



111 Adams Avenue  
Lewes, DE 19958

# Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022

Approved June 27, 2017  
Lewes Public Library  
Board of Commissioners

In the fall of 2016, a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of key staff and key members of the board of commissioners of the Lewes Public Library began development of a strategic plan. The Committee used the Public Library Association's planning process outlined in the publication The New Planning for Results: a Streamlined Approach by Sandra Nelson. This is a community-based planning process in which key community stakeholders identify a vision for the community and determine how the library can help achieve the community vision.

Community surveys and community stakeholder meetings, which included key library staff, identified three areas upon which the Library's Strategic Plan would be based. The focus areas or library service responses are:

- 1 Satisfy Curiosity**
- 2 Exemplary Service**
- 3 Lifelong Learning**

The Strategic Planning Committee approved these three library service responses and began developing goals, objectives, and activities that would reflect the library service responses as recommended by the community surveys and community stakeholder meetings.

### **The Vision and Mission of the Lewes Public Library**

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

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

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Lewes Public Library anticipates the needs of the community and adapts, creates and supports classes and programs for all ages that encourage a love of reading, exploration and discovery. The Library provides access for a wide variety of educational, informational and recreational materials to all members of the community through traditional resources and emerging technologies.

**SERVICE RESPONSE #1 -**

**Satisfy Curiosity:**

Community members will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

**Goal 1:** The library will anticipate and respond to patron needs, requests, and provide accurate information, appropriate resources and services.

Objective 1: The library will make at least one improvement to enhance access to resources during each year of the plan.

*Activities:*

- A. The Library Director and the Development Director will explore grant funding and donations to fund structural improvements to better meet the needs of the physically handicapped and differently-abled.
  - i. drive up book drop, low seating in the lobby, 15 minute parking, shift items off bottom shelves
- B. The Library Director will work with the Assistant Director and the professional staff to create programs and organizational partnerships to mitigate barriers for underserved populations
  - i. forgiving fines for jobless job seekers, Spanish language welcome packet, Meals on Wheels partnership
- C. The Board of Commissioners, along with the Library Director, will determine feasibility of earlier opening or extended weekend hours to address this need and decide if it calls for an increase in the annual budget.

**Goal 2:** Patrons will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

Objective 1: The library will provide at least one forum for community feedback during each year of the plan.

*Activities:*

- A. Create a community board composed of a broad cross section of the community
- B. Create suggestion or feedback forms patrons can use
- C. Hold open meetings seeking input and feedback

Objective 2: Lewes Public Library will increase the accuracy of the information being provided to patrons annually. By the end of 2019, 60% of the adult library users will say

they found the information or resources they were looking for at the library. This response rate will increase to 75% by 2021.

*Activities:*

- A. The Assistant Director will investigate and analyze reference questions received and assess how to better provide information and resources monthly.
- B. The Assistant Director will train desk staff and volunteers to differentiate between the types of patron questions.
  - i. The Assistant Director will offer desk staff and/or volunteers continuing education workshops/webinars on Readers' Advisory, Reference Skills and Online Databases as appropriate.
- C. The Library Director will analyze statistics from Delaware Division of Libraries annually
- D. The Adult Services Coordinator will provide opportunities for patrons to obtain informative assistance with government web sites, government agencies, and civic information
  - i. Offer space for appointments with various government entities
  - ii. Partner with various government entities for informational programming
  - iii. Host community forums to increase engagement in civic life

Objective 3: The library will meet its operating and capital needs with a sound financial structure annually.

*Activities:*

- A. The Library Director and Board Treasurer will implement an annual budgeting process
  - i. Create a budget calendar
  - ii. Create formal Development Plan for income to fund the 40% of the annual budget not funded by the state and county
  - iii. Obtain key stakeholder input
    - a. Conduct stakeholder meetings to solicit feedback to help guide spending priorities
    - b. Solicit staff, Friends and volunteer input
    - c. Document priorities for budget planning
  - iv. Discuss draft budget plan at Board meeting
  - v. Approve final budget by Board
- B. The Library Director and Board Treasurer create 5 year budgets/operating plans
  - i. Present major issues/trends and funding gaps to Board
  - ii. Obtain stakeholder input
  - iii. Determine possible solutions to any gaps or issues

- iv. Create rolling forecasted budgets for the next 5 years
  - v. Approve forecasted budget with operating budget
- C. The Board of Commissioners and Development Director will create and update long term capital and endowment growth funding plans
- i. Create capital funding plan that includes obsolescence, upgrades and maintenance
  - ii. Determine capital funding needs and target levels of funding for Board approval
  - iii. Define gaps and plan for solutions to reach needed funding levels
- D. The Board of Commissioners and Development Director will re-establish an active Legacy Program to encourage planned gifts and bequests
- i. Complete program plan with sample literature
  - ii. Recruit and train program leaders
  - iii. Implement and review results at Board meeting

**SERVICE RESPONSE #2 -**

**Exemplary Service:**

Community members will have a first-rate experience when interacting with Lewes Public Library staff and volunteers.

**Goal 1:** The library will create and maintain flexible, happy, productive, well-trained, professional, properly-compensated staff and volunteers.

Objective 1: Staff and volunteers will be given information and opportunities to enable them to provide exemplary service. Expectations for staff and volunteer continuing education will be communicated annually.

*Activities:*

- A. The Library Director will update/create job descriptions and review with staff.
- B. The Library Director will ensure that performance evaluations, which will include personal performance goals and personal development/skills inventories, take place annually.
- C. The Library Director and Assistant Director will determine relevant resources for staff and volunteer development and provide resources
  - i. Provide an opportunity and expect participation for all interested staff to attend relevant training & professional development at the County, State and National level.
  - ii. Encourage staff to participate in webinars.
  - iii. Leverage subject experts within Delaware Library organization to do in-house, no cost staff training.
  - iv. Recognize staff completion of training and allow for opportunity to share information with coworkers.

- v. Offer periodic training for volunteers in relevant topics.
- D. Utilize volunteers to allow staff to accomplish more skilled duties
- i. The Library Director and the Volunteer Coordinator will identify opportunities for better efficiency by matching volunteers with appropriate advanced patron services.

Objective 2: An outreach plan for programming staff will be established and updated annually.

*Activities:*

- A. The Library Director will change job descriptions to reflect an outreach component.
- B. The Assistant Director will compile list of annual community opportunities and assign.
- C. The Library Director will identify opportunities for outreach with organizational partners and assign quarterly.
  - i. The Library Director will identify partners that would benefit from a pop up library on an annual basis and assign.
  - ii. The Library Director will identify underserved communities, contact closest community center, and provide a “little free library” with books from the Friends of Lewes Public Library donations.

**SERVICE RESPONSE #3 -  
Lifelong Learning:**

**Goal 1:** Community members will receive the service needed to address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

Objective 1: The visibility and partnerships will increase annually.

*Activities:*

- A. The library will establish ongoing relationships with community organizations and local government agencies.
  - i. Compile a list of targeted community events.
  - ii. Create and update an informational display and kit and assign to trained staff and volunteers.
  - iii. Create web links from other web sites to the web site
  - iv. Provide library information to homeowner associations, etc.
  - v. Partner with other community organizations to share in joint marketing efforts.
  - vi. Create info packets & 5 minute welcome talks for meeting room users as a part of welcoming before their meetings.

- vii. Host pop-ups for non-profits to share info in lobby once per week.
  - viii. Host programming opportunities presented by sponsors/supporters.
  - ix. Host networking opportunities – civic, social & educational.
- B. The library will establish outreach to visitors, vacationers and new residents.
  - i. The Library Director and the Assistant Director will create and update targeted information packets for realtors.
- C. The Library Director will develop a marketing plan & budget to guide outreach activities.
  - i. Formulate annual plan, including expenses.
  - ii. Determine how to fund.
  - iii. Formulate consistent materials.
- D. The Assistant Director and Development Director will utilize new website and all social media tools to engage patrons and stakeholders.
  - i. Train staff and assign appropriate roles.
  - ii. Include community news/events links and sponsor/supporter profiles.
- E. The Library Director will communicate the library's role in the community and the value provided.
  - i. Create annual reports to the community.
  - ii. Advocate for funding with State, County, City and nationally.
  - iii. Assign responsibility for advocacy activities annually.