

# **FOX LAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

## **Long Range Plan and Goals for 2023-2027**

Prepared by the Fox Lake Public Library Board of Trustees in collaboration  
with Library Director Erin Anders & Staff      Approved October 4, 2022

The Fox Lake Public Library is in its 115<sup>th</sup> year of service to the community. The Library provides primary service to over 1,400 residents of the City of Fox Lake and also provides service to other surrounding areas, including the Town of Fox Lake with over 2,500 residents. The current downtown Library facility was constructed in 1958. The Library is a member of the Dodge County Library Service and the Monarch Library System. The Library's lower level is home to the Harriett O'Connell Historical Collection Room which preserves historical written and photographic materials relating to the City and surrounding Townships.

Unexpected changes in Library leadership, staffing and the COVID-19 pandemic had significant impacts on the opportunities for the Library Director and Staff and the Library Board to fully target the priorities outlined in the 2018-2022 plan. Director Paula Torgeson unexpectedly passed away in March of 2018. She had been the Library Director since 2009. Erin Anders, a long time Library staff member, was hired as the Library Director in August of 2018. Anders completed Library Director classes and earned a permanent license in December 2019. The Library Board and Director Anders utilized public health guidance to develop a Library Pandemic Plan due to COVID-19. The Library curtailed in-person Library use from mid-March 2020 through mid-June 2020, while maintaining phone, curbside and on-line resources. In-person services with reduced hours began in mid-June 2020. In mid-June 2021 normal hours resumed. Library Board meetings were not held during the months of April, May and August of 2020. Board meetings that were held during the early years of the pandemic included priority discussion/action items and were made as efficient as possible which limited time for some of the tasks outlined in the 2018-2022 Plan. In the summer and fall of 2021 the Library Director and Library Board obtained written surveys to get feedback about services from children, parents and community members, and write this Five-Year Plan. This document outlines the goals for maintaining and improving Library services in the next five years.

### **Communication**

During 2018-2022 a Library Facebook page and Instagram and Twitter accounts were established. Library information was shared through flyers and posters in the Library and schools, staff attendance at school events, and with postings on the Library Facebook page and Website and the Fox Lake Chamber of Commerce Facebook page. A new outdoor sign board was obtained in 2021. A vision statement was adopted in early 2022. Branding was a focus starting in 2022.

### Goals to Improve Communication:

1. Get people into the facility (programs and events in wide range of age and interest) offer at least one program/event in each age range a month (Story Time, SRP, presentations, passive programming, etc.).
2. Utilize collections highlight different collections frequently in visual display and mentioned in media.
3. Utilize social media have at least weekly “chatter” on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter; update website frequently enough to keep it relevant; update postings on Chamber of Commerce website to keep relevant.
4. Utilize tradition “media” methods continue posters/flyers for events around town and in the schools; outdoor sign; calendar of monthly events, update outdoor sign board frequently.
5. Participate in Community events Monarch System booth at Dodge County Fair; Community Spooktacular event; events at the schools that are Library relevant; other community events.
6. Set up a newsletter annual/quarterly and/or specialty mailing to all Fox Lake zip code address; opt-in emails; if Monarch system starts the product to send e-newsletters and emails then participate as often as allowable.
7. Build relations with the schools get both of the schools’ kids into the Library and go to the schools as fitting to “normalize” the Library to the students of the area.
8. Utilize Library services that aren’t well-known have ways, like training classes or special focus days that people can learn how to use services like Monarch2Go, Hoopla, Gale Courses, Libby, Cricut Maker, etc.
9. Have regular schedule predictable timeline for events and activities that encourage lifelong learning and growth so people will not be surprised by “random” activities. (Storytime, routine programs for adults, etc.).
10. Utilize branding make use of the color scheme and logo so they are recognizable to the community that they are connected to the Library (name tags, work shirts, possible Library card redesigning to fit with the brand, all promotional material uses color scheme and/or logo as applicable.

## Programming/Library Services/Library Materials

The Fox Lake Public Library offers a large number of services. Library staff is available in-person, by phone and by email to answer questions. On-line resources and Library materials assist patrons with information about local, state and federal government and non-government resources, and how to receive assistance. Patrons have access to printing, photocopying, faxing, Wi-Fi and computers (software upgraded to Windows 10).

### Goals to Improve Programing:

1. Evaluate program suggestions for possible addition to the programming schedule per 2021 community survey and based on participation in existing programs.
2. Increase communication and marketing of programs through partnering with community groups to plan and promote a program or speaker.
3. Be consistent with programming by providing a regular schedule of events.

### Goals to Improve Services:

1. Provide outreach and homebound services.
2. Use LEAP (Polaris mobile software) at programs, community, and school events along with a small collection of materials.
3. Promote online services provided by the Library such as 1000 books before kindergarten, 500 books before middle school, Hoopla and CreativeBug website and services provided by Monarch Library Services such as the Libby app, Transparent Language and Monarch2go app.
4. Explore adding adventure passes, such as those for the Wisconsin Historical Society, zoo pass and children's museums.

### Goals to Improve Materials:

1. Expand collection as indicated by patron interest, such as large print new releases, dual language books, audio books, graphic novels, and local interest.
2. Expand the "Library of Things" to include a Seed Library and tool lending.
3. Promote intra and interlibrary loans for popular and non-owned items (Monarch Library system delivers daily, weekdays; Interlibrary Library loans (WISCAT) outside of Monarch system).

## **Library Staffing and Administration**

The Fox Lake Public Library currently has a full-time state licensed Library Director and three part-time Library Assistants to equal 1.95 full-time employees; one Assistant position includes specific functions in support of programs for children and youth and one Assistant position has specific functions in reference, research, and assist with the maintenance for media platforms. Staffing and service hours of 46 per week are adequate.

### **Goals for Staffing and Administration**

1. Review Library policies every three years considering the needs and expectations of Library staff and patrons, and in recognition of the Monarch Library System and current Wisconsin Public Library Standards to ensure expectations are met to be best of our ability and resources.
2. Make staff time available for proper training and continuing educational opportunities.

## **Capital Expenditures**

Steel siding on the east side of the building and landscaping updates were added in the last five years. The Monarch Library System offers annual group purchases of PCs, laptops and other peripheral equipment which the Library uses to keep such equipment up to date. In 2022 a new copy machine with wireless printing and fax capability was purchased.

### **Goals related to Capital Expenditures:**

1. Maintain computers for public and staff usage by budgeting for equipment to insure that the Library is utilizing current and reliable computer equipment.
2. Capital needs for improving the Library mentioned by patrons during 2021 community survey included more modern furniture, more computers, digitizing equipment, quiet reading/study/work room, space for meeting, meeting room with door, and more parking. The board and staff will continue to examine ways to improve the quality and comfort of the patron's Library experience.

## Library Facility

An unmet goal from the 2018-2022 plan was to assemble a committee of people from within the Fox Lake community to explore the options and costs associated with expanding the size of the Library, and make a report to the community with a recommendation for action. Interviews, surveys and discussions highlight the space limitations, aging lighting, lack of patron electrical device outlets, lack of meeting space, lack of comfortable and physically spaced seating, and limited parking, to name a few concerns, in the soon to be sixty-five year old facility. Recent water damage in the basement is concerning given it is the home of the Harriett O'Connell Historical Records Room. Library services are impacted by the inability to utilize the lower level because of ADA compliance. Group Library programs are conducted at the City Hall Community Room or the outdoor pavilion located there and at the Community Congregational Museum.

### Goals related to the Library Facility:

1. Form a Committee.
2. Consider costs of upgrade to current 65-year-old facility.
  - A. Space limitations
  - B. Aged lighting
  - C. Lack of electrical outlets
  - D. Lack of meeting space
  - E. Basement not ADA Compliant
  - F. Limited parking
  - G. Recent water damage
3. Consider new construction.
  - A. Consider addition to current City Hall:  
Use existing infrastructure - parking, bathrooms, and community room.  
Location is close to both schools, pool, and main highway intersection.
4. Restart major fundraising efforts.
5. Continue our vision to encourage lifelong learning and growth.