

Access, equality, education

Bethlehem Public Library Long-Range Plan for 2015-2018

Approved by the Board of Trustees October 13, 2015

Board voted on September 17, 2018 to extend plan through December 2019

The Board of Trustees of Bethlehem Public Library is committed to maintaining a library that will offer a full range of information services for the residents of Bethlehem, providing equal and uncensored access to everyone. Preserving intellectual freedom is a cornerstone of all work and activities of the library's trustees and staff. Continuing current well-received library programs, developing innovative services, providing suitable and ample connectivity, sustaining adequate staff, preserving the library facility, and leading the community in the understanding and use of new information technologies are the library's goals. These will be realized within a culture of total respect for all individuals, including adhering to policies that protect privacy and confidentiality.

The library is committed to achieving the following goals:

1. Existing and Proposed Service Enhancements

The library has currently responded to the community's needs by:

- Expanding access to WiFi beyond the library proper
- Implementing additional charging stations within the library at lockers and at tables

The library will pursue the development of innovative library and information services that will be *user centered*, including but not limited to:

- One-on-one technology help
- One-on-one help with e-books and social media
- One-on-one training in Excel and PowerPoint
- Concierge information services in response to patrons' requests, in person or through other platforms such as Twitter and other social media
- Intergenerational programming
- Services for those patrons who seek help with self-publishing
- Reviewing and assessing the current borrowing structure used by the library
- Continuing innovative programs for children

The library will expand and support online and print resources.

In fiction, the library will:

- Maintain a sufficient print collection, as well as provide access to both popular fiction and a wider system-based fiction collection
- Increase the number of e-books and e-readers and offer training in their use
- Ensure appropriate staffing to help patrons find the fiction they desire, within and outside the library

In reference and non-fiction, the library will:

- Maintain a sufficient non-fiction print collection
- Continue to maintain its unique historical collection
- Continue to provide access to the most-used databases
- Ensure appropriate staffing to help patrons find and navigate additional resources when desired

2. Marketing and Community Outreach

The library will increase its footprint in the community and its outreach activities.

Staff will:

- Continue the Books to People program
- Develop relationships and programs at local nursing homes and other adult organizations such as HILL, and with local service organizations
- Seek to be embedded in community activities and facilities such as the Delmar Farmers' Market and other public gathering places
- Develop strong media contacts in order to make the library's programs and services better known
- Measure and evaluate the results of communications and other media activities that expose the public to services and programs
- Measure and quantify the attendance at library programs and the frequency of services used in order to better serve patrons
- Offer candidates for public office the opportunity for discussion forums
- Encourage the use of public meeting space
- Encourage and increase teen space for studying
- Collaborate with local municipalities, such as the Town of Bethlehem and the Bethlehem Central School District, on demographic projections in order to assess building needs and availability of services

Trustees will:

- Strive to develop active relationships throughout the community that personify the values and worth of the library

- Publicly speak with one voice when discussing library decisions
- Encourage town residents to avail themselves of library services

3. Public Awareness and Advocacy

Bethlehem Public Library believes it is essential that all public libraries play an active role in the civic life of their communities; that they defend intellectual freedom; and that they support democracy in all its forms.

To that end:

The library will strive to communicate to Bethlehem residents the offerings and services of the library via newsletters, social media, and a robust website. The trustees and director will strive to support and strengthen the Friends of the Library. They will also commit to increasing their own knowledge and understanding of key library issues, services, and programs through general inquiry, targeted agenda items, and continuing education.