SEMINOLE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

WORKSHOP #1 MINUTES

Date: March 9, 2011

Project Name/ Seminole County Library Planning Services/Strategic Plan
Project Number: 1028

Submitted By: Ginger Corless

Meeting Date: Monday, February 28, 2011

Attendees: <u>Library Advisory Board</u>
Beverly Myers
Pamela Neal
Regina Bereswill
Jenifer Finch
Grace Chewning

<u>Seminole County Library Staff</u>
Christine Patten
Barbara McCullough
Denise Tate
Beverly McCormick
Ginny Howerton

<u>Strategic Plan Consultant</u>
Tom Kohler, RERC
Ginger Corless, HHI Design

Purpose: Above referenced meeting was the **first of three workshops with the Library Advisory Board and staff for the Strategic Plan update. The primary purpose of the workshop was to discuss the planning process, identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends, as well as direction on specific issue areas (collections, facilities, programs and facilities and technology).** This is a summary of the writer's interpretation of the meeting. Unless advised in writing to the contrary, it is assumed those in attendance are in agreement with the statements as set forth and work will proceed on this basis.

I.   WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

   A.   Christine Patten called the meeting to order and lead introductions. She then provided an overview regarding the changes to management and organization for each of the branches.
   B.   Ms. Patten also informed the group that $470,000 had been allocated for carpet and paint improvements for each of the branches.

C.   Ms. Patten introduced Tom Kohler and Ginger Corless, the Library Strategic Plan consultants.

II.   DEVELOPING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A.   Ms. Corless described the strategic plan planning process and distributed an outline describing the Strategic Plan process and objectives.

B.   Ms. Corless and Mr. Kohler explained that the Strategic Plan Steering Committee included the Library Advisory Board and key staff. They explained the role of the Steering Committee would be to direct the formulation of the Library System's strategic mission, goals, objectives and action/implementation strategies.

C.   Mr. Kohler explained the Strategic Plan would guide the provision of services; recommend funding strategies and steps for plan implementation.

D.   They explained the purpose of the workshop #1 was to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends as well as address issues that include collections, programs and services, facilities and technology.

III.   SWOTT EXERCISE RESULTS

The group participated in an exercise to identify key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends. The information and issues identified and discussed through this exercise will be used to draft the updated mission and strategic goals and objectives.

A.   Strengths

1. Our staff and approach to customer service

2. Our customers and level of membership – our customers appreciate the services provided, are well educated, young and truly interested in what we offer; over 75% of the residents within Seminole County have a library card

3. The geographical location of our branches serve our population centers

4. Our resources (i.e., collections, programs, website, volunteers, computers, Wi-FI, meeting rooms, databases including remote access)

5. Our existing partnerships (i.e., Seminole County Schools, Seminole State College)

6. Our programs and services, especially the kids programs, and business services

7. New leadership

8. Friends of the Library (FOL)

B.   Weaknesses

1. Lack of dedicated funding

2. Low allocated budget – in bottom 5% in state for funding (only $1.84/capita)

3. Poor community outreach, communication and self-promotion

4. Size, appreciation, layout, parking, signage and age of our facilities

5. Hours of operation - "Friday Closures"

6. Lack of non-print collections (i.e., music, DVD, downloadable books)

7. Poor promotions and feedback opportunities

8. Non-user attitudes that library is a non-essential service

9. Politics

10. Economy

11. Lack of adult and teen programs

12. Library Advisory Board has not been used to their full potential

13. Loss of services due to budget cuts

14. Relationship between the Library System and the BCC and the public

C.   Opportunities

1. Improve communication with the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), staff, Library Advisory Board and our customers

2. Clarify and reinforce role of Library Advisory Board as an active and meaningful Board to provide input to Library planning and budgeting, in addition to communicating with the different publics served by the Library, including BCC, customers, partners, Friends of the Library

3. Create, promote and maintain a "Virtual" Branch that can serve customers 24/7

4. Improve and capitalize on community outreach activities to build system and support

5. Redefine and promote libraries as "Community Centers that provide access to information while building social connections"

6. Promote databases and information literacy programs

7. Enhance technology resources to increase customer access and expand services

8. Seek alternative and traditional funding sources (dedicated funding, grants, grass roots fund raising, sponsorships, benefactors, evaluate fees, volunteers, in-kind services, increase BCC budget participation)

9. Develop and implement active promotions, marketing and communications programs

10. Develop active media relations programs

11. Reach out to the wealth of experience and resources of our community residents to improve the provision of programs and services offered at each of our branches

12. Tap into the full potential of our volunteers and celebrate their participation

D.   Threats

1. Privatizing

2. Community attitude and perception regarding how the Library is a non-essential service

3. Misinformation regarding what the Library does

4. Poor economy

5. Budget decreases

6. Community access to the internet

7. Lack of technology and non-print collections

8. Fear of promotion and success by the BCC

E. Trends

1. Today's and tomorrow's library will function as a "Community" destination, a place where people come ("community living room") to not just discover information, but to tap into educational resources but also to socialize

2. Increased access to virtual and technological resources

3. Serve as an E-Gov site

4. Site for social services and information

5. Green and sustainable facilities and technologies

IV. SMALL GROUP PRIMARY CATEGORY EXERCISE

Small groups were formed to address issues facing collections, facilities, technology and services and programs. For each category three questions were ask. The following are the results from this exercise.

A. Collections (group members – Christine Patten, Ginny Howerton, Pamela Neal, Denise Tate, Beverly Myers)

1. If we were starting from scratch and had all the resources needed – what would our approach to collections be?

   a. Best category of books per capita

   b. Electronic media; DVDs; downloadables, multimedia

   c. 24/7 virtual library

   d. Music downloadables, CDs

   e. Reciprocal borrowing

2. Are we shooting for a specific collections standard?

   a. Best category of books per capita

   b. Recognized by state

   c. Award winning

   d. Be at least comparable to our surrounding library services providers

3. What do our existing collections say about us and our services?

   a. Non – progressive since our funding for collections has not progressed in 5 years

   b. Have not kept up with the times for alternative collections (not just books) or print due to the building of databases

B.   Services and Programs (group members – Christine Patten, Ginny Howerton, Pamela Neal, Denise Tate, Beverly Myers)

1.   If we were starting from scratch and had all the resources needed – what would our approach to services and programs be?

   a.   Provide programs/services for all age groups

   b.   Dedicate the necessary staff to providing programming

   c.   Proactive approach to marketing and promotion

   d.   Active community program involvement – find out what people want to do and have access to

   e.   Resources for community program technology and materials

   f.   Conduct needs assessments on regular basis to determine branch trends and services

2.   Are we shooting for a specific services and programs standard?

   a.   National awards – known for setting the local standard

   b.   Emergent literacy

   c.   Information fluency

   d.   Increase partnerships with schools

   e.   Continue library card drives

   f.   Promotion of literacy

   g.   Higher books budget per capita

3.   What do our existing services and programs say about us and our services?

   a.   That we primarily serve youth and we need to look at meeting the needs of other populations, including seniors, teens and adults

C.   Technology (group members – Jennifer Finch, Regina Bereswill, Grace Chewning, Beverly McCormick, Barbara McCullough)

1.   If we were starting from scratch and had all the resources needed – what would our approach to technology be?

   a.   Figure out a way to connect to electronic readers such as Kendall

   b.   Increase access to computer classes and education

   c.   Increase access to downloadable materials

   d.   RFID

   e.   Partnerships with Netflix – Red Box

   f.   Control our own IT and web services

2.   Are we shooting for a specific technology standard?

   a.   Orange County

3.   What do our existing technologies say about us and our services?

a. We have been in a cave for the last 20 years and haven't moved into the 21st century

D. Facilities (group members – Jennifer Finch, Regina Bereswill, Grace Chewning, Beverly McCormick, Barbara McCullough)

　　1. If we were starting from scratch and had all the resources needed – what would our approach to facilities be?

　　　　a. Attractive, inviting, pleasing, welcoming appearance

　　　　b. Separate children's department

　　　　c. Enough space to accommodate customers

　　　　d. Accessibility to public transportation

　　　　e. Increase access to computer labs

　　　　f. Glass enclosed study rooms

　　　　g. Café/restaurant

　　2. Are we shooting for a specific facilities standard?

　　　　a. Look at such facilities as the Seattle Public Library

　　　　b. Welcoming, customer friendly and colorful

　　3. What do our existing facilities say about us and our services?

　　　　a. We are trying to play catch up

　　　　b. Years of neglect

　　　　c. Behind the times as it relates to technology

　　　　d. We do not value library services

V. OTHER DISCUSSION

A. The Library Advisory Board discussed the past frustration of not being an active functional board.

B. Christine Patten reinforced the future includes monthly meetings with the Library Advisory Board and commits to engaging the Library Advisory Board in real decision making and future development of the Library System.

VI. NEXT STEPS

A. Review the handouts provided about trends and the previous strategic plans.

B. Workshop notes will be sent to the Steering Committee along with additional reading and worksheets in preparation for the March 28th meeting.

C. Consultants will be drafting goals and objectives for review and comment at the next workshop.

VII. NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME

A. Workshop #2 - March 28, 2011 – Strategic Goals & Objectives
B. Workshop #3 – Week of April 25, 2011 – Draft Plan

Note: Persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decisions at these meetings/hearings they will need a record of the proceedings and for such purpose, they may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based, per section 286.0101, Florida Statutes.