

THE LEWES PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015

INTRODUCTION

The Lewes Public Library is an independent library and a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation, incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware which has been successfully serving the Greater Lewes Area since 1935. The Library is located in a building owned and maintained by the City of Lewes. The Library is a participating member of the Delaware Library Consortium and strives to meet the Delaware Division of Libraries Guidelines and Standards. A collaborative relationship for policies, programs and technical support exists with the Sussex County Department of Libraries.

The Board and Staff of the Lewes Public Library are pleased to share the 2010–2015 Strategic Plan with the general public. This plan will guide policy and operational decision-making to ensure that the Library continues to meet or exceed user expectations in a world of rapidly developing technologies and a changing society with varying lifestyles. The plan is meant to be a flexible living document that is available and easy to read. The Staff and Board will review the plan annually and update as required.

With a focus on the Vision, six strategic initiatives were identified which will enable the Library to fulfill its Mission to the greater Lewes community.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Lewes Public Library is to provide access to a wide variety of educational, informational and recreational materials to members of the community through traditional and emerging technologies. The Library will be responsive to the needs of the community and will support programs, for all ages, to encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning.

VISION STATEMENT

Lewes Public Library will be a leading library in the State of Delaware and a trusted civic, cultural, social and learning center. The Library will be a welcoming, comfortable center for the exchange of ideas, as well as a place for cultural and social interaction in the community.

The six initiatives are:

I. COLLECTION: The Lewes Public Library Collection includes books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, electronic media and a Delaware Historical Collection. The Library strives to offer and promote a quality collection that informs, enriches and interests a diverse community.

A. The Collection Development Policy

1. guides the building and justification of the collection and the process of acquisitions, and
2. includes the process by which members of the community may participate in this policy.

B. The Library continuously improves the quality and condition of its collection by:

1. purchasing current high-demand items for the collection;
2. using community book donations to supplement the collection;
3. pursuing innovative methods by offering content in new media and emerging technology, including online databases, downloadable media, e.g. dvd and e-books.
4. completing the phase-out of older media, e.g. video and audio cassette formats.
5. carefully planning placement of the collection's subsections; and
6. weeding the collection based on standard library practices.

C. The Delaware Collection. The Lewes community is fortunate to have a room in the Library dedicated solely to Delaware historical and genealogical books, artwork and memorabilia. Because of the historical and monetary value of the collection, access to the Delaware Room is limited, and is granted by staff approval.

1. The Delaware Collection is continuously expanding its historically significant items by solicited and unsolicited donations from interested patrons and other sources.
2. The Library purchases new materials by Delaware authors and items about Delaware history relevant to the collection.
3. The process for this expansion is outlined in the Collection Development Policy.
4. Because this collection requires special environmental care and control, the Library will follow the recommendations of the Northeast Document Conservation Center for its protection.

D. The Library will continue to participate in the statewide preservation and digitization initiatives.

II. PROGRAMS/SERVICES: The Library offers high quality programs and services that reflect community interests and needs.

- A. The Library continuously evaluates current program offerings and modifies programs as dictated by customer feedback and trends. Current offerings include:
 - 1. Adult Programs,
 - 2. Early childhood and youth programs which encourage lifelong learning, and
 - 3. Outreach Programs.
- B. The Library will continue educating patrons in the use of the catalog, website and self-service features such as renewals, hold-placing and database searches, including technology training for future programming.
- C. The Library will reach out to those who cannot or do not come to the Library by:
 - 1. assessing the needs and the opportunity, as well as resource requirements, for development of programming and services for a diverse population;
 - 2. assessing the needs and the opportunity, as well as resource requirements, for development of teen-targeted programming and services; and
 - 3. providing improved physical access and services to those with disabilities.
- D. The Library will endeavor to increase awareness of the Library and its services by:
 - 1. instituting a public relations plan and
 - 2. developing a marketing campaign to promote its programs and services.
- E. Consistent with its Mission and Vision Statements, the Library will partner or co-sponsor events with other libraries and community organizations according to Library policy and guidelines.

III. FACILITY: The Lewes Public Library is a welcoming place that is modern, accessible and well-maintained.

- A. The Library assumes a prominent role in the Greater Lewes Area as a community center, and as such is an ideal venue for the exchange of ideas and information.
- B. The safety and security of staff and patrons are of paramount importance. The Library is affiliated with the Delaware Disaster Assistance Team and it reviews and updates, as needed, the following plans and systems:
 - 1. disaster plan,
 - 2. fire prevention plan,

3. mechanical systems,
 4. signage,
 5. lighting needs, and
 6. security system.
- C. In conjunction with the City of Lewes, a long-term maintenance and operations plan will be developed and implemented for the facility.
- D. In conjunction with the City of Lewes, the Library will review the use of its meeting rooms and equipment to ensure they meet current needs and safety standards of the community.
- E. Under the guidelines of the Delaware Division of Libraries, the Library
1. completed initial Needs Assessment;
 2. will update the needs assessment, as required; and
 3. annually complete the Library Standards Contract required by the Delaware Division of Libraries.
- F. In conjunction with the Needs Assessment to be developed under the guidelines of the Delaware Division of Libraries, the Library will develop a facilities plan for the future. This plan will position the Library to meet future community needs with appropriate renovations, reconstruction or expansion. The Library will develop this plan by:
1. continuing to periodically survey users;
 2. identifying ways to survey non-users; and
 3. utilizing recent census data.

IV. TECHNOLOGY: As part of the Delaware Library Consortium, the Lewes Public Library applies existing technologies and monitors emerging technologies.

- A. With technical support from the Delaware Division of Libraries and Sussex County Department of Libraries, the Library provides the technical infrastructure needed to support library operations and provides the most recent computer security by:
1. assessing library computers for patrons and staff and upgrading as needed;
 2. assessing the library wireless hardware and software, and upgrading as needed; and
 3. upgrading software on public internet and workstations.
- B. As part of the Delaware Library Consortium, technology and software are upgraded, as needed.
- C. The Library will maintain a current website using interactive options and social networking resources.
- D. The Library will plan for self-checkout stations.

E. The Library will explore new technologies, e.g. free downloadable movies and videos.

V. STAFF: The Library employs a well-educated staff which anticipates and meets the varied expectations of its users, and creates a satisfying work environment.

A. The Library will develop and implement a succession plan for key positions.

B. The Library will conduct annual personnel evaluations to:

1. ensure the most effective and efficient utilization of staff;
2. allocate staff to areas of greatest need;
3. consider organizational changes to improve efficiency and service; and
4. maintain high standards of customer service skills.

C. The staff is encouraged to attend County, State and national training seminars throughout the year.

D. The small full-time staff and extensive use of volunteers require a significant amount of cross-training between both full- and part-time staff based on skill level and availability.

1. The Library will develop and implement a formal plan for staff development and training to further enhance productivity and customer service.
2. This will be accomplished partly by providing for full-day development and training of the entire staff at least twice a year.
3. Invite volunteers, trustees and Friends to participate in training.

E. Operational information is shared with all staff on a regular basis.

F. The Library is fortunate to have a wealth of competent, loyal and enthusiastic volunteers. Volunteers are an extension of the total library program, not a substitute for staff. Through their efforts, volunteers increase the library staff's ability to provide the best possible service for library patrons. To use the talents of its volunteers to full advantage, the Library will:

1. develop and implement a Volunteer Policy and Manual, and
2. create the position of Volunteer Coordinator whose duties will train and track all aspects of the volunteer including, among other things:
 - a. recruitment,
 - b. training,
 - c. supervising,
 - d. scheduling, and
 - e. technical services.

VI. DEVELOPMENT: Fifty to sixty percent of library funding is provided by county and state governmental agencies. The balance of funds needed to operate must be generated through fundraising.

- A. The Library encourages community involvement through volunteerism and financial support.
- B. Donations are encouraged through:
 - 1. the Annual Appeal,
 - 2. book donations,
 - 3. library wish lists,
 - 4. memorials, and
 - 5. planned giving.
- C. The Library will continue its beneficial relationship with the Friends of the Lewes Public Library by:
 - 1. promoting membership in the Friends and providing information on how Friends' support is used by the Library for the benefit of the community, and
 - 2. supporting Friends' fundraising activities - Book Sales, and all other events.
- D. The Library will also continue its pursuit of grant awards through application processes.
- E. The Library will create a comprehensive resource development plan to provide a blueprint to increase fundraising and development results that will help ensure the success of its Mission to the greater Lewes community. The Library will:
 - 1. assess the feasibility of undertaking a capital campaign to support the planned growth of the Library;
 - 2. implement a three- to five-year development plan to diversify and increase the Library's funding streams, with a focus on foundation and business support, planned giving and major individual donors;
 - 3. continue to maintain a donor database for fundraising, mailing and e-letter purposes;
 - 4. increase contributions to the Library's Annual Appeal campaign by:
 - a. providing fundraising training for the Library Board members, staff and volunteers,
 - b. expanding the list of prospects,
 - c. developing web pages specifically focused on the annual appeal;
 - 5. continue to identify materials, resources and equipment that the Library would like to purchase and announce these giving opportunities on the Library website
 - 6. enlist the local business community in supporting the Library and identify corporations/businesses that may be interested in sponsoring new program series or business-related services and collections; and
 - 7. set a specific fundraising goal for the Library's endowment to ensure ongoing library support