



JPA Governing Board

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Kevin Bryant, Woodside

**San Mateo County Library Joint Powers Authority
Meeting Agenda**

April 29, 2024, 8:30 a.m.

Millbrae Library, 1 Library Avenue, Millbrae

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| I. Call to Order | Action |
| II. Public Comments | Information |
| III. Introductions | Information |
| IV. Strategic Plan Update and Discussion | Information |
| V. Adjournment and Tour of Millbrae Makerspace | Information |

2024 Governing Board Meetings: May 20, June 17, September 16, November 4

2024 Operations Committee Meetings: May 14, June 11, September 10, October 29

ADA Accommodation Requests: Individuals who require special assistance or a disability-related accommodation to participate in this meeting may contact Priscilla Bermudez before 8:00 a.m. the day of the meeting by sending an email to bermudez@smcl.org.

Members of the public may email written public comments in advance of the meeting to bermudez@smcl.org. The Board will make reasonable efforts to read into the record all emails received before the meeting. All emailed written comments, regardless of when received, will be included in the administrative record.



To: JPA Governing Board
From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director of Library Services
Carine Risley, Deputy Director of Library Services
Date: April 23, 2024
Meeting: April 29, 2024
Re: Strategic Planning Update and Work Session

Background

On September 14, 2015, the Library JPA Governing Board approved San Mateo County Libraries' 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. In FY 2020-21, the Governing Board approved an initiative to develop a new strategic plan to replace the current plan which was set to expire in 2020. On February 8, 2021, the Governing Board accepted staff's recommendation to extend the current strategic plan to 2025 due to COVID-19 and the difficulty of community engagement efforts.

On June 12, 2023, the Governing Board once again approved work to develop a new strategic plan. The current budget approved by the JPA Governing Board included the following priority:

Engage community members and develop a new strategic plan to guide our work and ensure we address and reflect the diversity and needs of our residents.

We have embarked on a robust strategic planning process to replace the current plan. Our libraries, like our communities, have undergone transformations. The opportunity to take time to explore needs and wants in our communities is valued and a crucial source of input to effectively shape the evolution of San Mateo County Libraries. This is an exciting time to reflect, be inspired, and map our collective future.

Discussion

In partnership with library leadership, InterEthnica has been hard at work engaging our stakeholders and communities. The San Mateo County Libraries Strategic Planning Process is a pioneering endeavor to adapt and define library services through the lens of equity, inclusivity, and community engagement. Our approach is grounded in the importance of understanding the communities in our service area, equitable and inclusive engagement with stakeholders, and ensuring that everyone's voice — both internal and external — plays a pivotal role in shaping the library's future.

We are excited to share the work completed to date:

Comprehensive Analytical Research and Discovery

This phase focused on conducting a thorough research and discovery process. We updated our demographic analysis to help identify gaps in reach and generate key insights to current and emerging trends in library service, science, technology, and community interests. Public library trends were analyzed to serve as a picture of opportunities to strengthen current library work or expand thinking into new areas.

Varied and Customized Stakeholder Engagement

In this phase, we have engaged with library staff, devoted supporters, and the JPA Governing Board and Operations Committee through interviews and workshops. Internal stakeholder engagement has been varied and customized to individual groups.

InterEthnica has led engagements with the JPA Operations Committee and Governing Board as well as our Foundation and Friends of the Library Presidents. Multiple small group discussions and workshops have been held with key staff groups where the focus has been on what is working well, what could be better, and what, ultimately, should be prioritized in the Strategic Plan. These small group discussion participants are helping us focus in on the core of what should be included in the Strategic Plan by discussing service gaps, recent patron changes, and goals for San Mateo County Libraries. A thought-provoking session at a San Mateo County Libraries leadership retreat also generated crucial observations and inputs into this process.

Individual interviews have been conducted to engage staff representing different roles, experience, and perspectives to deepen and add nuance to the picture of who we are and how our experiences with the public might inform our future thinking. Our staff have been able to share everything from personal experiences to ingenious ideas regarding the Library's programs and protocols. All staff have been encouraged to provide input into this process by completing survey worksheets and contributing to site-specific group vision boards that urged participants to think boldly into the future and contribute their recommendations.

Extensive, Inclusive, and Multicultural Community Engagement

We are currently immersed in the work of deeply and thoughtfully engaging the public in this process. On March 22, we launched a targeted public community survey designed by InterEthnica to begin community interviews. Community engagement is being gathered in three modes: in-person via street surveys, online out in the community, and in-person at libraries with a goal to include feedback of 3,500 community members.

Staff have placed emphasis on engaging far-ranging members of our communities in street interviews. These in-depth documented conversations, which take approximately 20 minutes each, have occurred throughout our service area in English, Spanish and Chinese. Sample locations have included laundromats, food distribution sites, places of worship, and diverse businesses and groceries such as India Cash and Carry, Cardenas, Grocery Outlet, Dollar Tree, and Chavez Supermarkets.

In addition to these efforts, we have been engaging the community through surveys both out in our communities and inside our libraries. Partners like Housing Authority and our local school districts and senior centers have been helping us engage participants outside of our libraries. Inside our spaces, staff have been gathering the input of a diverse cross-section of library users—from desktop computer users to literacy learners to teenagers and families.

We are now beginning to evaluate our response patterns and additional demographic considerations. The result of that evaluation will be leveraged to plan our upcoming, additional community engagement methods with input and guidance from the Governing Board and Operations Committee members. The goal of the remaining community engagement is to ensure that populations underrepresented in current library users and broad-based public workshops and surveys have an opportunity to provide their feedback. This will ensure inclusive participation from diverse segments.

In partnership with JPA members, we will also review the remaining engagements that include community leader interviews and focus groups with community members. We'll work together to identify who we'd like to reach and what key questions or topics we would like to learn about.

Final steps in the completion of the Strategic Plan process include:

Socializing Findings and Strategic Plan Draft Development

This includes collaborating with project staff to recommend adaptations to the mission and vision statements and workshop strategies based on the input from previous phases. Analysis of insights and data collection will be completed to initially draft a plan. Based on the insights and data collected, we will develop a comprehensive San Mateo County Libraries strategic plan, aligning with the identified needs and aspirations of the community and staff.

Collaborative Refinement and Final Plan Presentation

This involves refining the strategic plan through collaborative feedback from library stakeholders, ensuring the plan's relevance and effectiveness, and building buy-in for the final plan. Finally, we will formally present the completed strategic plan to the JPA Governing Board and other key stakeholders, showcasing the culmination of our collaborative efforts.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this information only item.

Recommendation

No action is needed on this information only item.