

Great Barrington Libraries Trustees Strategic Planning Meeting Minutes

Location: Town Hall, 334 Main St. Great Barrington

July 26, 2023

6:00PM in person only

Board Members Present: Patrick Hollenbeck (chair)
Sandra Pantorno
Ruby Chang (secretary)
Lauren Clark (left at 6:52 PM)

Others Present: Donna Brown (library interim director)

The meeting convened at 6:25 PM after the Special Library Trustee Meeting.

Minutes from past meeting: will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Vote on using name of Strategic Plan Project as Reflect, Reimagine, Reconnect.

SP: Agree it is a good start to have name to connect to project, not letting it go.

PH: The name is to looking at the past to look at the future. Looking at the plans in the past has been great but not executed, like fixing Ramsdell. We need to take this seriously.

SP: People reflect on their past history, family history and history of Housatonic.

Motion is made and seconded and so voted to name the Strategic Plan as Reflect, Reimagine, Reconnect.

Discussion on Survey

Survey Update—Email from Rob Shaeffer who could not attend this meeting:

Through Sunday 7/23 we've received 177 completed surveys.

On Monday, I delivered the Spanish language surveys to VIM.

In advance of getting these surveys finalized, we received incredible feedback from the VIM staff about the survey which will be of great benefit going forward.

Also this week, Eileen Mooney is circulating surveys within the Flag Rock community where she lives.

Finally, this Saturday Carol and Ruby will be at the farmers market for our 4th time. So far, the market attendees have accounted for over 65% of the total completed surveys.

There are still surveys to collect at EST, and Sandy and Ruby have delivered them to other places, so we should exceed 220 by our August 4th deadline next week.

PH: Have on line version of the survey and back to Google and the person was able to shut off the function that collects email addresses of those that respond. Access is by QR code. Poster will be made to post around town and to go onto the library website.

RC: I sent email to Fran this morning to link the QR code to the newsletter for August. Fran can also post it on Instagram and Facebook.

Review the Process and Time Table

PH: There are various focus groups(Santa Cruz Library called them prioritized groups), such as city staff, educators, families with young children, BIPOC community, Friends of the Santa Cruz Library, infrequent or nonusers of the library, library staff, members and partners of the Disabled Group, Spanish Community, Senior and Teens.

SP: These are inputs that need to be ready before October 1st. I have Seniors and Teens. What is the timeline? How long it would take to assemble?

PH: One week before October first, does not need to be formatted. It is community input. There are more important stuff than the survey. Statements from people are more important.

Discussion made to split up the groups. PH will take the Disability Group. Families Group do not need to be together or assemble people. Can be done via email. The Senior Center group and RSYG will be done in person. Sending emails to a group of people can be possible. RC can ask families that come to the

library and get their input. Rob can do the Spanish Speaking Group. There are no names in the quote. We are looking for real input. Survey also has comment section in the end that can be used. PH will take with select board members, Housatonic Improvement Committee. Informal discussion is also important. Then written and documented by sending the comments to RC to collect. LC recommend Housatonians. SP will speak with W.E.B. Du Bois Freedom Center, Gwendolyn. The comments will be anonymous. Also, library staff comments as well, very important.

Strategic Plan:

PH: This is a planning document for the future. We do not need consultants. Reviewed Long Range Plan in the past. We have to honor this from the past. Can use these words. Not sure who is doing it. Word smithing start September 1st. Acknowledgement of the Indigenous People is important. State is looking to honor these past plans. Mission statement, user needs assessment, gathering survey information, goals are broad statements over long time to encompass our vision. Breaking down objectives into goals. This has been done in the past. There are enough information that we have not done.

SP: Methodology, description, who participated, what data was gathered and get approval by the Board of Trustees.

RC: recommend typed out anonymous comments from the staff placed in a box would help as one focus group. We do need to discuss whether we want to have Sharon Gregory be involved since she has done quite a bit of work and we should let her know.

PH: We are guided by past plans and Sharon is an independent thinker. We got to follow the plan that is in front of us. We want Sharon in but she has to do what we need.

SP: I like what she has written so far. She did the Strategic Plan and Renovate Ramsdell and Specialized Programs between Ramsdell and Mason to be complimentary. This was already in the report in 2018.

- Further discussion about writing the Strategic Plan, making the charts, agree with the goals. We are still talking about data after the survey information has been collected after August 4th. Then do the tabulations to be used in the plan. We need to look at what has been done in the past such as Long Strategic Plan and the one before that(2012-2016).
- Discussion of timeline as well. The spread sheet of the tabulating of survey data are done by Rob as we are receiving them. We do want Sharon to be part of this process but she is far ahead of us. Sandy feel the best way is communal way like when we made the survey.
- Request Donna to send us the PDF file of previous plans from 2012-16 period.
- This Strategic Plan has been determined to be a five year plan.

Old Business/New Business: none

Citizens Speak/ Media Time: none

Adjournment at 7:28 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ruby Chang