

## Preparing for Our Future

### Strategic Planning Goals 2016-2020

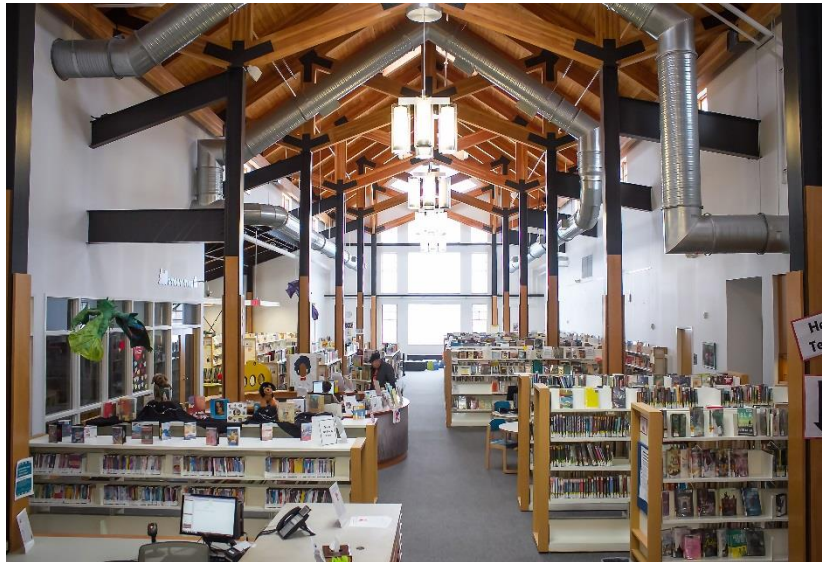


#### Our Mission

Our mission is to be a unique resource offering open access to information that fosters a passion for reading, learning, and the exchange of ideas. As the heart of our community, we support democracy, citizenship, and the cultural growth of the Sugar Grove Public Library District.

#### Our Structure

The Board of Trustees is composed of seven elected members serving in the valuable role of stewardship and governance to the Sugar Grove Public Library District. Key functions of the Board include advocacy, policy governance, fiscal responsibility and oversight, and comprehensive stewardship of the facility to ensure needs are met. Board members serve with no compensation and graciously donate time and attention to serve the needs of patrons.



The Board hires and works in conjunction with the Library Director to serve the needs of Sugar Grove residents. The role of the Library Director is to faithfully serve in the main leadership role in the library. Typical duties include preparing and overseeing the budget, developing employment and service policies, strategic planning, public and governmental relations, reporting to the governing board or official, ensuring compliance with laws, fundraising, hiring, motivating and directing staff, and more.

A qualified staff is essential to the success of Library operations. Staff report to the Library Director, and work comprehensively to implement a strategic plan, develop a collection, serve the reference and resource needs of the community while utilizing talents to bring cultural programming to the community.

## History

The Sugar Grove Public Library began in 1962 with a donation of slightly under 500 books, and became a public tax supported institution in 1963. The first fully operational Library opened in 1980 in a 6,600 square foot facility. Due to a growing population and the need for space, updated facilities, emerging technology and desires for programming and civic space, voters voted YES for a new facility which opened in the current location at 125 South Municipal Drive in 2009.



The Library was previously housed in the current Township building and briefly in the Community House.

The current 5+ acres of land for the Library was purchased for well below market value after free land offers were rescinded by Neuman Homes as the developer terminated the projected Promenade project. A generous local benefactor offered free land, however this land was unimproved (water, sewer, electric) and in a location that would have been challenging. It was determined that it would actually cost more to take free land than purchased developed land at a discounted price and in a location that would situate the Library by developing neighborhoods and other municipal services.

As local neighborhoods continue to grow, the destination has proved a success as the local elementary school is in close proximity and families are easily able to walk and bike to the Library. The continued growth of Sugar Grove provides an influx of new residents eager to bring their families to the Library.

## Who We Serve

The Sugar Grove Public Library District serves the geographic area of approximately 40 miles located within Kane County and covering parts of the Sugar Grove and Blackberry Township. The majority of the Library

## LEADERSHIP

### Board of Trustees

Anthony Oliver, *President*  
Bill Durrenberger, *Vice-President*  
Pat Graceffa, *Secretary*  
Debbie DeBoer, *Treasurer*  
Kim Ekker, *Trustee*  
Robert Bergman, *Trustee*  
Vivian Santos-Buch, *Trustee*

### Administration

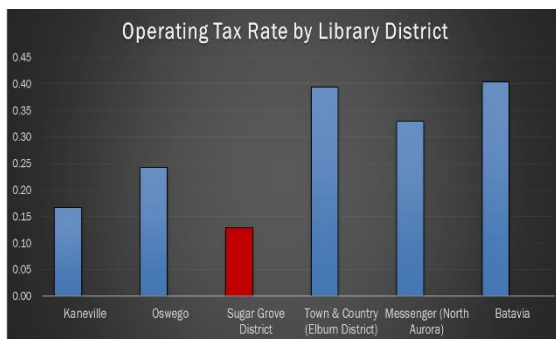
Shannon Halikias, *Library Director*  
Genna Mickey, *Adult Dept. Manager*  
Aimee Marx, *Youth Dept. Manager*  
Mary Clapp, *Tech Services Manager*  
Wayne Lindquist, *IT Manager*  
Scott Noblitt, *Circulation Supervisor*

The Library is a District, receiving no supplemental funding from the Village. It is responsible for following all applicable state and industry standards and laws, and provides data to the Secretary of State while following Administrative Codes.

resident's resident within the Village of Sugar Grove, and other residents live within several distinct local areas that may include unincorporated Sugar Grove, unincorporated Aurora, Prestbery and Sugar Grove residents living in the town of Montgomery.

### Our Strengths and Challenges

The Sugar Grove Library continues to grow the collection and work to provide services and programming despite limited resources. As the Library is a District, it is responsible for all oversight and financial stewardship. While voters voted YES for a new building, and currently about 52% of what we levy for goes to pay for the building, voters have said NO for a limiting rate increase 14 times in a row. Essentially the Library functions with the same operational budget it had as a tiny facility – and has had no more than the CPI increase throughout all these years. The Library is a tax capped institution, and is not supplemented by any Village funds. The recent TIF that was passed in the community handicaps the opportunity for the growth of commercial revenue – a critical immediate need for an underfunded institution.



The limiting rate (operating tax rate) in Sugar Grove Public Library District is much lower when compared to libraries in neighboring communities.

As a result the Library has limited resources to grow the collection, provide for programming or consistently maintain a professional staff. All 13 staff members work less than a full time schedule and receive no pension, insurance, or other benefits considered standard, and has concerns about livable wages for staff. As such, the Library has a high turnover rate though staff members and experiences fluctuations.

Additional impacts include limited hours for the Library in order to control costs and run the facility on a skeleton crew. All beautification efforts, supplemental landscaping, and even shelving the books are done solely by dedicated volunteers. Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers, Friends, and community service efforts the Library is making forward progress.

Our challenges are offset by the strengths of the institution that continue to grow as the Library has begun to thrive in the new facility. Staff that have been hired and maintained feel passionately about Librarianship, positive service to patrons and are leaning into the challenge of doing the most possible for our patrons with the existing resources. Ongoing affirmation to be as positive as possible and provide a “friendly touch” to all of our patrons makes the Library a lovely place to visit.

Our collection has continued to grow through the additional efforts of applying for and receiving supplemental grants for materials and accepting quality donations. Through a generous anonymous donation of \$5,000, adult program was resuscitated in 2015-16 and additional programs were made possible for Youth. The

Library established a P.A.C.T. fund (Programs and Community Together), setting up a dedicated fund to which patrons can contribute. Donations, contributions, and grants are critical for ongoing support.

Programming expanded in FY 15-16 to include a variety of culturally enriching activities including book/film/writing/knitting clubs, and a host of youth programs delighted the community. Circulation increased a significant amount as well as patron traffic. Due to strict budget controls the Library was able to provide a few much needed repairs such as a parking lot refurbishment and technology additions.

Our Library shares resources with 15 other Libraries in order to bring patrons a rich array of resources, and items may readily be obtained throughout the state. Usage of digital materials continues to expand and the website enables materials as well as databases to be used 24/7. The technology lab is well used, and programs are consistently full. Circulation rates and patron usage continue to grow as we move forward into the next steps for the Library. Ultimately we are all well loved by our patrons and have a consistently high level of satisfaction with residents.

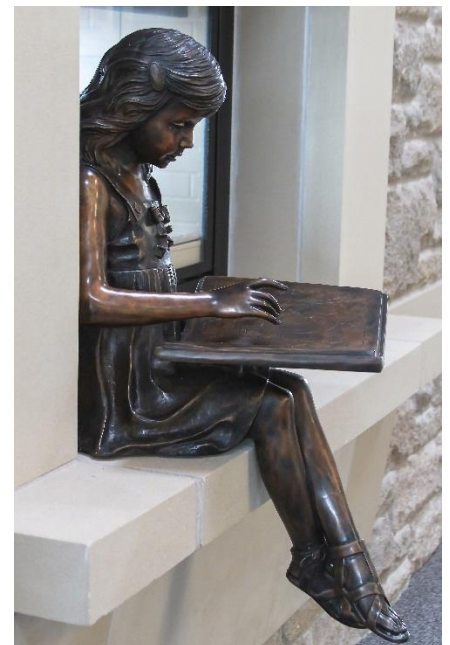
### **Strategic Planning**

Due to the limited resources of the Library, strategic planning is necessary to determine goals, and if needed be used as a tool to make decisions about expanding or limiting resources and services. A plan helps provide a framework of priorities determined by the community and Board, and implemented by the Administration and staff.

In order to formulate a plan two focus group sessions were held with community members. This allowed an open opportunity for residents to express what they thought was critical to maintain, desired improvements and comprehensively provide direction to the Library. A public survey was conducted with over 200 patrons responding to questions about technology, facility, collection, financials, and staffing. The Board and administration reviewed all of the results and held a strategic planning session with a consultant to conduct a SWOT analysis and streamline results into a 5 point system of goals. The Board worked to provide clear-cut goals and a vision that the Administration will work to implement over the next four years.

#### **A Few Facts**

- Service area is 15,761 patrons
- 13 Staff Members - Open 6 days per week
- 57.3% of service area holds Library Cards (June, 16)
- Over 110,000 checkouts each year
- 7,267 patrons served through programs in FY 15-16
- 21.4% increase in materials usage this year
- Over 66,000 patrons reached through social media
- FY 15-16 Working Budget: \$1,291,276
- FY 15-16 Bond Payment: \$656,460
- FY 15-16 Operating Expenses: \$634,819
- FY 14-15 Audit showed revenue/expenditures within \$170.00 of each other.



## **Goal 1: Enhancement of Library programming, resources and services**

### **A. Strengthen Adult Programming**

1. Provide technology instruction to promote digital literacy and access to Library content.
2. Hone focus of program planning to identify on community wants and needs.
3. Expand and effectively market teen and tween programming.

### **B. Focus on Collection (digital and paper)**

1. Increase collection growth in the Adult Department; target weak areas of the collection to match patron needs. Use specific methodology to assess the current collection and direct purchasing.
2. Aggressively market the shared catalog and Interlibrary Loan services to encourage resource sharing to provide a rich range of materials to patrons.
3. Identify the curriculum needs of local educational institutions and develop the non-fiction collection to better serve students.

### **C. Provide ongoing support for a dedicated Youth Department**

1. Energize youth programs to support the educational, learning and cultural needs of children and families.
2. Provide collection support for underdeveloped areas.
3. Develop an organized network for regular outreach as feasible with limited staffing.
4. Identify the curriculum needs of local educational institutions and develop the collection to better serve youth students.

## **Goal 2: Foster positive community relations through awareness and partnerships**

### **A. Strengthen community outreach**

1. Deploy volunteers to assist at appropriate activities and engage citizens in endeavors that support the Library; develop reward and recognition initiatives for volunteers.
2. Promote the use of civic spaces and encourage room rentals.
3. Explore unique partnerships and opportunities (ex: potential playgrounds, homebound delivery programs or energy projects)

### **B. Foster awareness of Library services and value**

1. Utilize all available communication venues to connect with patrons.
2. Provide a content rich and timely website; maximize social media marketing.
3. Participate in collaborative informational publications such as the Sugar Grove Newsletter.
4. Develop an in-house publication for website download.

## **Goal 3: Engage and empower a patron-focused staff**

### **A. Create a climate conducive for staff success**

1. Support and encourage development through learning opportunities and professional networking.
2. Foster open communication and staff cohesiveness.

3. Develop emergency preparedness procedures and policies to increase safety and security for patrons and staff.

**B. Strengthen assessments and human resource management tools**

1. Create core competency requirements and proficiencies standards.
2. Strengthen and encourage staff diversity.
3. Redesign assessment process, develop a human resources manual, and refresh staff policies to ensure consistent, excellent standards.

**Goal 4: Ongoing Facilities Maintenance**

**A. Prepare for foreseeable future needs**

1. Prioritize immediate (3 year) needs with anticipated budget expenditures.
2. Research and develop a ten year plan of anticipated necessary refurbishments.
3. Allocate funding to savings to prepare for refurbishments.

**B. Enhancement of the existing facility to meet patron needs**

1. Complete underdeveloped areas of the Library as the budget allows
  - Whiteboards in meeting room areas
  - Replace broken technology; enhance where feasible and upgrades are needed
  - Patio furniture on front and back porch areas
2. Add additional lighting to the children's area and bathrooms

**Goal 5: Strengthen Financial Security**

**A. Promote the Library's value to our residents**

1. Actively promote the mission and value of the Library to residents including return on tax dollar investments to property values and the contribution to educational and cultural community enrichment.
2. Connect with other stakeholders in the community including civic leaders, educators, realtors, and local business to enhance understanding.

**B. Work to provide financial stability to effectively fund Library operations**

1. Continually address referendum readiness.
2. Prioritize funding to sustain operations including staff development, adequate benefits and livable wages, and staffing allocations to successfully conduct Library operations.
3. Garner community support through ground level activism from residents to educate and inform patrons.
4. Increase donor support, recognition, and explore unique giving opportunities.
5. Develop annual fun fundraisers working in partnership with the Friends.
6. Increase financial transparency by making information readily and fully available on the website; translate financials into digestible informative pieces to inform residents.