
**FRIENDS OF THE
JOSEPH T. SIMPSON
PUBLIC LIBRARY
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR
2019-2021**

**Adopted on September 9, 2019 by the Friends of the
Joseph T. Simpson Public Library Board of Directors.**

About the Friends of the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library

Mission:

The Friends of the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library will enhance the resources and services of the library through fundraising, advocacy, education, and community outreach.

Vision:

A thriving and sustainable library that is accessible to all.

Core Values: The Friends of the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library Board of Directors adheres to the following values, in alignment with the Board of Trustees:

1. Lifelong learning - Providing comprehensive services, programs, and collections that encourage educational and intellectual development throughout people's lives and providing opportunities for discovery in settings that are stimulating and engaging in support of literacy and lifelong learning.
2. Community – Providing a welcoming environment for people and groups to gather and interact with others and experience learning opportunities.
3. Service – Providing and delivering excellent service to all by staff who are friendly, knowledgeable, helpful and approachable.
4. Access – Providing access to a wide range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners who are informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Goals:

For 2019 through 2021, the Friends of the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library will focus on the following five goal areas:

1. Board Development
2. Fundraising
3. Membership Recruitment and Retention
4. Public Relations and Marketing
5. Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

Goal Area #1: Board Development

Strategy #1: Recruit and develop well-informed, enthusiastic, and productive leaders to guide the direction of the Friends of the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library.

Action Steps:

- Create and maintain a board development matrix to assist with board recruitment. Along with the matrix, conduct an annual needs assessment regarding the types of skills needed on the Friends Board.
- Develop a succession plan for board officers.
- Maintain updated recruitment materials at all times to provide to potential board members.
- Educate Friends board and potential Friends board members on the requirements and expectations for board service. This includes personal financial support, committee participation, fundraising duties, attendance at board and committee meetings and Friends of the Library events.

- Expand board committees to include more non-board members so that new people can be considered for future board positions and future Friends of the Library leadership positions. Committee chairs should utilize the volunteer list that is kept updated by the volunteer recruitment committee.
- Actively recruit potential board members throughout the year. Consider diversification on the board in regard to gender, age, race, and municipality of residence.

Strategy #2: Provide educational opportunities for Friends board members to learn about the Simpson Public Library and public libraries, in general.

Action Steps:

- Encourage members of the Friends Board to attend continuing education opportunities related to public libraries and Friends groups, such as the Friends Institute.
- Continue to support and participate in the Friends Board and Library staff breakfast and dinner events annually.
- Continue membership in United for Libraries and the Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries groups. Identify funding streams to support these memberships.

Strategy #3: Explore best practices related to non-profit boards and Friends Groups for ideas to enhance the effectiveness of the Friends board.

Action Steps:

- Conduct a strategic plan review at the Friends annual meeting each November.
- Contact Friends groups from other libraries for operational and fundraising information.
- Explore web sites of Friends of Libraries organizations for new ideas.

- Continue participation in the United for Libraries listserv and/or review United for Libraries website and newsletter periodically for new ideas.

Goal Area #2: Fundraising - Sponsor a variety of fundraising activities to support the library.

Strategy #1: Maintain and expand the Friends of the Library Book Sale events.

Action Items:

- Review contract and begin exploring new locations or contingency plans on an annual basis.
- Continue sponsoring book sales and explore new avenues of generating revenue related to the book sales.
- Explore the practice of selling selected books on the Internet or other venues.
- Continue the Members Only Preview Nights prior to each book sale.
- Develop job descriptions which include physical requirements for book sale volunteers and minimum time commitment required.
- Create and maintain a handbook of operations for the book sale committee which documents in detail all aspects of the book sales.
- Continue to offer a gift certificate that people could purchase to utilize at the ongoing Mini Book sale. Assess the effectiveness of this on a semi-annual basis.
- Continue to publicize the book sale through print and electronic methods.
- Leverage digital media space to increase the number of new members that attend the Book Sale.

Strategy #2: Maintain and grow the annual Online Auction.

Action Items:

- Continue to solicit donated items to auction from individuals and businesses.
- Collaborate with Board of Trustees to effectively execute the online auction event.
- Increase fundraising revenue from Online Auction year over year.
- Secure financial sponsorships to cover the expenses of hosting the auction.

Strategy #3: Investigate and explore new fundraising ventures to diversify our revenue base.

Action Items:

- Support the Fundraising Committee in identifying potential new major fundraising events, with a goal of \$10,000.

Goal Area #3: Membership

Strategy #1: Recruit and retain enthusiastic and productive members to the Friends Board and explore new ideas for membership recruitment and retention.

Action Items

1. Periodically review membership dues and membership benefits.
2. Survey current Friends members about their membership in the Friends of the Library to gauge their thoughts on value. Assess and analyze survey results to identify needed changes.
3. Create a gift certificate for an annual Friends membership that people could purchase to give as a gift to others.
4. Continue to conduct membership drives targeting nonmembers from a specific geographic area or a specific category (such as card holders, etc.).
5. Continue to provide membership forms at all Friends sponsored events held both off-site and in the library.

Goal Area #4: Public Relations and Marketing

Strategy #1: Increase community awareness of the Friends of the Library.

Action Items:

- Create and annually review a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) flyer.
- Continue to support and/or explore new opportunities for community outreach efforts such as municipal community days, Summer Learning Kickoff, and the Wildcat Foundation Festival.
- Evaluate and assess current outreach efforts and specials events.
- Review and update all marketing materials that promote the Friends of the Library and their activities to publicize events, to increase membership, and to increase member participation in these events.
- Maintain media contact information and develop a timeline to publicize Friends events.
- Explore other technology / social media options for increasing community awareness of the Friends.
- Send press releases to major local media outlets for every major fundraising event.

Goal Area # 5: Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

Strategy #1: Recruit and retain enthusiastic and productive volunteers to assist with Friends' events.

Action Items:

- Seek opportunities to expand the pool of volunteers willing to help the Friends of the Library.
- Develop a diverse pool of volunteers of varying ages, from various municipalities, and with different skills to provide the broadest possible range of talents to help the Friends of the Library.
- Create and maintain a volunteer interest list and share with committee chairs.
- Explore ways to utilize more volunteers.

Strategy #2: Assess volunteer and customer satisfaction levels through feedback obtained after each Friends' event.

Action Items:

- Solicit feedback from volunteers on their experience helping with a Friends' event and forward feedback to the appropriate committee for use in planning the next event.