

**Barrhead Library Board
Strategic Plan 2020-2024**

**for Barrhead Public Library
and Neerlandia Public Library**

**Approved November 19, 2019
Confirmed December 17, 2019
Barrhead Library Board**

Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024 for Barrhead Library Board

Introduction

The Strategic Plan for the Barrhead Library Board covering years 2020 through 2024 was approved by the Barrhead Library Board on November 19, 2019 and confirmed for implementation at Barrhead Public Library and Neerlandia Public Library on December 17, 2019.

1. Overview of Library Board and Libraries in Barrhead Communities

Barrhead Library Board is an intermunicipal library board for the Town of Barrhead and County of Barrhead No. 11. The Library Board governs the Barrhead Public Library and Neerlandia Public Library.

The Town of Barrhead, population 4432, is located 1 hour and 40 minutes northwest of Edmonton. It has an acute care hospital, five seniors housing facilities, recreational facilities, parks, 11 churches, 3 pre-schools, an elementary school and a junior/senior high school. It is a commercial centre for the area and surrounding counties.

The County of Barrhead No. 11 is primarily a farming district with a total population of 6096. The hamlet of Neerlandia is located 20 minutes north of the Town of Barrhead. Neerlandia Public Christian School and 2 additional private Christian schools are located in or near the hamlet as are 3 churches and a Coop grocery and farm centre complex.

Barrhead Public Library is a school-housed public library. In addition to Provincial funding, Barrhead Library receives Town funding to serve the population of the Town of Barrhead and County funding to service 78% of the County of Barrhead residents. It also receives funding from Pembina Hills Public Schools division (PHRD) to serve Barrhead Elementary School staff and students (631 students in grades K to 6 in 2019).

The Library is open to the public 7 days a week, for 53 hours in winter months and 44 hours in summer. The library has been located in its current location in the elementary school since 1986, and on school grounds as a school-housed public library since 1950.

Neerlandia Public Library is a school-housed public library established in 1973 and receives County and provincial funding to serve 22% or 1298 residents of the County of Barrhead. It also received funding from Pembina Hills Public Schools division (PHRD) to serve Neerlandia Public Christian School, (184 in grades K to 9 in 2019). The Library is open to the public during school hours and one evening a week from 7 to 9pm. During the summer, the Library is open one day a week from 9am to 6pm. The library has been located in the newly constructed school building since 2016.

2. The Planning Process

Beginning in November 2018, Strategic Planning sessions were held with the Library Board, Library staff, the Friends of the Library Society, and Inter Agency groups to identify:

- What are the unique needs smaller rural centres experience when navigating the world-wide-web and social media
- What each Library currently makes available in relation to their community's information needs and interests.
- What and where each Library needs to be within the next five years to best serve their community in this respect.

In March and April 2019, community agencies were surveyed with respect to information needs of their clients.

In June 2019 a general public survey was conducted with visitors to the community's Street Festival. Survey responses were tabulated.

In September 2019, the Board came to a consensus: the focus of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan library service plan is to assist library users in finding and authenticating information for informed decision-making. This service response will build on the reputation of all public libraries as:

- respected and trusted location for assisting patrons in finding, evaluating and using information
- as *the* place for responsible, accurate and reliable information and fact-finding
- keeping up on current events to assist users in making informed decisions.
- a community's gateway for accessing credible and reliable information sources against the tide of information (some reliable, some not) found on the web and in social media

In tandem with this, the libraries will continue to uphold objectives of previous strategic plans to:

- stimulate and engage readers
- maintain comfortable library spaces and
- assist library users in being better informed about our own community and the world

3. Library Board Plan of Service for 2020-2024: assist users with finding and authenticating information for informed decision-making

This service response is a blend of two of Nelsons Strategic Planning for Results service responses:

- Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information, p207” and
- Make Informed Decisions, p191”.

Suggested Target Audiences: adults, seniors, teens and children

Typical Services and Programs:

- Provide basic and intermediate program sessions on using the Internet and proprietary databases responsibly and effectively.
- Program sessions on new technologies and web trends to keep patrons aware and current in what is available to them via the Internet.
- Online tutorials made available to help online users navigate library technology and trends in social media.
- Partnering with community organizations to provide programs to specific interest groups to ensure their members (youth, parents, seniors, farm industry, new Canadians, etc.) can effectively access, evaluate and use information found on internet.

Potential Partners in the Community:

FCSS Youth Program
FCSS Seniors Program
Adult Learning – ESL
Aspen Health
Retirement Planning consultants- commercial banks and investment firms

Programs and Resources:

- Inhouse and online programs on smart use of content on internet and social media:
 - delivered appropriately for the age and interest level of attendees
 - available in English and other languages as may be requested
 - updated alerts deliverable through social media
- Community TED talks and Town Hall discussion opportunities
- Displays of information resources for making informed decisions
- Online tutorials
- Wikis and online pathfinders to help in finding resources

Personnel Implications: knowledge, skills and abilities

To better assist library patron, ongoing training is required for all front-line staff to ensure they have working knowledge in technology use, trends, and the software applications they are expected to teach. Instruction in adult education, and training design would be useful also.

- Staff will receive training to be more aware and knowledgeable about electronic and print resources
- Staff will search for and/or create electronic resources and wikis to use as training tools for other staff and for library patrons
- Staff will plan and make presentations to groups outside the Library, on request
- Staff will plan and mount exhibits and displays in the Library, on social media and in the community

Possible Measures of success and user interest:

- Number people who enroll (in person or online) for information literacy classes
- Number of people who receive one-on-one information literacy assistance
- Number of people who access computer-based training modules
- Number of people who indicate on a survey that they use the library to learn how to find, evaluate and use information and/or to make an informed decision
- Number of people who state the library's collection of materials/access to electronic resources helped them make an informed decision
- Number of people who indicate on a survey that they feel confident using information resources suggested by the Library

Measuring 'User Perceptions'

Success in achieving the goal "Libraries are the "go to" place for reliable information" may be measured by the percent of users surveyed who respond that:

- The session sponsored by the library is very good or excellent.
- The user would recommend others attend.
- The assistance and/or instruction they receive from library staff is very good or excellent.

Success in achieving goal " library users are better informed" may be measured by the number and percent of users who:

- know how to find reliable and accurate information in online databases.
- learn to use a computer safely and confidently to meet their personal needs.
- know how to navigate software applications
- know how to successfully evaluate information found on a website.
- are able to share with others what they have learned.

4. Now to Begin:

As the Library Board moves forward through the 2020 -2024 Strategic Plan, the Board will be kept aware of progress in monthly reports by senior staff. Each year at the June meeting, the Board will review the progress made over the past year and make observations and recommendations to senior staff as appropriate. Each year, a summary-to-date of the Strategic Plan will be compiled with the Annual Report for each library. If/as professional development seminars about these service responses become available, Board trustees will be invited to attend.

Appendix

Library Board Overview

Mission Statement (revised in January 2015): Connect. Discover. Explore.

The Mission of the Barrhead Library Board is to connect the community to the library, library staff and library resources, to encourage discovery of information, and to inspire explorations of knowledge and the world we live in.

Policy Statement

The Library Board upholds the public's right to know by providing to people access and guidance to information and collections that reflect different points of view.

The Library Board believes in:

- Equal access to information for all members of the community
- Professionalism and respect by and for each library employee
- Respect for each person served by the Library regardless of age, economic level, beliefs or race, personal or physical characteristics
- Effective and efficient service
- Library materials that anticipate and respond to community interests and needs
- Maintenance of friendly, inviting and safe facilities.

Board Members in 2019

Ruth Bohn,	Chair (resides in County)
Helmut Ehrenholz,	Vice Chair Member-a-Large (resides in County)
Sandra Olthuis	Member-at-large (resides in County)
Ruth Hewitt	Member-a-large (resides in Town)
Marlene Szwec	Member-at-large (resides in Town)
Sandra Cober	Member-at-large (resides in Town)
Rod Klumph	Town Municipal appointment
Ron Kleinfeldt	County Municipal appointment

