

# Plan of Service Focus Group Session

## Friends Groups | March 29, 2011

### Challenges & Issues:

- **Funding & Fundraising**
  - Concerns about the future of library funding, “There seems to be a disconnect between people making decisions and people using library resources.”
  - Concerned that donors are exhausted, too many organizations are hitting up the same people again and again.
  - Seeking fundraising techniques that work in a small community; “lots of bang for the buck”
  - Feel it is important to support local businesses, even if it costs a bit more
  - Importance of showing cooperation/coordination between local libraries
  - “Online requests and delivery are key to our survival – how do we continue to pay for this?”
  - “We are the best bargain no money can buy.”
- **Recruitment**
  - All groups are looking to bump up recruitment efforts and draw new people in to the group.
  - Looking for ways to fit into people's “fast paced lives”
  - How to use programming for recruitment
  - Looking for younger volunteers
- **Outreach & PR**
  - Want to help build patron loyalty to the library
  - Looking for ways to communicate that libraries are a great value; general feeling that people don't understand what libraries have to offer; “we're the best bargain around and people don't seem to know it!”; “people that don't use the library don't realize how vital it is to some in the community”
  - Would like to increase outreach to the Spanish speaking population
  - “Libraries have the extra selling point of education, we should play that up more.”
  - Libraries need to work harder to get the word out to younger people (20s/30s); they don't understand how we fit their needs
  - People are connecting in different ways; Library needs to be part of the social media/networks
  - Providing meeting space to outside organizations is critical to outreach efforts.
  - See outreach to schools, teachers and parents as key to outreach efforts.
- **Technology**
  - Friends are concerned with how the library will keep up with technology
  - People may have the technology at home but not the connectivity; library still plays a role for people with technology
- **Space**
  - Friends see their libraries are out of space but are not sure how to help.



- They recognize the need for more space for people, not just stuff.
- **Trends**
  - More people want to use the library to reconnect with their neighbors, looking for a comfortable environment
  - How will a “paperless society” impact the future of the library?
  - See an increasing need for the library to provide support for students
  - People are bringing their own technology to the library.
  - “Libraries are threatening” not just threatened. Threatening to publishers, to those who are not fans of “free thinking” or keeping information free.
- **System Support**
  - Feeling that libraries will be depending more on Friends Groups and System support of Friends Groups should be continued.
  - Feeling that libraries without Friends Groups will want to start them and the System should continue to support this.
  - Some groups reported missing graphic design and printing services the System used to offer. The free market is much more expensive.

**What do you hope people are saying about your library?**

- I always get what I want ( bestsellers, videos)
- It's painless
- Makes my life easier
- Friendly and helpful
- I really love my library
- It's such a cool place
- A happening place
- A major part of our community.