

Town of Bourne

Town Administration



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24 Perry Ave, Bourne, MA 02532

Memo

To: Jonathan Bourne Public Library Board of Trustees
Irja Finn, Library Director

From: Liz Hartsgrove, Assistant Town Administrator

RE: **2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan Process**

Date: June 8, 2023

Cc: Bourne Select Board
Marlene McCollem, Town Administrator

Attachment: Jonathan Bourne Public Library Request for Strategic Planning Services, dated May 3, 2023.

The Town issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant to assist with the Library's Strategic Planning; with a submission due date of June 2nd, 2023.

The purpose of the services as specified in the RFP is to assist the Jonathan Bourne Public Library with the design, development, and implementation of a multi-faceted strategic plan process for the next five-years of operation (2024 – 2028) including a robust solicitation and receipt of public opinion as to ***“what should happen next in terms of library services and facilities so that we may better serve our vibrant and diverse community and realize the library's full potential to have a positive impact in the lives of residents of all ages, backgrounds, needs, and abilities.”***

The RFP was published in news outlets as well as extensive push through press releases and social media channels however zero (0) bids were received.

Considering the updated strategic plan must be approved by Library Board of Trustees prior to September 30th for upcoming FY24 grant funding opportunity eligibility it is recommended that the Administration's role shift to facilitator, with assistance from the Library Director, in leading the planning exercise over the next several months and following the proposed methodology and timeline as detailed below:

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

To be sure all of the necessary steps for this initiative remains on track, the tentative Implementation Schedule outlined below details the process, assigned participants and preliminary milestones dates for completion including public engagement opportunities. These steps mirror expectations defined in the Technical Scope of the RFP (pages 9-10).

TRUSTEE TASK: This schedule is a draft and Trustees are encouraged to offer feedback if there are suggested adjustments to be made prior to the tentative June 29th kick-off date.

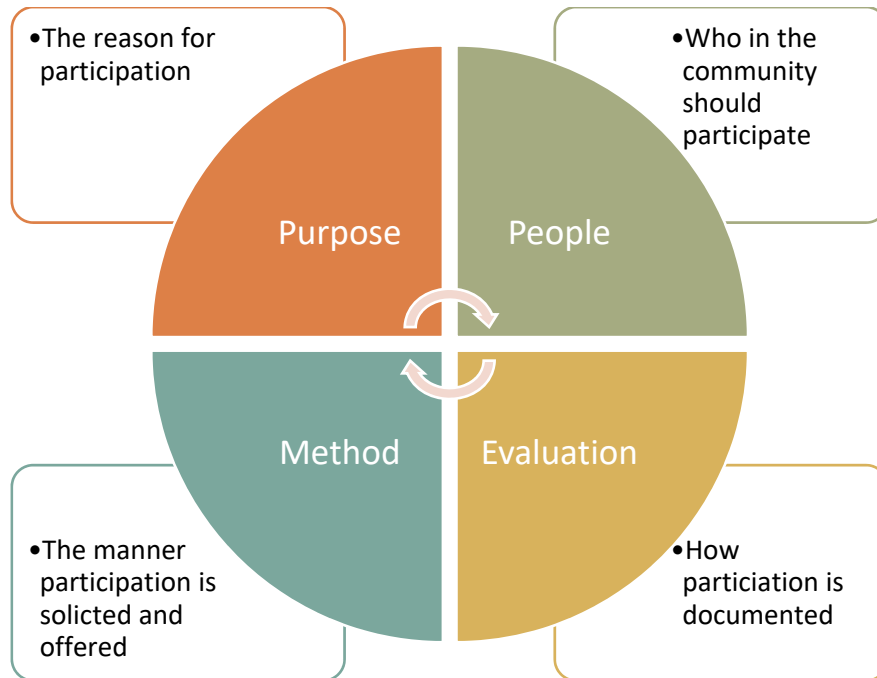
Description	Task #	Timeline	June	July	Aug	Sept
Gather data about existing library operations and indicators	1a	June 12 – June 23				
Review Public Participation/Engagement, and list of Stakeholders	2a	June 29				
Initial SWOT Analysis/Evaluation of Programs and Resources	2d	June 29				
Discuss Survey draft	2c	June 29				
Summarize Initial plan and discussions	1b	June 12 – July 11				
Review and finalize draft Survey	2c	July 12				
Develop outline of Public Workshops	2b	July 12				
Update Select Board	2b	July 18				
Launch outreach efforts outlined in Engagement plan	2f	July 19				
* Launch Survey for public participation	2e	July 19 – Aug 4				
* Conduct Public Workshops	2e	July 26 & Aug 2				
Collect and compile results from Survey and Workshop	3a	Aug 2 – Aug 25				
* Public Meeting for comments on 1 st Draft Plan	3a	August 31				
Revisions to Draft Plan incorporating feedback	3a	Sept 1 – Sept 25				
Update to Select Board	3b	September 5				
* Public Meeting for comments on 2 nd Draft Plan	3a	September 13				
Final Draft/Report presented for Trustee approval	3b	September 28				

	Trustee & Staff Task
	Town Staff Task
*	Public Participation

REVIEW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The implementation schedule outlines a rather swift timeline. Therefore, to guarantee the primary influencer of the adopted plan remains a reflection and linkage to the needs and wants from the actual members of the community, a plan for soliciting, inviting and ensuring participation must be framed, documented and followed through a Public Participation/Engagement Plan.

Traditional Public Participation Plans (PPP) are crafted into four (4) areas of focus or cornerstones:



Purpose

In the published RFP, the Trustees identified the following purpose for commencing with a 2024-2028 Strategic Plan:

“The Library Board of Trustees and staff are interested in generating public opinion as to what should happen next in terms of library services and facilities so that we may better serve our vibrant and diverse community and realize the library’s full potential to have a positive impact in the lives of residents of all ages, backgrounds, needs and abilities.”

Indirectly, this purpose also showcases an outcome objective: *The success of the library creating a positive impact will be achieved when decisions about its future are aligned with the needs of all people it serves.*

People

The People Cornerstone of a PPP should describe who in the community must be invited in the planning process. Considering the purpose acknowledges the importance of diverse representation “of residents of all ages, backgrounds, needs and abilities” extending an open invitation for participation to the general public is not enough to secure broad representation of public interests –the PPP must also actively target specific stakeholders, such as:

- Friends of the Library and other groups (COA, etc)
- Select Board
- Boards/Committee/Commissions, Town Departments and Staff
- Public and Private Schools
- Chamber of Commerce
- Neighborhood, Village and Civic Organizations or Associations
- Youth Groups and Organizations
- Religious Organizations
- English as a Second Language

TRUSTEE TASK: The stakeholders listed above is meant as a starting point, prompting individual reflection so that collectively the Trustees can discuss and conclude on a more comprehensive list.

Method

Once the stakeholders have been identified, the Methods cornerstone should be designed to increase not only the public’s awareness and education of the plan, but the participation opportunities being offered in order to build involvement and input capacity.

TRUSTEE TASK: Similar to the People Cornerstone, the Trustees can use the draft list below to finalize a list of desired outlets for communicating and collaboration with the participation opportunities for the public.



Awareness/Education Methods

- Websites: Establish an informational landing page on the Town’s website with links from the Library site.
- Establish Communication sign up list for updates on progress.
- Informational Boards – Town Offices, Post Offices, Grocery
- Department Newsletters – Library, COA, Recreation distribute electronic newsletters
- BourneTV broadcasts of meetings, and specific segments
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) – provide regular updates online and encourage participation.
- Press Releases
- Newspapers – Cape Cod Times and Bourne Enterprise advertisements and requests for article features.
- Flyer Distribution
- Select Board and other B/C/C Updates at mtgs (Rec, COA, etc)



Input Methods

- Open House
- Public Meetings
- Workshops Meetings
- Survey
- Focus Groups with specific Stakeholders

Evaluation

Documenting and evaluating the participation provides evidence of the plan’s journey from start to finish; it illuminates the standards applied while seeking input, and ensures results of the plan are transparent. That transparency is essential in the final decision-making moving forward, and should be used beyond when progress or identifying problem areas must be addressed to measure effective results.

Therefore, evaluation is the final cornerstone of the PPP as it secures meaningful and functional participation through documentation, and is completed in a two-step process.

Step 1) The list of questions used in the surveys and workshops, along with formatting, will need to be developed in order to successfully reveal what community needs and wants are desired for the future. In essence, these documents script consistent messaging and data collection throughout the public participation portion.

TRUSTEE TASK: Starting with the workshop worksheets, it is recommended the questions exhibit a traditional “SWOT” (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) theme. Below are preliminary examples for the Trustees to consider:

Public Workshop Participants Worksheets
<p>Question 1: What are the strengths and assets of Bourne Library? What about the Library do you value the most and want to preserve for future generations and why? Think about spaces, programs, events, or traditions that contribute to the quality of life and make the library great place to learn, grow and strengthen as a community. Consider where the Library is doing a good job having the biggest impact on the greatest number of residents.</p> <p>Comment, and why:</p>
<p>Question 2: What are the Library’s challenges today and in the future? How do they impact life in Bourne? Where could the Library serve the community better, and why? Think about all aspects including educational, environmental, and social. Consider challenges that have town-wide impact, but also those that might disproportionately affect a certain group of residents.</p> <p>Comment, and why:</p>

Question 3: What is your future vision of library services in the Town of Bourne? What are the opportunities that exist to reach that vision? What are the barriers that need to be overcome? What are your hopes for future generations of Library patrons in the Town of Bourne? Think about how you answered questions 1 and 2. Does your vision build on the Library's strengths and how? Will your vision help it meet its challenges today or in the future and how?

Comment, and why:

TRUSTEE TASK: There are two times in the process which surveys can be offered to the public, as detailed below. The Trustees will need to consider +/- merits of both opportunities, and in conjunction with staff abilities and time management.

1. The first is complementary to the workshops where similar questions within the workshop are asked but online or in printed format. Offering surveys coincided with the workshops captures input from those unable to attend the workshop. In addition to an online option, hard copies of the survey can be offered and collected at public buildings which might extend the reach of participation.
2. A second survey could be considered AFTER the first draft report has been presented to the Trustees and public for input. This allows the public to vet the results and garner community support for various goals and priorities.

Step 2) Once participation feedback and data has been collected from the surveys, workshops and public meetings, Staff will compile the data into reports for the Trustees to assess main issues and trends in order to summarize categories of focus that will begin building goals. Those goals will be the developmental basis of the final Strategic Plan.