

Planning to Plan Report

Problems to be addressed

- Insufficient staff to complete the work that must be done, without causing regular and on-going stress on staff, which manifests itself in health issues, irritability, increased mistakes made, etc. These manifestations spill over into the service provided the public.
- A proposed budget that falls \$32,000 short (without COLA's) or \$47,000 (with COLA's), just to cover the regular and on-going work of the District.

Charge

The Director was asked to develop a way for the District to identify the number of flexible staff hours needed (Strategic Plan – 7.1) and a method by which decisions could be made to determine how/where the hours of service would be cut to free up the needed amount of time.

What follows are some thoughts that will next be shared with staff for their review. This report will be discussed at the Staff Meeting on Tuesday, June 13 at 8:30a.m. The Director will present to the Board, at their meeting that same evening, the gist of the Staff Meeting discussion.

Identify staffing needs – 7.1

- ❖ Identify current areas where staffing is clearly insufficient (done by volunteers) – This would identify work that volunteers do that has previously been done by paid staff
 - Is this work that should be done by volunteers?
 - What is the risk to the library if the volunteers don't complete the work in an accurate and timely manner?
- ❖ Identify areas where current level of staffing is causing chronic stress to those trying to get the job done
 - Identify what isn't getting done; or it is getting done at what expense (something else not getting done, health issues – physical, mental, or emotional)
 - Can the workflow be streamlined, or
 - Is staff doing things that are not “essential” elements of their position description, or
 - Is there is too much to do for the level of staffing?
- ❖ Identify how much staff time is needed to allow the flexibility for staff to cover while other staff take annual and sick leave
 - This will require greater planning on all staff's part in taking annual leave
 - Since sick leave is rarely planned, this poses an additional challenge

- Are we willing to close a branch if there is no one to move there to cover the hours?
 - This however, cannot totally replace the need for a sub budget
- ❖ Does Latah County Library District need to provide training in the use of
 - Databases
 - On-line catalog?
- ❖ Does Latah County Library District need to provide training on other timely topics for all ages?
- ❖ Identify time needed to address issues identified above. This will identify the total number of staff hours that must be freed up from other work responsibilities to provide the needed flexibility.

Develop criteria to determine service hours – 7.2

- ❖ The process above will identify how many “flexible” staff hours are needed, which will drive the number of hours that will have to be cut from libraries throughout the District.
 - Assumptions:
 - No library is exempt from losing hours except Troy, who has two years left on their lease agreement, and specifies that the library will be open 18 hours per week.
 - No administrative time for the branch supervisors
- ❖ Criteria, which may or may not be weighted equally
 - Library Criteria
 - Library circulation as percent of total circulation
 - Registered patrons per library as percent of total registered patrons
 - Computer use as percent of total circulation
 - Other Criteria that has been mentioned
 - Distance to next closest library (determine some way to weigh this into calculation)
 - 0 to 5 miles
 - 6 to 10 miles
 - 11 to 15 miles
 - 16 to 20 miles
 - Other community amenities (school, community center, theatre, swimming pool, etc.) (determine some way to weigh this into calculation) – Specify what is available
 - Calculate cost per circ and cost per patron for each library using the four elements above
 - Rate seven libraries as percent of total using the elements above
 - NOTE: It may be necessary to call upon an outside expert to develop a method to equitably calculate the above

- ❖ The percent ranking of each library will determine its percentage of the total available open hours, which will have previously been determined by the total number of flexible staff hours needed.

Scheduling

Once the number of flex hours is identified and an agreed upon way to apply the criteria there still remains the huge task of scheduling to make the plan work. Scheduling is not addressed in this report.

Recommendation

Since public input was received during the policy development I recommend that the board make it clear that implementation of the Strategic Plan is the Director's responsibility with appropriate input from and collaboration with the staff. If this is not adhered to then we have a "micro-managing" situation, which will ultimately make implementation difficult at best but more likely it will grind the process to a halt, thereby leaving the problems unaddressed.