

Phelps Community Memorial Library

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2019

EDUCATE ♦ COLLABORATE ♦ CULTIVATE ♦ GROW

THIS DOCUMENT WAS APPROVED IN ITS ENTIRETY BY THE PCML BOARD ON:

DECEMBER 2016

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

It is the intention of the Phelps Community Memorial Library to best serve their community in all of the services, programs, and materials that they offer. The Library strives to be as Community-driven as possible by listening attentively to the needs and desires of Library patrons and the community-at-large, actively seeking information from Library users and non-Library users, and fulfilling the needs and wishes of the Community to the very best of their abilities.

This document contains the goals and aspirations of the Phelps Community Memorial Library for the three year period of January 1, 2017, through December 31, 2019. These goals are based on conversations and information gathered from the Community through written and online surveys as well as Community Focus groups.

With the assistance of Ron Kirsop of Pioneer Library System, the PCML Board of Trustees began the strategic planning process at the monthly Board meeting on January 16, 2016. This process started with a conversation to brainstorm ideas about the activities that would contribute to the Strategic Plan of 2017 – 2019. Project Directors were chosen for specific tasks and a planning timeline was laid out. The PCML Board of Trustees created a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of three Board members, the Library Director, and one Library staff member.

Together with Ron Kirsop, the community was surveyed in both paper format or online, followed by two to three community focus groups. Library staff were asked to contribute their own goals and aspirations for the Library over the next three years. The Strategic Planning Committee then reviewed the data accumulated through the survey, focus groups, and interviews. A rough draft of the Strategic Plan was written by the Library Director, and this document was revised by the Board of Trustees.

The document below contains the final approved version of the Phelps Community Memorial Library's Strategic Plan, 2017-2019, approved by the PCML Board of Trustees on October 17, 2016.

For questions and concerns about the PCML Strategic Plan, 2017 – 2019, please contact the current Board President or the Library Director at 315.548.3120 or [phelpslibrarydirector @owwl.org](mailto:phelpslibrarydirector@owwl.org).

REPRESENTATIVES & CONSULTANTS

2016 Strategic Planning Committee

Briana Graham, PCML Board President
Mary Ellen Darling, PCML Board Vice President
Sally Logan, PCML Trustee
Leah Hamilton, PCML Library Director
Deb Dennis, PCML Senior Clerk and IT Specialist

2016 Survey and Focus Groups facilitated by:

Ron Kirsop, Associate Director, Pioneer Library System
Hope Decker, Library Liaison, Pioneer Library System

2016 PCML Board of Trustees:

Briana Graham, President
Mary Ellen Darling, Vice President
David Benz, Treasurer
Carol Priebe, Secretary
Christa Socha, Trustee
Craig Logan, Trustee
Sally Logan, Trustee

2016 Library Staff:

Leah Hamilton, Library Director
Debra Dennis, IT Specialist and Senior Clerk
Vicki Emerson, Children's Programming Specialist
Diane Goodman, Library Clerk and Bookkeeper
Kathryn Emerson, Custodian

The Phelps Community

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Phelps community was invited to participate in the planning process. During February and March of 2016, the Phelps Community Memorial Library conducted a survey of the community, facilitated by Ron Kirsop, Assistant Director of Pioneer Library System, and Hope Decker, Member Liaison of the Pioneer Library System.

There were 33 surveys completed, with options to fill out the survey online as well as in the traditional paper format. The survey was advertised on the Library website, Facebook, in the digital and paper newsletter, and at the Library. Paper surveys were handed out at group meetings, and Trustees were encouraged to hand deliver surveys to non-library users in the community. Those who agreed to complete the library's survey answered questions about how often they used the library, how well the library met their needs, their main reasons for their visits, what hours were most convenient for them, and what one change might be to improve the library.

Because the survey data is not a scientifically significant representation of the Town of Phelps community, the Phelps Community Memorial Library used the data to develop strategic priorities rather than as the basis for their decision-making.

SURVEY RESPONSES:

When asked to describe the Phelps Community Memorial Library in one word, those surveyed responded with the following adjectives, in order of repeated usage:

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Excellent | 7. Great | 13. Kind |
| 2. Innovative | 8. Adventurous | 14. Incredible |
| 3. Helpful | 9. Convenient | 15. Awesome |
| 4. Friendly | 10. Fabulous | 16. Inviting |
| 5. Unique | 11. Welcoming | 17. Connected |
| 6. Amazing | 12. Exciting | 18. Personable |

When asked to list the most convenient times for library visits, the surveys revealed that an average of 21% of the responses were when the Library is currently closed. The most convenient times for the community to visit the Library are, in order of preference:

1. Thursdays, from 3pm-8pm
2. Mondays, from 3pm-6pm
3. Fridays, from 3pm-6pm
4. Tuesdays, from 3pm-6pm
5. Wednesdays, from 3pm-6pm

The most convenient times for library visits when the Library is currently closed are, in order of preference:

1. Sundays, from 3pm-6pm
2. Fridays, from 6pm-8pm
3. Sundays, from 12pm-3pm
4. Saturdays, from 3pm-6pm
5. Sundays, from 9am-12pm

The main reason for library visits include:

- 50% for Books/Audiobooks
- 35% for DVDs
- 7.5% to use the library space
- 5% for Computer and/or WiFi use
- 2.5% for Program attendance

Comments specifically mentioned visits for Makerspace activities, Genealogy Club, and Adult, Teen and/or Children's programs.

As for meeting the needs of the community, 69.7% responded Extremely Well, and 30.3% responded Very Well. 97% of the respondents were Very Satisfied with the current library services, while 3% were Somewhat Satisfied. Reasons stated for positive satisfaction include amazing staff, friendly people answering questions to all ages of customers, exceptional service, and wonderful staff.

Suggested improvements to the Library include:

- Better signage in front of the building
- More advertising of events
- More personnel to assist in the Makerspace, and more staff, in general
- Additional hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings
- More square footage

Additional comments include:

- Best kept secret in Phelps & a great community resource
- A very welcoming, warm & inviting space for the community
- Something for everyone
- Incredible STEAM Lab Makerspace
- Staff is super friendly and helpful

FOCUS GROUPS

In the survey, community members were asked if they would be willing to participate in one of three Library Focus groups. Library patrons and local community leaders were also asked to participate in the focus groups. The three meeting dates were later reduced to two meetings based on response, interest, and availability.

When considering their goals, aspirations, hobbies, and interests, the attendees of the focus expressed that the following were the most important COMMUNITY services/assets:

- Small school system
- Historical societies
- Well-rounded community

When considering their goals, aspirations, hobbies, and interests, the attendees of the focus expressed that the following were the most important LIBRARY services/assets:

- The STEAM Lab Makerspace
- Library programs, in general, especially those offered by volunteers
- The influence, coordination of services, and work performed by the Library Director
- Community access to computers, internet service, and digital literacy training
- Selection of books, movies, and magazines and ability to place books on hold

The focus groups revealed the following areas for COMMUNITY growth:

- Additional outlets for children, such as art, that they cannot receive at school
- Growth and greater diversity of the business community, with new restaurants (with fresh food), coffee shops, etc.
- More active participation of businesses in the community and community events
- Acceptance of change, in general
- Increased public transportation and downtown parking
- Awareness of www.phelpsny.com so that residents know what events are going on
- Ability to pay staff of non-profits and small businesses (i.e. increased minimum wage and other costs may cause non-profits and small businesses to cease to exist)
- Phelps is unsure if it is a retirement community or a younger-aged community

The focus groups revealed the following areas for LIBRARY growth:

- Wider reaching and more targeted communication about programs, resources, and the “new” 21st century Library
- Expansion of existing library space
- Increase collaboration with local organizations
- Address the needs of those with challenged mobility (distance from parking lot and stairs at back entrance)
- Misunderstandings about the location, separate services, and roles of the Phelps Community Memorial Library vs. the Clifton Springs Library, as well as the Phelps Community Memorial Library vs. the Phelps Community Center.
- Bilingual materials

New services requested and suggestions offered by the focus groups include:

- Collaborations with and community inclusion for day cares, group homes, disabled residents and other special needs educational facilities/organizations/businesses who might be interested in using the library's meeting spaces and attending library programming, e.g. the STEAM Lab Makerspace.
- Email newsletter with calendar (*this service is has been offered since 2014*)
- Espresso machine (*this service has been offered since 2012*)
- Lecture series on a variety of topics
- Video surveillance security system (*this system has been in place since 2011*)
- Receive library funding from the Town and Village of Phelps (*the library is currently funded by both of these municipalities, as well as through the school tax levy, fundraising events, and the Library's financial investments*)
- Assist community of all ages with finding employment and writing resumes

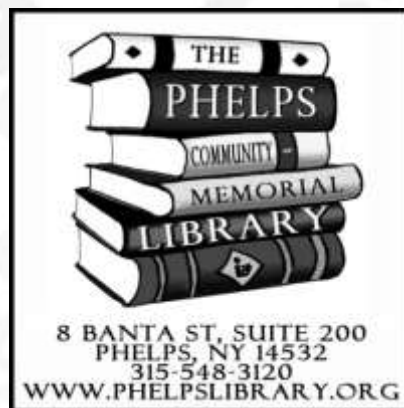
MISSION STATEMENT

The Phelps Community Memorial Library was chartered as an association library by the State of New York in 1973 to the Town of Phelps (population 7,072 as of the 2010 census). It is one of 42 libraries in the Pioneer Library System. One half of the operational monies comes from allocations from the Town, Village and School Tax Levy. The other half comes from grants, donations, memorials, investments, and fundraisers.

Our Mission:

The Phelps Community Memorial Library enriches lives, fostering lifelong learning and empowering every member of the community with a vast array of ideas and information.

GOALS & ASPIRATIONS
OF THE
PHELPS COMMUNITY MEMORIAL LIBRARY



EDUCATE

Enhance the education, knowledge, and awareness of the Phelps community through innovative programming

Project Leader: Library Director

Purpose: To provide diverse and educational library programming. To educate the community in areas that they request. To offer programs that will teach new skills leading to interesting hobbies and career success.

Measurement: The collection of success stories from individuals who benefited from education at the Phelps Library. The achievement of employment of individuals who engage in workplace literacy training at the Library.

Action Steps:

- **Invite Community Leaders to be special guest readers for Story Hour**
 - Library Staff
 - As available, quarterly
- **Educate patrons on how to better utilize OWWL.org and library databases available to the community**
 - Library Staff, Library Director
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Train Library staff in new tools and technologies so that they may better perform their work and that the knowledge might better benefit the Community**
 - Library Staff, Library Director
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Recruit talented volunteers to assist library staff with tasks such as shelving and shifting of materials, building maintenance, and programming.**
 - Library Staff, Library Director, Trustees
 - Immediate and ongoing
- **Expand the role of the Library by having a volunteer presence in local educational facilities**
 - Library Staff
 - Monthly

COLLABORATE

Increase Community Collaboration

Project Leader: Library Director

Purpose: To increase cooperation & partnerships with local groups and individuals

Measurement: Minimum of three (3) successful collaborations per year with community organizations, businesses, educational facilities, or individuals.

Action Steps:

- **Arrange meetings with appropriate groups/individuals**
 - Trustees and Library Director
 - Annually, at minimum
- **Brainstorm and re-evaluate strategy and possible collaborators**
 - Trustees, Library Director, Library Staff
 - Immediately, to be reviewed Quarterly
- **Create promotional materials to market current collaborations and programs to potential collaborators/partners**
 - Library Director (with input from program leaders and collaborators)
 - 2017; update as needed. (e.g. promotional letters to targeted group, newsletter to collaborators, digital newsletter, expanded lists of program topics targeted to specific groups)
- **Create an additional educational/meeting space in the Library**
 - Library Director and Library Staff
 - January 2017
- **Open the Phelps Community Memorial Library as a community meeting location for more groups and individuals.**
 - Library Director (with input from program leaders and collaborators)
 - Ongoing; update as needed. (e.g. promotional letters to targeted group, newsletter to collaborators, digital newsletter, expanded lists of program topics targeted to specific groups)

CULTIVATE

Provide easy and innovative access to culture of all varieties, especially in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math/Music.

Project Leader: Library Director

Purpose: To inspire creativity and curiosity within our community

Measurement: Increase in both number of programs and attendance at library programs.

Action Steps:

- **Seek out additional presenters and local artisans**
 - Library Director, Library Staff, Library Trustees
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Exhibit the works of local artists, especially those who have been inspired in the STEAM Lab Makerspace**
 - Library Director
 - January 2017, with a Monthly rotation
- **Nurture spaces for creativity and encourage local artisans to be Artists-in-Residence in the STEAM Lab Makerspace**
 - Library Director
 - Quarterly beginning 2017
- **Inspire creativity in the Children's Room through interactive play and recruit talented volunteers to be assist with new Children's programming**
 - Children's Specialist
 - January 2017 and Ongoing
- **Develop unique programming to support diverse cultural experiences and learning**
 - Library Director, Library staff
 - Immediate and ongoing

GROW

Increase library usage and local knowledge, participation, and awareness of Library programs, services, and materials

Project Leader: Library Director

Purpose: To increase community awareness of what the Library has to offer. To increase participation in library programming.

Measurement: More diverse population using library and signing up for and requesting programs. Increase in library traffic (library visits, website, social media) over the three year period, by an overall average of 3% per year.

Action Steps:

- **Increase Library hours by opening on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10am**
 - Trustees, Library Director, Library Staff
 - January 2017
- **Purchase People Counters to track foot traffic**
 - Trustees
 - January 2017, to be reviewed annually
- **Create database to compare annual web traffic, social media activity, and program attendance**
 - Library Director
 - January 2017, updated monthly and reviewed annually
- **Develop targeted promotional materials for specific populations, such as daycares, elderly, special interest groups**
 - Library Director
 - 2017, updated as needed
- **Extend home delivery of Library materials for local assisted living facilities and homebound patrons**
 - Library Staff
 - By request, beginning January 2017
- **Expand the Library outside of its physical boundaries by actively participating community events**
 - Library Staff
 - Immediate and ongoing as events are scheduled
- **Seek new and innovation methods of advertising and marketing**
 - Library Director and PR Committee
 - Immediate and ongoing

TECHNOLOGY

Project Leader: Library Director/IT Specialist

Purpose: To maintain and upgrade existing technologies and technological services following industry standards. Library users expect and demand a wider array of electronic resources and equipment. The Phelps Community Memorial Library must work to meet this demand. The library aspires to be at the forefront of library technology practices.

Measurement: Replace and upgrade obsolete technology on an ongoing basis. Monitor and record usage statistics for website, digital newsletter, computers and tablets, and makerspace technologies.

Action Steps:

- **Recognize that access to technology and the Internet is a critical service provided by libraries**
 - Board of Trustees, Library Director, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Investigate and evaluate emerging technology**
 - Board of Trustees, Library Director, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Use technology to increase library usage by advertising free WiFi access**
 - Board of Trustees, Library Director, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Use technological initiatives to build on and enhance existing library services (e.g. STEAM Lab makerspace)**
 - Board of Trustees, Library Director, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Maintain flexibility to adapt to new and changing technology to meet users' needs**
 - Library Director, IT Specialist, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Provide access to technology and development of technological skills of staff and patrons by providing training**
 - Library Director, IT Specialist
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Improve access to the Internet with Bandwidth expansion, as needed to keep pace with demand**
 - Library Director, IT Specialist
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Upgrade or increase the number of public access computers as appropriate.**
 - Library Director, IT Specialist
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Make access to technology easy and intuitive for patrons by providing support and knowledgeable customer service**

- Library Director, IT Specialist, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Add hardware, software, and services to meet user demand**
 - Library Director, IT Specialist
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Improve and maintain the Library's website on a regular basis**
 - Library Director
 - Immediate and Ongoing
- **Improve service to users with disabilities by ensuring that design and accessibility are to industry standards**
 - Library Director, IT Specialist, Library Staff
 - Immediate and Ongoing

FINANCIAL

Secure the financial future of the Phelps Community Memorial Library

Project Leader: President, PCML Board of Trustees

Purpose: To advocate for and ensure the funding to improve and increase Library materials, services, staffing, technology and programming.

Measurement: Attain increased funding annually.

Action Steps:

- **Advocate to municipalities**
 - Library Director and Board of Trustees
 - Bi-annually
- **Pursue one unique fundraiser per year**
 - Board of Trustees
 - Annually, to be completed by each December
- **Seek grant opportunities**
 - Library Director
 - Immediate and ongoing