

Reuben Hoar Library Littleton, MA

Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (S.O.A.R.) Analysis

November 18, 2013 (Patrons) and November 19, 2013 (Staff and Trustees)

The S.O.A.R. analysis is a tool to help planners analyze the current and future conditions which affect the library and its ability to provide the desired services. During the process the library's greatest Strengths and Opportunities are discovered and explored by the participants. Then the participants share their Aspirations and discuss their most preferred future. Then recognition and reward programs are designed to inspire employees to achieve measurable Results. (from Massachusetts Library System definition.)

The S.O.A.R. analysis was the first step in the Library's planning process. A group of Library patrons and a group of staff and trustees met separately to implement the S.O.A.R. analysis. There were significant overlaps in comments from the two groups. For the Reuben Hoar Library planning process the comments specified by each of the two groups have been combined into a single set of responses as listed below.

STRENGTHS

Staff: Friendly, welcoming, and non-judgmental; absolutely helpful

Location: Excellent in the Center of Town, near schools, Senior Center, Town Hall, Special Needs Housing

Facility: Atmosphere is welcoming and comfortable; there are three Meeting Rooms available for public use; furniture is comfortable; Library opens when there is a community need; very neat and organized; easy to use; carrels on lower level allow for quiet study

Children's Room: Librarians are well known, go beyond making children feel special; children can be loud, parents feel comfortable because the Children's Room is on a separate floor

Teen Area: Very nice; Teen Librarian is an asset; Summer Reading Program for Teens

Programming: Informational; Community Reads; Summer Reading Program (great implementation); Art Gallery; posting of programs on Library Electronic Bulletin Board

Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC): Great source of materials; Overdrive; Inter-Library Loan; Online reserves; notification when materials are coming due; residents are willing to travel to nearby libraries for needed materials

Collections: Good selection of books, music, movies, audio-books, magazines; Genealogy help two days a week with good archives; mostly up-to-date with some classics; collection is small but it is easy to get what you want from MVLC; excellent Book Lists; Readers' Library—pleasure reading mostly; access to e-Books

Resources: Notary; Endowment; Friends of the Library; outside of Town Funds; Community support

Technology: Computers and wifi available; Self checkout stations; Copy Machine

Friends of the Library: Great book sales; fund programs, Museum Passes, and other support services

Volunteers: Want to work at the Library

Web Site: New web site well liked; good information available; easier to use since redesigned; Calendar of Events allows registrations

OPPORTUNITIES

Staff: More staff; more communication with schools; reorganize Library to have staff on lower level so teens do not have access to unsupervised space

Training: On-site training for Staff and Library patrons on Overdrive, e-readers, etc.; more cross training for staff (helps make work fulfilling); funds for conference attendance

Facility: Handicapped access improvements; space for quiet study; space for 'hanging' out; better gallery space; bigger and better Meeting Rooms with more access to technology, better lighting and furniture; Books off the Floor; curtains, plants (atmosphere)

Teen Area: Better Teen Space; more teen programming; wall, partition, or book shelves for controlling sound; Desk for YA/Teen Librarian

Programming: More Book Clubs; activities for the whole family; open on Sunday; Writer Programs; Music Programs; Outdoor Programs

Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC): Staff takes advantage of training and committee work

Collections: Broader selection of movies and more independent movies on DVDs; downloadable movies; clean audio-books; more Playaways; more e-Books

Technology: Library patron computer stations improvements; one computer set up with large print capabilities, flash drives capabilities; a scanner for patron use

Partnerships: More connections with schools; work with Scouts, Lyceum, Historical Society, Council on Aging, and other Community groups expanded

Market Services: Library services can be used more effectively when the public knows what is available

ASPIRATIONS

Staff: Better training and communication about Databases; more In-house training; provide Book talks and introduce new books to all age groups

Location: "Littleton's Living Room;" Vibrant-more than a Library, a destination

Facility: Make the building more accessible; proud of the Facility—celebrate Library space with art, music, and books; have lounge space for coffee and socializing; more space for art, provide a piano in

performance space, provide a gas fireplace, maintenance budget is established

Collections: Everything is up-to-date; better organization of collections; consider switching fiction and non-fiction as non fiction requires more staff assistance; or arrange for a staff person to work in the non-fiction area

Technology: Modernize with tablets and i-Pads

Friends of the Library: Dedicated space and a small store

Develop a Marketing Plan: Improve Visibility in the Community; target age groups for Services & Communication

RESULTS

Staff: Talk to Selectmen about Maintenance Fund; Staff receive training with positive impact

Programming: Develop and provide more programs for teens and children (measure attendance)

Collections: Better organization of collections

Resources: Trustees receive a Library Maintenance Budget; receive good annual budget

Friends of the Library: More Friends; more community involvement in the Library

Marketing: Increased use of services; Meeting Rooms are over-booked; every Selectman has a Library Card; Littleton Library patrons use the Library Value Calculator to determine their own personal Library benefit; increased use of key sections of the web site (measures use); compare annual statistics to identify use trends; develop surveys to gather input; consider Trends and activities that are typical of other public libraries; develop more communication with school librarians (measure results)

MBLC Planning & Design Grant: Write, receive, and Implement Grant; identifying Facility possibilities; determine viability of expansion/construction

The S.O.A.R. analysis results will be used in the development of Goals, Objectives, and Activities for the Reuben Hoar Library 2014-2019 Plan.

Appendix: S.O.A.R. Analysis

The following are the comments from each group listed separately. This section is intended for the Library Administration and planning team as data for more detailed analysis.

Note that there are a few subjects that were addressed in only one of the two groups. It does not mean that the subject was not important to the group that did not comment, just that the group did not bring the particular subject up in the S.O.A.R. analysis. Perhaps the group thought the subject was so well known that they didn't feel it needed comments, or that the group did not feel knowledgeable about the subject. The analysis was open-ended so as to not lead the participants to specific conclusions. The intention of the interviews was unsolicited, spontaneous comments.

November 18, 2013 (Patrons)	November 19, 2013 (Staff and Trustees)
STRENGTHS	
Staff: Friendly Absolutely helpful Many are "townies" which means staff know people and what is going on	Staff: Good communication Cross Training Welcoming and non- judgmental Spread of staff ages (staff w/history of Library and Town, and staff that identifies well with young people and new trends) Know readers which informs book selection, database selection, and programming Good sense of Humor Very efficient
Location: Center of Town with sidewalks Near Middle School and Playground	Location: Near schools, Senior Center, Town Hall, Special Needs Housing
Facility: Atmosphere is welcoming and comfortable Three Meeting Rooms available for public use Furniture is comfortable Library opens when there is a community need Coffee is available Air conditioning appreciated Very neat and organized; easy to use Carrels on lower level allow for quiet study	Facility: Welcoming Three Meeting Rooms available for public use Use Town Hall for Large Library Programs
Children's Room: Community building Children can be loud, parents feel comfortable because the Children's Room is on a separate floor Self-checkout in Children's Room	Children's Room: Librarians well known, go beyond making children feel special
Teen Area: Very nice Teen Librarian Summer Reading Programs for Teens	Teen Area: *

November 18, 2013 (Patrons)	November 19, 2013 (Staff and Trustees)
STRENGTHS cont.	
Programming: Informational Community Reads Summer Reading Program (great implementation) Art Gallery	Programming: Job Seekers Posted on Electronic Bulletin Board
Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC): Great source of materials, Overdrive Notification when materials are coming due Great home access	Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC): Inter Library Loan, Online reserves Residents are willing to travel to nearby libraries for needed materials
Collections: Books, music, movies, audio-books, magazines Genealogy help two days a week with good archives Mostly up-to-date with some classics Small but it is easy to get what you want from MVLC Excellent Book Lists	Collections: Readers' Library—pleasure reading mostly e-Books
Resources: No fees for overdue materials Notary	Resources: Endowment, Friends, outside of Town Funds Community support
Technology: Computers and wifi available Self checkout stations Copy Machine	Technology: *
Friends of the Library: “Killer” Book Sale twice a year (and ongoing) Museum Passes	Friends of the Library: Great book sales, flexible in working with Library, fund programs, Museum Passes and other support services
Volunteers: *	Volunteers: Want to work at the Library Library Scholarship given annually
Web Site: New site well liked Calendar of Events allows registrations	Web Site: Good information available, easier to use since redesigned
OPPORTUNITIES	
Staff: More staff	Staff: More staff Staff attend conferences More communication with schools Reorganize Library to have staff on lower level so teens do not have access to unsupervised space

November 18, 2013 (Patrons)	November 19, 2013 (Staff and Trustees)
OPPORTUNITIES cont.	
<p>Training: For staff Computer classes on Overdrive, e-readers, etc.</p>	<p>Training: On-site training for Staff and Library patrons More cross training for staff (helps make work fulfilling) Funds provided for conference attendance</p>
<p>Facility: More small study rooms Bigger and better Meeting Rooms with more access to technology, better lighting and furniture Outdoor reading area Better gallery space Books removed from the Floor (stacks too full on lower level) Security cameras on every floor</p>	<p>Facility: Improve handicapped access Additional and Better Meeting space Space for quiet study Space for 'hanging' out Better gallery space Consider curtains, plants (atmosphere)</p>
<p>Teen Area: Better Teen Space More Teen programming</p>	<p>Teen Area: Bigger, Better space Consider shift to current Reference Area (or Magazine Area) Wall, partition, or book shelves for sound control Desk for YA/Teen Librarian</p>
<p>Programming: More Book Clubs Children's programs offered on additional days Activities for the whole family Open on Sunday Writer Programs Music Programs Outdoor Programs International Day</p>	<p>Programming: *</p>
<p>Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVL): *</p>	<p>Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVL): Staff takes advantage of training and committee work</p>
<p>Collections: Broader selection and more independent movies on DVDs Downloadable movies Way to be certain that audio-books will play More Playaways More e-Books Reinstate Mitchell's on-demand car manuals</p>	<p>Collections: *</p>

November 18, 2013 (Patrons)	November 19, 2013 (Staff and Trustees)
OPPORTUNITIES cont.	
<p>Technology: Provide more up-to-date computers Provide a scanner</p>	<p>Technology: Library patron computer stations improvements, no privacy Patrons use their laptops Scanner for patron use One computer with large print capabilities Flash drives capabilities Paper for printing</p>
<p>Partnerships: More connections with schools Work with Scouts, Lyceum, Historical Society, Council on Aging expanded Seasonal Library Cleanup Day</p>	<p>Partnerships: Communication with schools improved, include cross promotions (possible tie-in to catalogs) Develop and/or expand work with Community groups</p>
<p>Market Services: Library services can be used more effectively when the public knows what is available</p>	<p>Market Services: Library services can be used more effectively when the public knows what is available</p>
ASPIRATIONS	
<p>Staff: Provide Book talks and introduce new books to all age groups</p>	<p>Staff: More staff receives benefits Have a “ floater” staff person (someone who can fill-in in any department as needed) Better training and communication about Databases More staff meetings More In-house training More open communication with schools</p>
<p>Location: “Littleton’s Living Room” Vibrant-more than a Library A destination</p>	<p>Location: Visibility of the Library in the community Maintain near schools, Senior Center, Town Hall, Special Needs Housing</p>
<p>Facility: Proud of the Facility—celebrate Library space with art, music, and books Have lounge space for coffee and socializing More space for art Provide a piano in performance space Provide a gas fireplace Maintenance Budget is established</p>	<p>Facility: Make the building more accessible</p>
<p>Collections: Always have print books Collection is up-to-date, seen as a sign that Library will continue</p>	<p>Collections: Everything is crowded, eliminate underused reference materials</p>

November 18, 2013 (Patrons)	November 19, 2013 (Staff and Trustees)
ASPIRATIONS cont.	
Technology: Modernize with tablets and i-Pads	Technology: *
Friends of the Library: *	Friends of the Library: Dedicated space Small store
Develop a Marketing Plan: Help Library Services get used more	Develop a Marketing Plan: Improve Visibility in the Community Target age groups for Services & Communication
RESULTS	
Staff: *	Staff: Staff receive training with positive impact
Programming: Develop and provide more programs for teens and children (measure attendance)	Programming: *
Collections: *	Collections: Better organization of collections
Resources: Trustees receive a Library Maintenance Budget	Resources: Good annual budget
Friends of the Library: *	Friends of the Library: More Friends More community involvement in the Library
Marketing: Increased use of key sections of the web site (measures of use) Compare annual statistics to identify use trends Develop surveys to gather input Consider Trends and activities that other public libraries are doing Develop more communication with school librarians (measure results)	Marketing: Increased use of services Every Selectman has a Library Card Littleton Library patrons use the Library Value Calculator to determine their own personal Library benefit Meeting Rooms are over-booked Increased use of web site and newsletter
MBLC Planning & Design Grant: Receive and Implement Identify Facility possibilities Determine viability of expansion/construction	MBLC Planning & Design Grant: Write, Receive and Implement Grant Identify Facility possibilities Determine viability of expansion/construction

*Group did not comment on the subject during the S.O.A.R. analysis