

WNPL Short-Range Strategic Plan

Draft: September 17, 2021

Introduction

The WNPL Library Board of Trustees has made the decision to delay the development of our next long-range strategic plan until FY 2022-2023. In the meantime, WNPL will use this short-range plan to help us focus our time, efforts, and resources to make meaningful, positive impacts on the communities and the people we serve. This plan will help us:

1. To inspire new creative solutions and inventive approaches;
2. To drive teamwork and collaboration;
3. To engage with partners; and
4. To build excitement, interest, and awareness in the communities we serve.

Who We Are

WNPL consists of a dedicated group of library staff, trustees, and volunteers. Each of us has a unique role in providing programs and services at our physical location (224 N. O'Plaine Road, Gurnee), online, on the bookmobile, and through other outreach programs that bring library services to our diverse community.

Mission

The Warren-Newport Public Library District provides the community with access to information, kindles the imagination of children and adults, and supports lifelong learning.

Core Services

- Physical and digital collections
- Readers advisory
- Assistance with library resources and research
- Programs for children, teens, and adults
- Spaces for study, leisure, and meetings

- Computers and Internet access
- Outreach

Staff Values

These are the values that guide us.

- **Service:** We are committed to the highest level of service. Everyone who walks through our doors, enters the bookmobile, or visits us online gets excellent service from us. We give more than is expected.
- **Excellence:** We strive for excellence every day in everything we do.
- **Growth:** We are committed to improving, innovating, and growing WNPL to better serve the evolving needs of our community.
- **Family:** We believe in treating each other like family, that is, in creating a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels they are a vital part of the team and supported in their work. We help each other, unite together to deal with adversity, and celebrate our combined successes as a group.
- **Fun:** We recognize that having fun is vital for the success of WNPL, as it helps us attract and retain the best talent, increases productivity, and enhances our level of service.

Vision

Our vision is to be locally recognized as a focal point of our communities, delivering innovative learning experiences, excellent programs, and the highest level of service to our patrons.

Board Philosophy

The WNPL Board of Trustees is committed to governance that provides a foundation for the success of WNPL's mission and strategic plan. In keeping with that commitment, the Board will consider the interests of WNPL residents and stakeholders, make fiscally responsible budgetary decisions, and set thoughtful policies that are supportive of the goals set forth here.

Strategic Themes

1. WNPL must continuously **adapt** and **innovate** in order to thrive and to deliver to the community what it wants and needs, especially as these wants and needs have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. WNPL is committed to providing the highest level of service to our constantly evolving and diverse community. We will commit time and resources to better **engage** our community to ensure we are fully meeting the needs of our entire community.
3. **“Work smarter, not harder”** has been one of our mantras for years now, and we can only amplify this focus if we want to be able to provide the high level of service that our community expects with the resources we have.

Action Plan

- 1) WNPL must continuously **adapt** and **innovate** in order to thrive and to deliver to the community what it wants and needs, especially as these wants and needs have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - a. Address staffing challenges
 - i. Objective: Develop a plan by the fourth quarter of 2021 addressing the changes we need to make to better attract diverse staff and retain existing staff, which will include an examination of compensation (including minimum wage compliance), position hours, and benefits offered.
 - b. Develop a plan of action for a swift response to a resurgence of COVID
 - i. Objective: revise our current COVID-19 increase response plan to reflect the latest information and guidance from the CDC, IDPH, and the Lake County Health Department by the fourth quarter of 2021.
 - c. Successfully implement processes that will improve our efficiency.
 - i. Objective: Successfully implement Office 365 by the first quarter of 2022.
 - ii. Objective: Successfully implement an automated PO system the first quarter of 2022.

- 2) WNPL is committed to providing the highest level of service to our constantly evolving and diverse community. We will commit time and resources to better **engage** our community to ensure we are fully meeting the needs of our entire community.
- a. Complete the hiring and recruitment of a Community Engagement Specialist and work with them to develop a strategy for how to better engage both our diverse community and collaborate with our staff on how to more effectively serve our community
 - i. Objective: Hire a new Community Engagement Specialist by the fourth quarter of 2021 and have a strategy developed by the first quarter of 2022.
 - b. Collaborate and connect with partner organizations both to help us better engage our community and help us address the stress and mental health issues in our community
 - i. Objective: Establish a system to formalize and document our relationships with partner organizations in our community by the first quarter of 2022, including the person at WNPL responsible for maintaining each relationship.
 - c. Establish a committee to begin planning for our 50th anniversary celebration in 2023, which will involve a series of events that will better engage our community.
 - i. Objective: Establish the 50th anniversary celebration committee by the first quarter of 2022, and develop a roadmap for a year's worth of activities to celebrate this major milestone.
- 3) **“Work smarter, not harder”** has been one of our mantras for years now, and we can only amplify this focus if we want to be able to provide the high level of service that our community expects with the resources we have.
- a. Develop a formal system for recognizing staff members who exemplify this organizational value
 - i. Objective: Create and implement formal recognition system by the fourth quarter of 2021.

- b. Identify the communication channels staff use internally and clearly establish protocols/best practices for using these channels
 - i. Objective: Create a subcommittee to examine organizational communication and formalize communication protocols/best practices with staff by the first quarter of 2022.
- c. Create universal signage for use within library
 - i. Objective: Utilizing the existing signage audit, identify and create universal signage by the second quarter of 2022.