Pine Plains Free Library

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

ADOPTED: November 16, 2021

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MISSION, VISION, VALUES

MISSION The mission of the Pine Plains Free Library is to provide resources, programs, and services that facilitate life-long learning, community engagement, and public awareness of local information.

VISION The Pine Plains Free Library will be a facilitator of learning, the recognized source of community information, the place to gather and discuss, and a promoter of reading for all ages.

CORE VALUES

- Provide life-long learning for our community members.
- Support open communication of ideas, knowledge and information.
- Encourage resident engagement through our facilities, programs and services.
- Ensure service accessibility to information in all formats to all members of our community.
- Promote the Library as a community center adopting the new role of libraries in America.

INTRODUCTION

The Pine Plains Library was founded in 1798 as a membership organization with a $2.50 membership fee. In 1874 the status of the library changed to a tax supported public library. The original charter was granted in 1895 followed by a provisional charter in 1950 and an absolute charter in 1960. The provisional charter paved the way for the library to change from an association library to the municipal library that it is today, with its budget approved by the Town Board.

In 2016, Library Director Marguerite Hill and the Pine Plains Free Library Board of Trustees developed the Library's first Strategic Planning committee to conduct a community survey and develop goals and objective for five years of Library operations. In 2021, this plan expired and the Board with its current Director, Alexis Tackett, sought to assess how the Pine Plains Free Library did on those goals and create the path for the next five years.

In this review, the Pine Plains Free Library realized a substantial increase in library services over the past decade, with a substantial portion of that beginning after the adoption of the first Strategic Plan. From 2016 to the end of 2019, the Library saw a 70% increase in circulation, an almost 225% increase in program offerings, and over 300% increase in attendance. Although COVID-19 slowed these numbers in 2020, current projections for 2021 has the Library back to pre-pandemic levels and growing.

As Pine Plains continues to see growth and development as a community, and as the Pine Plains Free Library approaches 225 years of operation in 2023, the Library Board and staff are committed to meeting the growing patronage and demand for the users of the Library. The focus on sustainability remains of upmost importance to all involved in the Strategic Planning process to ensure the library's commitment to serving its users for the next 225 years.

ABOUT THIS REPORT & THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This strategic plan has been developed by the Library Director and Board of the Pine Plains Free Library in order to develop a five-year plan and to provide a disciplined approach to updating and refocusing our services in light of our community's needs and the changing role of libraries. A community survey was conducted in September of 2021 in order to gain public feedback to better establish goals and objectives. This process could not have been done without the community's involvement and the Board of Trustees would like to thank those community members for their participation.

This report looks at several aspects of the role the library serves in the community and addresses an update to the mission, vision and values of the Library that have come out of the strategic planning process. This report also lays out the goals and objectives for long range planning over the next five years. At the end of the report you will find success metrics that define ways the library and our constituents may assess our achievement of this strategic plan.

The strategic planning process began in September 2021 and the plan was submitted to the Board and approved in September of 2022. Over 150 people participated in some way in the planning process which included community survey, facility survey, demographic analysis, and comparisons of the Pine Plains Free Library to other local libraries and small community libraries nationally.

Board of Trustees

- Beth McLiverty: President
- Patricia Hall: Vice President
- Kenda Ward: Secretary
- Darrin Culver
- Patrick MacMurray
- Amy Rothstein
- Keary Hanan

Planning Committee

- Alexis Tackett: Library Director
- Jean Osofsky: FRIENDs Treasurer
- Patricia Hall: Trustee
- Darrin Culver: Trustee
- Mary Bowen: Staff

COMMUNITY SURVEY

During the month of September of 2021, the Pine Plains Free Library Staff and Board of Trustees worked together to transmit a community survey to the population of Pine Plains in order to better understand what their needs of the Library looked like. There was a total of 243 participants, and the key results that impacted this strategic plan are outlined below.

Use

How is the Library used?

- Over 50% of respondants utlilize the Library on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Respondants primarily use the Library to check-out books (88%), attend programs (51%), and utilize public computers (42%).
- 86% of respondants rated 5 stars (out of 5) for the quality of staff interactions.
- 74% of respondants rated the Library's environment as "welcoming".

Expand

What exisiting services should the Library expand?

- Over 55% of respondants expressed a desire for expansion of operation hours.
- 63% of respondants want improved and updated technology offerings.
- 47% of respondants expressed interest in more programming focused on local topics: local authors, history, gardening, and interests.

Improve

What areas could the Library improve?

- 44% of respondants want improved disabled accessibility to Library facilities.
- 61% of respondants request improvement of digital collection offerings.
- 58% of respondants ask for improved seating areas and program space.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: FULFILL COMMUNITY NEEDS

Library services will be accessible and responsive to the needs of the community.

OBJECTIVE 1: DIVERSE COLLECTIONS

Provide a quality collection of materials in current and emerging formats that reflect borrowing trends, interests, changing habits, and the use patterns of the community.

Activities:

- Continue use of Mid-Hudson Library System inter-library loan and resource sharing;
- Investigate feasibility of integrating new emerging technologies into existing services;
- Continue to expand digital materials through emerging formats for broad digital access;
- Utilize web and social networking tools to promote existing resources.

OBJECTIVE 2: DIVERSE LOCAL PROGRAMMING

A variety of programs will be offered, in a variety of formats, that respond to needs and expressed interests of residents, and engages resident volunteers who may want to share their interests or expertise

Activities:

- Create a comprehensive Program Development Plan;
- Focus programming on major community interests, especially:
    - Local interest;
    - Author visits, book talks, and discussion;
    - Music, art, theater, history;
- Develop programs and activities that engage local experts and expertise;
- Develop a standard method effectively promote programs.

OBJECTIVE 3: EXPAND LIBRARY SERVICES

To better provide for the community in an ever-changing world, the library should be continuously updated and expanding resources that users can access in diverse ways.

Activities:

- Explore the cost of and funding for additional hours for the library operations;
- Explore the cost of and funding for additional staffing to expand productivity, programs, and meet demand;
- Collaborate with local event and organizations to bring the library to the community;
- Explore more ways that library users can access resources from home and when the library is closed such as homebound services;
- Further expand electronic databases, access to technology, and technical services.

GOAL 2: A VALUED COMMUNITY CENTER

The library will be reimagined to respond to emerging trends in community libraries and to the specific needs of the Pine Plains community.

OBJECTIVE 1: ESTABLISH A PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

The Library will develop a comprehensive public relations campaign to increase visibility and raise the public's awareness of the many services and opportunities available.

Activities:

- Develop, implement, and update a complete marketing plan to inform, engage, and excite the community on Library services;
- Issue timely press releases of library activities, special events, and programs;
- Maintain display cycles to market new and featured materials.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENGAGE IN LOCAL COLLABORATIONS

Identify, initiate, and foster collaborative ventures that maximize the use and distribution of library and community resources.

Activities:

- Identify partnerships and collaborate on cross-marketing opportunities;
- Ensure that the Library is represented in community events and activities as a local organization;
- Prepare Library Information brochures for all new residents available at the Town Hall with Library card applications.

GOAL 3: SUSTAINABILITY

The structure, support, and operations of the library will be strategically developed and regularly assessed to ensure the library's long-term ability to sustain and remain operational.

OBJECTIVE 1: OPTIMALLY STRUCTURE THE ORGANIZATION

Evaluate and maintain workflow, staffing, and budget allocation to maximize customer satisfaction with resources and services.

Activities:

- Assess current budget and identify gaps in resources;
- Require Library Director to submit an annual work plan aligned to current strategic plan;
- Set Library priorities for FRIENDS of the Pine Plains Free Library and establish an annual plan with FRIENDS to meet those priorities;
- Improve training opportunities for trustees, staff, and volunteers;
- Recruit volunteers and use their time effectively;
- Hold an annual staff meeting with a Board of Trustee representative;
- Regularly review all policies and procedures.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENSURE LIBRARY FACILITY FACILITATES LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

The Library will be an inviting and safe part of the community.

Activities:

- Continue professional consultations to improve Library space;
- Evaluate the facility, its systems, and procedures to increase safety and enhance efficiency;
- Maintain emergency readiness;
- Work with the municipality on Disaster Planning;
- Maintain a clean environment with welcoming and inviting entrances.

OBJECTIVE 3: EXPAND FUNDING SOURCES

Explore creative ways to ensure fiscal sustainability of library services.

Activities:

- Create a financial development plan to maintain increasing operational costs;
- Identify and pursue supplemental non-municipal funding sources;
- Explore more creative fundraising opportunities;
- Explore the possibility of a professional grant writer.

SUCCESS METRICS

The following are general metrics that define ways the library and our constituents may assess our achievement of this strategic plan.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

- Annual surveys to administer to the population for qualitative and quantitative feedback.
- Surveys to provide feedback for programs and events.
- Satisfaction surveys of library volunteers.

CUSTOMER USE METRICS

- Number of library cards distributed within the last year;
- Collection usage and circulation rates;
- Frequency of computer use;
- Number of people utilizing the library space;
- Program attendance;
- Library website visits and social media engagement frequencies.
- Number of new partnerships with local arts, business, and educational organizations each year of the plan.