



Ocone County Public Library

2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

As accepted by the
Library Board of Trustees on
Monday, September 24, 2018.

Acknowledgements

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Special thanks to all community members who participated in the focus group meetings, and to Robert Moir, Facilitator4Hire, for facilitating the community focus group meetings.

Process

The planning process was initiated in January, 2018, by the Library Board of Trustees. The library had not had a comprehensive strategic plan that involved the community and multiple stakeholders in many years. This plan involved input from the Library Board of Trustees, the leadership and staff of the Oconee County Public Library, and community members in two different focus group sessions held at the Walhalla Main Library. In addition, many conversations were held with other stakeholders, from Oconee County Administration and staff, to County Council members, to other library directors and staff members in South Carolina, as well as the South Carolina State Library, which also provided a planning grant using Library Services and Technology Act funds.

Library leadership began formulating a “plan to plan,” and the first community planning meeting was held at the Walhalla Main Library on February 22, 2018. (See Appendix A for a list of those who attended.) Attendees were asked about their general impressions of the county, and asked to identify needs in the county. Then they were asked to determine, in their minds, which of those needs could be best met by the library.

From that meeting, library leadership and staff began determining the best responses to meet those needs. At the spring staff training day on March 30, 2018, the staff spent the day linking the needs that the community had identified to a list of service responses that the library could implement to meet those needs (taken from *Strategic Planning for Results*, by Sandra Nelson for the Public Library Association, a division of the American Library Association, 2008).

Those responses were then presented to the public at a second community planning meeting held on April 26, 2018. (See Appendix B for a list of the attendees.) The task given to attendees of this second meeting was to review the service responses the library staff identified as those which would best meet community needs. They reviewed, refined, and critiqued those responses. After that meeting, in May, 2018, a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) survey was given to the Oconee County Public Library staff to determine how the responses could be implemented, or how well the library could find resources and expertise in-house and in the community to meet those needs.

Library staff presented a draft of the plan to the Library Board of Trustees at their July 23, 2018, meeting and received additional input. The final plan, a one-page core document, was approved by the Board on September 24, 2018. It is included with this background, and will be the focal point for an ongoing effort to improve the library’s service to the community, while the library will continue to identify and refine possible programs and services, and identify ways to measure the success and outcomes of the plan.



Oconee County Public Library

2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

PRIORITY ONE: HELP RESIDENTS UNDERSTAND HOW TO FIND, USE, AND EVALUATE INFORMATION.

- Encourage new people to use the library and lapsed users to reengage with the library.
- Improve internal communication so our message to our users is consistent and accurate.
- Work to improve our brand across the board, from better staff training and emphasis on service, to new spaces and branding that communicates what the library is all about.
- Seek out opportunities to expand use of information by unserved or underserved populations.

PRIORITY TWO: HELP RESIDENTS MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS.

- Develop a series of programs using community partners to deliver information that residents can use at all stages of their lives to empower them to learn and grow.
- Expand the library's reach by seeking out new partnerships with a variety of community agencies and entities, and by strengthening and nurturing existing partnerships.

PRIORITY THREE: HELP RESIDENTS BETTER KNOW THEIR COMMUNITY.

- Provide a needed space for gathering information about a wide range of community services and features, and sharing that in a variety of media and platforms.
- Participate in a variety of community events and celebrations.
- Engage with community leaders on a regular and consistent basis so that the library has timely information about community needs and can respond quickly and appropriately.

PRIORITY FOUR: HELP RESIDENTS SATISFY CURIOSITY THROUGH LIFELONG LEARNING.

- Work with local literacy groups, schools, and other agencies to promote reading for fun.
- Build a lending library of non-traditional items for checkout.
- Continue to develop high-quality programs about a number of historical, cultural, and education topics of interest to residents.

Mission: The Oconee County Public Library provides resources and welcoming places where people of all ages can understand how to find, use, and evaluate information, make informed decisions, know their community, and satisfy curiosity.

Priority One: Help Residents Know How to Find, Use, and Evaluate Information

Where we are now	Where we want to go	Projected timeline/staff involved
<p>OCPL has a staff of dedicated, caring individuals that are talented and are competent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish more regular training on technology, and on each staff member’s job function • Hold training at regular intervals, instead of just at the beginning of a staff member’s employment and at semi-annual staff retreats • Establish a manual for each position in the OCPL system 	<p>Spring, 2019 Branch managers will assist in creating training on technology, communications, time management, and staff relationships. Branch Services Librarian will coordinate and organize the training on a system-wide basis. Staff members will also start writing a manual of their position.</p>
<p>Some staff members feel left out of the loop, and communication across the system is sometimes difficult. Staff members at different branches don’t always feel like they know what is happening.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Slack or another communications tool for more instant communications (besides just email) • Hold bi-weekly staff meetings at each branch • Establish some sort of system-wide newsletter • Establish mentoring program 	<p>Spring/summer, 2019 Slack or another tool will be set up for managers to communicate on their own “Channel,” branch managers will set a time and place for staff meetings at their branches, the Director or their designee will come up with a newsletter for the library system. Branch Services Librarian and Director will set up regular branch visits to assist and support branch managers. Director and managers/librarians will set up a system of cross training for all staff.</p>
<p>The library has a basic Spanish language collection and limited outreach to a growing population of Hispanic users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of Spanish language materials in all formats, including e-books and e-audio books • Have programs led by Hispanic volunteers • Have classes in Spanish as well as ESL classes at the library • Find volunteers to serve as reading mentors or coaches • Library will also explore 	<p>Ongoing for collection development; By summer, 2019 for programming and for classes Volunteer Administrator will recruit and train volunteers to assist Branch managers and those who order materials will increase the number and quality of Spanish language materials; Youth Services Librarian will coordinate with School District of Oconee County</p>

	<p>other languages in which to expand services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand services to include citizenship classes, maybe book clubs and other programs 	for literacy and reading coaches
The library has website, social media, and calendar to promote programs and events; and has basic signage at libraries to assist patrons with using certain services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create LibGuides and short videos for patrons to show them how to use the library, access library services, and use the public access catalog and library databases Improved signage in the libraries so that branches look uniform 	Fall, 2019 Technical Services Librarian, Branch Services Librarian, and branch managers will create content to be used with OCPL website (LibGuides) Director and other staff will establish guidelines for brand, signage, style guide for social media, print media, etc.

Priority 2: Help Residents Make Informed Decisions

Where we are now	Where we want to go	Projected timeline/staff involved
The library offers basic classes on computing, other handheld devices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with SCWorks to offer basic computing classes, resume building workshops, Interview 101 classes Offer classes on Chrome and cloud computing 	Spring/summer 2019 Branch managers will schedule classes; branch managers or their designees will be trained on Chrome and on Chromebooks.
The library offers occasional classes and programs with cultural or historical themes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with local businesses and Extension service for Adulting 101 classes Partnerships with local businesses for classes on investing, retirement, and job changing Resume having VITA volunteers for yearly tax prep assistance 	Ongoing; Director, Branch Services Librarian, Youth Services Librarian, and branch managers will reach out to community partners for classes
The library occasionally does outreach to local organizations; staff participates in some community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have staff that feel comfortable making presentations about what the library can offer on a specific topic about life skills, life events, etc., make such presentations to United Way, hospital, 	Ongoing—starting spring, 2019 All full time staff

	senior centers, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library has parenting programs about literacy, coping skills, etc. 	
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Priority 3: Help Residents Better Know Their Community

Where we are now	Where we want to go	Projected timeline/staff involved
Library has some community information in the form of pamphlets, bulletin boards for flyers, and a community page on the web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library connects with community organizations and creates informational guides, FAQs from patrons, and cross promotes other cultural and heritage organizations Library has presence at community events, like Oktoberfest, Apple Festival, Jazz on the Alley Find ways to get partnerships and even sponsorships from local businesses for events and promotions Provide open house for County employees, County Council, and others to allow them to see the impact the library can have 	Ongoing, starting fall, 2018 Managers and leadership; Need training on Website and LibGuide creation Need flexible scheduling to allow for staff to be at off-site events without exceeding allotted hours

Priority 4: Help Residents Satisfy Curiosity Through Lifelong Learning

Where we are now	Where we want to go	Projected timeline/staff involved
Library holds a variety of programs and classes on computing; has book clubs and occasional speakers on historical and cultural topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library connects with other partners like the Extension Service or OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) to provide programs and classes on variety of topics Library has “non-traditional” items to borrow, such as cake pans, fishing equipment, or other items Library develops 	Ongoing, starting fall, 2018 Volunteer Administrator; all staff

	<p>relationships with those who represent underserved populations, and offers programs, services, and events geared to those communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with local Humane Society and other animal advocates to make reading to animals a regular event, instead of just a Summer Reading program 	
<p>Library partners with School District of Oconee County for literacy nights; Library has representative on First Steps board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library develops more for homeschool groups, like bundles and learning kits that can be borrowed • Library develops system of classification that assists parents in finding age/reading level appropriate resources in the library • Library seeks grants and other resources to assist with literacy • Library seeks to become go-to resource for parents, along with schools, for literacy and reading 	<p>Ongoing, starting fall, 2018 Youth Services Librarian; YS assistant All staff assist with reclassification of materials, grant seeking and writing, and staffing book clubs, teen events, and outreach to underserved populations</p>

Core Values

Accessibility: OCPL will strive to promote and provide open access to all our facilities, information, resources, and services.

Partnerships and Community Engagement: We pursue strategic partnerships alliances, and collaborations that support outreach to our community.

Reading, Literacy, and Lifelong Learning: We encourage and support the development of literacy at every age level and support reading for information and enjoyment. We support learning as a lifelong activity and see our role as helping to create an educated community.

Stewardship: We are trusted, responsible managers of the funds provided by our community.

Appendix A

Attendees of community planning meeting on February 22, 2018

1. Liz Kuemmerer, Wild Hearts Equine Therapy Center
2. Lisa Martin, OCPL Board Member
3. Jean Mercer, Friends of the Library President
4. Dan Polk, Salem Branch Manager
5. Tara Weekes, Clemson University Libraries
6. Danny Day, Public Defender
7. Alisa Suddeth, OCPL Board Chair
8. Evie Hughes, Walhalla Chamber
9. Si Bischof, SC Works
10. Sharon DeRidder, Oconee County Grants Manager
11. Leah Price, Westminster Branch Manager
12. Maria Jacobson, OCPL Board Member
13. Leslie Hagerty, Oconee Heritage Center
14. Judy Roth, Friends of the Library
15. Caren von Hippel, Baby Read
16. Helen Rosemund Saunders, Blue Ridge Community Center, Retreat Rosenwald School
17. Tony Adams, Fair-Oak Youth Center
18. Charity Walker, SC DHEC
19. Leah Walker
20. Malcolm Walker
21. Lendwood Walker
22. Scuddy Walker, self-employed
23. Quientell Walker, Walhalla Branch Manager
24. Francoise Fussell
25. Larry Fussell

26. Allison Griffin Addison, OCPL Board Member
27. Emily Whitmire, Seneca Branch Manager
28. Bill Caster, OCPL Board Member
29. Sue Andrus, Branch Services Librarian
30. Robena Barton, Technical Services Librarian
31. Blair Hinson, Library Director

Appendix B

Attendees of second community planning meeting on April 26, 2018

1. Sharon DeRidder, Oconee County Grants Manager
2. Alisa Suddeth, OCPL Board Chair
3. Leah Price, Westminster Branch Manager
4. Leslie White, Oconee Heritage Center
5. Maria Jacobson, OCPL Board Member
6. Jaelyn Flores
7. Quientell Walker, Walhalla Branch Manager
8. Donna Wales, Childrens and Youth Services Librarian
9. Nivia Miranda, James M Brown Elementary
10. Allison Griffin Addison, OCPL Board Member
11. Olivia Timms, Blue Ridge Elementary
12. Bill Caster, OCPL Board Member
13. Sue Andrus, Branch Services Librarian
14. Dan Polk, Salem Branch Manager
15. Sarai Melendez, Greenville Hospital System
16. Blair Hinson, Library Director