

Dover Plains
Library
Long Range Plan
2020 - 2024

Dover Plains Library Board of Trustees
2020

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Mission Statement

The Dover Plains Library is a center of community life, offering opportunities for people of all ages to gather, learn and grow. The mission of the Dover Plains Library is to ensure that all the residents of the Town of Dover have free and open access to information and ideas. The library encourages the love of reading and the joy of lifelong learning, and offers the assistance people need to find, evaluate, and use electronic and print information resources that help them live successful and rewarding lives.

Introduction

The Dover Plains Library Long Range Plan 2020-2024 presents the mission, values, goals and vision for the next five years of library operations. Our plan provides a framework for our future growth and the strategies to achieve them. The emphasis of the plan is on the community of the Town of Dover. The library serves all by providing access to materials and programs to accommodate individuals at every stage of their lives. The Dover Plains Library provides current recreational and educational materials in a variety of formats including books, DVDs, compact discs, books on CD, computer software and electronic resources & databases.

Town History

The early Native Americans that lived in the Dover valley were peaceful and got along well with the settlers. They were Pequots, Wampanoags, and Schaghticoke and lived within the limits of the landscape, hunting deer, squirrel, bear in the mountains, fishing the brooks and river, catching frogs and turtles in the swamps, harvesting berries, nuts, and grains in season and planting the valley floor with small areas of compatible plants such as corn, beans and squash. Some of these Native Americans were noted as early as 1635, roughly 25 years after Henry Hudson sailed up into the Hudson River.

Dutchess County was one of the original New York counties established in 1683, but it was four years before the first settlers came to live there. But despite the granting of large land patents, its growth was so slow that its government was controlled by Kingston, in Ulster County, until 1717. In 1739, the Beekman Tax List showed only 121 names; fewer than ten of those names can be absolutely associated with Dover.

Growth was slow because by the 1770s, most of the land east of the Hudson River was controlled by about 13 families. After the American Revolution, the land went to the common man. The population exploded as the wealth of the county became apparent. Geologically, diverse soils created agricultural opportunities, mineral deposits within the mountains offered iron, marble, lime, and granite while the geographic location of the Hudson provided transportation. Within Dutchess County, Dover became an important area in the growth of New York.

On February 20, 1807, a group of Dutchess County men met at the Jackson Wing house, in the Town of Dover, and officially separated 26,669 square acres from the Town of Pawling and called it Dover. One of the largest towns in Dutchess County, Dover is located in eastern Dutchess County, bordered by Connecticut on the east, Amenia and Washington on the north, Beekman and Union Vale on the west, and Pawling lies to the south.

Methodology

The following objectives and action statements have been developed based on The Dover Library Community Survey, administered in October 2019, via Survey Monkey. The responses were collected through social media and website links to the survey. The survey questions and analysis can be found in the appendices.

Objective 1 Facilitate more use of the library's virtual offerings and physical collection by the public; continue to encourage use of library's facilities.

- Upgrade to a more mobile-friendly, user-friendly version of a Wordpress site offered through MHLS when more intuitive, aesthetically pleasing & customizable options become available as they've been discussing.
- Continue to add to the website's new, front page slider and stay abreast of new potential widgets or sidebar additions.
- Based on patron feedback concerning wait times for popular eBook titles, explore purchasing an OverDrive Advantage account for an annual fee.
- Continue to use social media platforms & the website to market online offerings & databases.
- Continue to form online connections with other local entities and strengthen online support and awareness through strengthening a network of followers and gaining visibility through online reactions to social posts.
- Make sure the outside of the building is aesthetically pleasing.
- Encourage use of the community room by non-profits.
- Continue to utilize the downstairs for larger programs or cooking programs.
- Ensure that the dampness in the walls will be addressed.
- Ensure that staff maintains the proper decorum when behind the desk.

Objective 2 Establish new ongoing and try new standalone programs for all ages

- Continue developing new programs for all ages.
- Continue growing community service opportunities for High School students to help with providing more programs and services through Helping Hands and other initiatives.
- Consider hiring a part time person (10 hours) on a mostly flexible schedule just for YA/Adult programs. This person must be willing and able to travel for outreach activities.
- Continue to form alliances with community organizations to provide cooperative programming, including programs offered off-site and outside of normal business hours.
- Establish ongoing technology training programs for the public.

Objective 3 Expand community relations

- Work to normalize relations with the town's governing board.
- Play more of an active role with the school board or school committees: attend SIT group meetings for DES, WES or MS.
- Work more closely with Dutchess County Executives on Dutchess County's Path to Promise graduation initiative.
- Continue to donate to the Books for Buses Initiative.
- Continue to poll and survey the community we serve in order to make sure we're meeting community needs.
- Focus on reestablishing an adult Friends group to fundraise, organize book sales, advocate & determine other ways their efforts could help improve the functioning of the library. Continue to encourage & grow the Teen Friends group.

- Dedicate more funding to established groups who meet at the library for charitable projects that'll benefit our community. For example: a structured charity project for the knitting group that the library finances entirely.

Objective 4 Improve physical facilities

- Work with the town board to form a committee to establish a set timeframe for maintenance repairs and a firm policy for dealing with immediate library needs.
- Plan for another budget increase after debating the merits of a 259 vs. a 414.
- Reconsider current relationships with contractors and request and consider other bids.
- Eliminate unnecessary records and consolidate ownings.
- Consider the addition of a permanent structure in the backyard to replace the need for a tent.
- Consider the addition of a shared electronic sign with the Legion.

Objective 5 Provide enhanced technology for the public

- Dedicate a staff person, if not the Director, to be available to make an appointment to assist in simple tech assistance—like troubleshooting a patron's device, updating or helping to create something.
- Structured technology training for the staff so they feel comfortable assisting patrons with on-demand problems.
- Continue to update technology as appropriate—maintain an active Office 365 subscription.
- Look into transitioning from Dropbox to Office 365 for staff purposes.
- Continue to add and replace public access and staff computers and printers as needed.
- Consider purchasing a high-speed scanner.
- Consider purchasing 1-3 basic laptop computers for Technology programming.

Objective 6 Carry out library's plan with a well-trained and adequately-sized staff

- Ask that some downtime at the desk every few months be spent watching webinars with closed captioning switched on.
- Effect position and salary upgrades as appropriate.
- Consider hiring a part time person for YA programming.
- Update and maintain the library policy binder as necessary.
- Continue to maintain a library minutes binder with the extra handouts given to board members with copies made available to the public by request.
- Continue to get board approval and update all MHLS recommended essential policies as necessary; add policies unique to Dover, also as necessary.
- Continue to expect employees to uphold their employee agreements.
- Revisit policies concerning social media use on staff computers & best practices for front desk behavior as necessary.