

**WYTHE-GRAYSON REGIONAL LIBRARY
LONG RANGE PLAN, FY 2012-2017 - 2014 update**

*“Planning is the process by which intentions are clearly articulated
so that they have a chance to be realized.”*

I. Introduction

A select group of Trustees, Friends, staff and community members began the process of revisiting and reshaping WGRL’s long range plan in the fall of 2011.

The first decision was to affirm the Mission Statement and Vision Statement

Mission Statement

The mission of the Wythe-Grayson Regional Library is to provide materials and activities for the life-enriching, informational and educational needs of the individuals and institutions of Wythe and Grayson Counties and of those users in the surrounding areas who request library services.

Vision Statement

The Wythe-Grayson Regional Library serves a population of 44,505 (2013 Census estimates) citizens in the counties of Wythe and Grayson covering a geographic area of 906 square miles. As the information hubs of rural communities, the Wythe-Grayson Regional Library system is in a unique position to make a difference in the lives of the residents of Grayson, and Wythe Counties by helping them prepare them for the challenges of living in the 21st Century through the use of both traditional library services and emerging technologies.

The next decision was which methodology to use as the planning process. The method chosen was Planning for Results, a planning model specifically designed for public libraries.

Over several meetings, the service responses, objectives and goals were developed for discussion. This plan is to be submitted to the Wythe-Grayson Regional Library Board of Trustees for review and approval.

II. Methodology

Planning for Results is built on three basic assumptions:

- A. Excellence must be defined locally - it results when library services match community needs, interests and priorities.
- B. Excellence is possible for both small and large libraries - it rests more on commitment than on unlimited resources.
- C. Excellence is a moving target - even when achieved, excellence must be continually maintained.

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There are thirteen possible service responses. The Long-Range Planning Committee and Library Board decided to focus on three of these responses along with two additional, separate service responses requested for Grayson and Whitetop location plus two supplementary choices. The definitions for each response is described in the book Planning for Results and repeated below

The core responses are: Commons, Current Topics and Titles, Lifelong Learning, Genealogy and Local History (Grayson) and Information Literacy (Whitetop). The two supplementary choices are : Staff and Surprise Factor.

III. Service Responses, Goals and Objectives.

A. Commons – A library that offers this service helps address the need of people to meet and interact with others in their community and to participate in public discourse about community issues.

How? - The library may provide a variety of meeting and gathering spaces including large meeting rooms, small group meeting and study rooms and open public spaces that invite conversation and discussion.

Specifically? - Meeting rooms of various sizes / Community events bulletin board / Partner with agencies to provide community-based programming.

What resources to consider?

Staff – good working knowledge of community / good people skills / technical skills if AV equipment is used / setup and cleanup of rooms when used multiple times in day.

Collection and Information Resources – may have to be created by staff or sought out from groups.

Facilities – Meeting rooms with flexible layout and flexible hours including access after library closes, but still secure. Catering / food service staging areas. Sufficient parking enough to handle groups in addition to regular library parking needs.

Technology – Projectors, screens, adaptive technology for visually and hearing impaired to fully participate. Soundproofing to separate events from rest of library activities.

Objectives-

The staff and Board will identify areas of the libraries that are in need of improvement, repair and/or ongoing maintenance and establish and update as needed a plan and schedule for meeting these needs. The staff will continue to work towards maximizing existing facilities through effective use of furnishings, signage, color and design. This plan will incorporate state standards for lighting, signage, electrical and telecommunications insofar as can be done with

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coordination with agencies who own the physical buildings. When feasible and in coordination with the owning agencies, energy efficient methods will have priority.

At the Wythe location, a cooperative agreement with a nearby church has helped to alleviate parking needs during periods of high demand. Also, a network assessment and subsequent equipment provided by the Library of Virginia has improved internet infrastructure and speed at the two largest library branches.

Additionally, both Grayson and Wythe governments have initiated a five year capital improvement plan. As the Grayson and Wythe buildings are owned by the respective counties, many facility improvement requests were submitted for the library buildings.

Using the baseline of 2011, the number of people (of all ages) who attend programs at the library will increase 1% per year. In 2010-2011, programs were attended by 6084. In 2012-2013, programs were attended by 11,609. The year to date numbers for 2013-2014 are 4624 with the summer reading club numbers ahead. This goal is anticipated to continue to surpass the five year goals which had the highest goal number of 6394.

Using the baseline of 2011, the overall number of events sponsored by the libraries or the Friends of the Library or other community groups for users of all ages will increase by 2% per year. In 2010-2011, 299 programs were scheduled. In 2012-2013, this goal has far surpassed the five year goals which had the highest goal number of 330 as the number of events reached 690. The year to date numbers for 2013-2014 are 319 with the summer reading club numbers ahead

Select one demographic group each year and provide additional programming targeted at that group. The success of this objective will be determined by program attendance of an average of 10 people per program plus a satisfaction survey filled out by the targeted group. This goal is being addressed in the current and upcoming year with a series of programs targeted at low-income housing residents in collaboration with several community groups..

Wythe only. As the busiest branch location, quiet reflective space is challenging to provide. Wythe branch will investigate possibilities of creating a non-computer, quiet space within the existing floor plan of the library. Options are limited to pursue this goal.

B. Current Topics and Titles – A library that offers this service helps to fulfill community residents' appetite for information about popular cultural and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences.

How? - Provide a current collection with sufficient copies of high demand titles to meet requests in timely manner. Select new items primarily on basis of local demand.

Specifically? – Display materials in attractive, easy to find, timely displays / Book clubs / Author visits / Offer materials in formats and languages requested

What resources to consider?

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Staff – Is expected to keep current with new titles/ new authors and what is getting the buzz on the talk shows and best seller lists / Should frequently read, view and listen to the types of materials that users are requesting / Be able to provide strong Reader's Advisory in variety of genres and types of interests.

Collection and Information Resources – Popular demand drives this collection. Library should be a dependable source of high-demand items.

Facilities – Display shelving, display end panels, broad aisles that encourage browsing. Excellent lighting / Materials not too high or too low or too crowded.

Technology – Wise use of available online resources by staff to assist in suggesting and promoting titles.

Objectives-

Continue to purchase a diverse variety of entertainment-oriented materials in both print and non-print formats (books, audio books, DVDs, e-books). Be flexible and responsive in purchasing. Hold request ratio will drop to no more 6 requests per copy, including e-books.

Using baseline of 2011, increase circulation by 1% per year cumulatively over next 5 years of all materials. Circulation of all items at the end of 2011 was 136,885. The goals for the next five years will be 138,253; 139,635; 141,031; 142,440 and 143,864. The circulation at the end of 2013 was 150,489 which surpassed the five year goals which had the highest goal number of 143,864. The year to date numbers for 2013-2014 are 110,567 with some the highest activity yet to come.

Increase turnover rate. [Turnover rate measures the use of the library's circulating collection. It indicates the number of times each item would have circulated during the year if circulation had been spread evenly throughout the collection. In 2011, circulation was 136,885 and total number of items was 139, 223. The turnover rate was .98. State wide at the end of 2010, the average was a 2.2 turnover rate. The goals for the next five years will be to match and preferably exceed, the state average through a combination of promotion, targeted audiences and weeding. At the end of 2013, circulation was 150,489 and the number of items held were 131,860 for a turnover rate of 1.14 which shows a significant improvement since the baseline was established. As of 2014 April, circulation was 110,567 and the number of items held was 133,037 which shows a turnover rate of .83, but is reflective of 9 months out of 12.

Conduct an annual adult reading program to promote reading among adults. Evaluation will be determined by completion rate. In 2010-2011, completion rate was 65% for the summer and for the winter program. Goal over next five years will be to increase overall completion rate to 85%. This goal has not been met yet.

Maintain a regular weeding schedule. De-select 5% of all circulating collections each year over next five years. Those collections that underperform by more than 10% per year for two consecutive years will be weeded at 100%. De-select 10% of all reference collections each year and either transfer to circulating or release to Friends' book sales. With a migration change to another ILS, significant weeding occurred and will continue to occur on a regular basis.

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Create themed displays to promote materials. Displays to be changed minimum of monthly.

C. Lifelong Learning – A library that offers this service helps address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

How? - Maintain an extensive collection of circulating materials on a wide variety of topics in which the general public has a sustained interest.

Specifically? – Collections will be easily accessible and organized to encourage public browsing by subject area. The library will develop finding tools to assist users in learning about specific subjects or topics.

What resources to consider?

Staff – Have a broad-based education that prepares them to assist independent learners as they explore a wide range of topics / have a sense of curiosity and interest.

Collection and Information Resources – Emphasis is on non-fiction collection for all ages and reading levels.

Facilities – Small and individual meeting rooms would be useful for homeschoolers and tutors and for small groups or clubs.

Technology - Specialized software that encourages self-paced study.

Objectives –

The library shall have a technology plan that regularly reviews and employs emerging technologies in order to maximize library services – including a 10% per year replacement cycle of library computers for staff (2 per year). For public, internet access and printing machines may replace personal computers – replacement rate to be 4 per year. Through donations and unexpected funding, nine public computers were replaced and all remaining equipment was upgraded.

Provide and increase number of in-house and remote weekly toddler and preschool story time programs including summer and winter reading programs. Current number of programs at the end of 2011 was 253. Increase over the next five years to 258, 263, 268, 273 and 280. At the end of 2014, this goal was well on the way to being met. Overall juvenile programming was at 174 with the majority of programs aimed at preschool children.

Programs to incorporate literacy building elements and in-house programs will take place in well-maintained child friendly spaces in each branch.

Continue to purchase materials supporting literacy including board books, picture books, concept books and materials related to literacy education for parents. Increase materials budget for these groups of materials by \$100 each year over next five years. This goal is being achieved as planned.

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D. Staff Employ and support a knowledgeable, highly motivated and well-compensated staff in sufficient numbers to provide the high level of service to which the communities need and to which we are committed.

Objectives –

Library staff compensation shall be regionally competitive and comparable to that for library positions that have the same level of education, training, authority, and responsibility.

The regional library director will work with the Library Board to establish a plan for implementing a salary scale with a fringe benefit package based on data from the wages of comparable staff in Grayson and Wythe counties. Increases have been provided on a yearly basis and adjustments included to correct former imbalances of wages.

Design and implement a performance management and measurement system to insure that employees are evaluated and rewarded consistently on the basis of their effectiveness and achievements on behalf of the library. Evaluations are to be conducted yearly of all staff including Regional Director. This goal was met in 2013-2014.

Each staff member will be required to attend minimum of 16 hours of formal and/or informal training / continuing education in library related subject areas.

E. Surprise Factor - Opportunities should not be discarded simply because they do not fully fit into the previously stated service responses. When opportunities are short-term and projected to have low resource needs they should be explored. Examples from previous years include Libri Foundation grant (Whitetop Friends), Wythe-Bland Foundation (Wythe County Library) and Citgo contest (led by Grayson County)

Objectives –

Library staff, Friends and Trustees should be ever on the lookout for grants, contests, events, collections, programs and other exciting and innovative challenges that can surprise and delight the users of the library and improve collections, programs, facilities or budget.

Restrictions in pursuing said opportunities would include length of time involved, number of staff involved and costs involved including ongoing and projected costs.

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Library Director and/or staff will participate in at least two “surprise factor” events per year.

Evaluation of event will be decided by type of event. In 2013-2014, the Wythe staff began collaborating with several community agencies for a multi-focused series of nutrition and healthy eating programs targeted at low-income families

F. Local History and Genealogy – Addressing the desire to know and better understand personal or community heritage - Grayson only

How? - The library will provide and maintain a collection of materials and other resources that chronicle the history of the people community and region in which the library is located.

Specifically? - Family histories and genealogical research tools are provided. The library will provide the equipment required to read, print and copy all formats in which information is supplied. The library may maintain special collections of historical interest including photos and archival materials. The library may digitize these collections and provide computer access to them.

What resources to consider?

Staff – Develop and maintain a good knowledge of history and genealogy.

Collection and Information Resources – Resources supporting local history and genealogy often come from non-traditional sources. Due to rarity of some items and fragility of others, many items may be available or transferred to alternative storage media.

Facilities – May need specialized facilities to store rare, fragile and archival materials. Considerations include temperature and humidity controls, physical and network security.

Technology – Library currently subscribes to AncestryPlus – a specialized genealogy research database. Have dedicated Internet accessible computer for patrons to use this database. Maintain microfilm reader/printer. May need to update and/or replace scanner or other equipment for scanning / copying / digitizing materials.

Possible Objectives –

Increase number of unique people who request information by 5% each year over the next five years.

Highlight genealogy research service and library as tourist destination.

Revitalize project of collecting / describing family history and local community photos for digitization and ultimate publication on website – consult and collaborate with other local organizations to pool resources. This goal has been partially met and an existing collection of previously scanned historic photographs is now available for public viewing via the library’s webpage.

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G. Information Literacy – A library that offers this service helps address the need for skills related to finding, evaluating, and using information effectively. Whitetop only.

How? - The library will provide training and instruction in skills related to locating, evaluating and using information resources of all types. Teaching the public to find and evaluate information will be stressed over simply providing answers to questions.

Specifically? - Provide classroom space / Special programs / Provide computer laboratory / Emphasize basic library skills and bibliographic instruction.

What resources to consider?

Staff – Staff should develop and maintain a knowledge of how people seek and process information as well as skills in evaluating information resources. Staff should have excellent range of computer skills and familiarity with different types of software products. Successful teaching experience is also desirable. Assist patrons who need greater than average assistance on web based forms.

Collection and Information Resources – Entire collection in all formats could tie in to this service response.

Facilities – Computer lab for formal training or area with large number of computers for training.

Technology – Equipment to support education and training - computer projectors, whiteboards, etc.

Objectives –

Establish classes on information technology. Currently there are no classes taught at any location.

Number of unique individuals who attend and complete basic Internet class – increase by 10% per year based on number who attend first class.

The library shall provide all of the staff with training in technologies required in carrying out their job duties

Staffing levels have not allowed this goal to proceed.