

Library Director's report for planning meeting with Trustees
May 8, 2017, 5 pm (before monthly Board of Trustees meeting)

Cook Memorial Library's most recent Long Range Plan was adopted in 2010. It listed a set of goals and strategies to use when planning library programs and services for the five years following the adoption of the plan (through 2015). In 2015, Library Director Jay Rancourt retired and Mary Cronin was hired as the new Library Director. In 2015, the Trustees decided to wait to begin the next phase of strategic planning until the new Director had time to learn about the library and its community. Now it's 2017, and the time has come.

The 2010 Strategic Plan used the book *The New Planning for Results* by Sandra Nelson as a guide. Since it was published in 2001, newer and updated guides have been developed. (See list of guides on Planning Resources document, attached.) The most recent is the *Action Guide* developed by The Aspen Institute in 2016 which offers an updated framework for assessing libraries by gathering community input. The Action Guide is based on the 2014 report, *Rising to the Challenge: Re-envisioning Public Libraries*, published by the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries. What's valuable about the Action Guide is that it is a workbook for all phases of community input and information gathering that take place in strategic planning, with the emphasis on "dialogue" rather than data (though data does have a role). Once all the steps have been taken, the remaining work is to develop action items in response to what is learned, to share the results, and to continue the dialogue. To me, this feels like a more sustainable way to approach planning since it emphasizes building a web of relationships within our community and continuing the dialogues that have been started, making it a circular and ongoing process rather than a linear one (beginning, middle, end).

Agenda for today's (May 8, 2017) meeting:

Discuss whether to move forward with strategic plan, if yes, then:

- Identify who should be included and make a list of community members to invite to participate on a strategic planning committee
- Schedule initial meeting of people interested in being on the strategic planning committee
- Draft a timeline for strategic planning (if we follow the Action Plan's timeline, this process will take five to six months) to share with potential committee members

Planning to Plan next steps:

- Distribute to strategic planning committee the Planning Resources document for review. All should read the report *Rising to the Challenge: Re-envisioning Public Libraries* <http://csreports.aspeninstitute.org/dialogue-on-public-libraries/2014/report>
- Gather recent (within a year or two) strategic plans from local organizations (Mary)
- Give information about strategic planning process to library staff and Friends group (Mary)
- Bring to June 12, 2017 Trustees meeting a list of who is on the strategic planning committee, notes from the first meeting (if held yet), and upcoming meeting schedule