the Library must adjust our web offerings to be in compliance with the new standards by 2027. Some steps are already being made, such as a focus on high contrast in weblinks, writing alt text for images, and adding voluntary product accessibility templates. There will be a lot of work and training involved to become compliant with the new standards, but the Library will be done before the deadline in 2027.

12. The Committee then discussed that the Library is almost halfway through the Strategic Plan, and while some strategic objects have received a lot of attention, others have not. The Committee decided to turn back to the Strategic Plan document to highlight objectives that have not received progress. These objectives include facilitating regular roundtables and communication opportunities for local community organizations, developing a staff culture statement, and utilizing cardholder and census data to identify unserved and underserved populations. Director Kowalcze explained that when the last objective was written, there had been a tool in development that would map cardholder and census data to help identify areas with low cardholder numbers

in the District. This tool was not made. The Committee discussed alternative ways that cardholder data could be gathered. One suggestion was utilizing the Idea Box to make a straw poll where Library visitors could mark their neighborhood, age, favorite things about the Library, and other data points. Although this would only get a limited set of datapoints based on current Library users, it would give the Library a starting point for identifying areas of underserved populations. The Committee decided to make this an Up Next item.

13. Finally, the Committee decided to include an Up Next item focused on evaluating Library Space and noise in the space to make a more inviting and productive environment. Sound pollution can make it difficult to host programs or focus on work.

B. Next Meeting

1. The Committee decided to hold the next Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on Monday, October 7th at 3pm.

VII. Public Comment

None.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:17PM.

Recorded By:
Amanda Kowalcze
Library Director