

WNPLD Board Self-Evaluation, 2017

Review of 2016 Goals

The Board's goals from 2016 were as follows:

1. Trustee Orientation for new Board members. The ExtraNet is nearly finished. Ryan and Jo collaborated on what to include. Jo created the content and organized the structure. Librarian Amy Blanchard contributed the technology and design pieces, using WordPress to create the site.

The Board has seen the Extranet twice and will view it a final time prior to the reorganization of the Board in May. Ryan and other administrative staff are finalizing the last few documents to be added to the "About WNPL" page. Jo and Ryan are currently working on the Board Library, a bookcase of materials now located in the Board Room. Suggestions from other Trustees about what to include in the Board Library would be greatly appreciated.

2. Reach out to the Friends of the Library to discuss the Board/FOL relationship. Jo met with Diana Vickery to explore this. Prior to the meeting, Diana discussed the topic with FOL Officers and Directors. They are generally pleased with the relationship. The only change they would like to see is for all Trustees to be members of FOL.
3. Make the Executive Director's job description and the survey used to evaluate the Executive Director more congruent. Sue and Jo completed this task after the goal was identified last year. This change in the ED Evaluation documentation improved the 2016 evaluation process.
4. Board development, such as RAILS training, webinars, readings, etc. The Board made no progress on this goal.

The Board's discussion of our progress included:

1. Goals 1 and 4 were both very large, work intensive goals. Two projects of that size are too much for one year. We will take that into consideration when setting goals in the future.
2. We all lost track of the full list of goals. We brainstormed to come up with a simple method for keeping them before us throughout the year. George had the excellent suggestion of putting them on the ExtraNet. Jo will follow up on this as the ExtraNet project reaches completion. Ryan will also add this to the 12-month Forecast spreadsheet as a quarterly update to be placed on a Board agenda.

Summation of 2017 Self-Evaluation Survey

Sue took on the responsibility of doing the survey. She distributed copies at the February Committee of the Whole, instructing Trustees to return their surveys to the library. Sue calculated the scores and compiled the comments into the attached document. Six trustees responded to the survey. Six were present for the discussion: Andrea Farr Capizzi, Tom Colwell, George Kotsinis, Sue Niemi, Nancy Sheldon, and Jo Beckwith.

Overall scores were improved from 2016. All six categories were in the 90's; five of the six were above 95%.

Trustees felt that our strengths are policy work, budget work, and Board culture. Ryan's assessment of the Board's strengths were the same as the Board's.

1. Policy work - We review policies as per our Bylaws. We have improved at this over the last few years and remain up to date in that effort. Policy discussions are thorough and thoughtful.
2. Budget work – The Board is now playing a collaborative role in budget planning. The discussion and deliberation involved in the planning makes the vote on the budget easy, as we all understand how it developed from start to finish.
3. Board culture – Our Board culture continues to improve. We share mutual respect, professionalism, support, openness to new ideas, consensus building, and a commitment to work together for the betterment of the Library. We enjoy a strong relationship with Ryan which is based upon mutual trust. Given our history, the revelation of a positive Board culture is the source of a great deal of pride and happiness among the Trustees. Enjoying what we do and how we do it and who we are doing it with – that just doesn't get old.

Areas for Improvement 2017

For Individual Trustees:

A single comment from the survey provided the first individual goal: "Take a straw poll to determine Board support on an idea before the ED spends time investigating options." All Trustees agreed that this is a good idea. Jo will make this her personal goal when presiding at meetings. She asked other Trustees to remind her if she forgets.

There were two areas for all trustees as individuals:

1. Fundraising efforts: The survey question on trustee attendance at fundraising events received the lowest score. Attending fundraising events is a decision that each Trustee ultimately makes for herself or himself. There was also discussion of Board participation in the fundraising efforts of the WDC. Since this is still in the formative stages, the Board will table this idea for now. As the WDC takes shape, we will examine how best to pursue this.

2. Sharing the work outside meetings: Consensus was for everyone to play a role in doing the work that's done outside of meetings. Working to achieve our goals is part of that work.

For the Board:

1. Board development (held over from 2016). The Trustee Orientation materials on the ExtraNet provide a great introduction for new Trustees. What is the best way for the Board, both current and new members, to learn more about libraries and library trends to better inform their decision making?
2. Create a knowledge base of documentation and procedures for future Trustees. We are losing two trustees who've served more years than the rest of us combined. They take a lot of history and continuity with them. What is the best way for us to document the Board's "tribal knowledge" as a resource for future Trustees?

The Short List – WNPLD Goals for 2017

For Individuals:

1. Jo – Take a straw poll to determine Board support on an idea before the ED spends time investigating options.
2. Jo – Add Board goals to the ExtraNet.
3. Better Board attendance at fundraising events.
4. Share the work outside meetings.

For the Board:

1. Board Development.
2. Organize and document the Board's tribal knowledge.
3. For later: crystallize the Board/WDC relationship.

How will we achieve the two Board goals? We will begin with an in-depth discussion of that at the March 2017 Committee of the Whole.

Respectfully submitted,
Jo Beckwith, President
2/22/2017