

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: October 17, 2007

Division: Community Services

Bulk Item: Yes No

Department: Library

Staff Contact Person: Norma Kula x7349

AGENDA ITEM WORDING: Approval of the Library Long Range Plan of Service for the years 2008-2010.

ITEM BACKGROUND: This is part of an annual application process to receive State Financial Aid.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION: The Library Annual Plan has been approved annually by the BOCC, most recently at the meeting of October 18, 2006

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES: N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Approval

TOTAL COST: \$ 00 **BUDGETED:** Yes No

COST TO COUNTY: \$ 00 **SOURCE OF FUNDS:** N/A

REVENUE PRODUCING: Yes No **AMOUNT PER Year** \$ 79,000.--

APPROVED BY: County Atty OMB/Purchasing Risk Management

DOCUMENTATION: Included Not Required

DISPOSITION: _____ **AGENDA ITEM #** _____

**MONROE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAN OF SERVICE
2008-2010**

**SUBMITTED BY
NORMA KULA
DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES
SEPTEMBER 27, 2007**

**A NOTE ON THE
LONG-RANGE PLAN
2008-2010**

When originally begun, this long-range plan was seen as the first of a series of steps forward for the Monroe County Public Library System. Successful programs from the past would be expanded, less-successful programs would be examined for value and appropriateness and judged whether or not they would be worth sustaining or building upon, and new programs would be considered, planned, and implemented as best possible with the investment of staff and funding available and anticipated.

With the financial and funding changes that have taken place within the past year and those that are now expected within the next few years, the outlook for Library planning has also substantially changed. The new and expanding goals that might have been addressed through enhanced allotments of funding and staff time must instead be re-evaluated, prioritized, and situated in the continuum of established goals already on record and already in progress.

The prospect of funding itself will have to be re-examined and considered in an entirely new light, with a view to a more thorough consideration of how to maintain maximum services possible with minimal expense, in terms of both financial and personnel investment.

For these reasons, the Long-Range Plan for the Monroe County Public Library, covering the years 2008 through 2010, while still aimed at moving us forward in meeting community needs and providing those essential services essential to our mission, will also re-visit the plans and services of the past few years. Lacking funds for expansion, we must review what we currently are doing and seek out ways to continue current services at less cost. If we cannot implement new services, we must concentrate on enrichment of present activities. If we are unable to increase staffing, we must focus on making the best possible use of, and expanding upon, the capabilities of our current staff, already proven to be the outstanding asset of our Library system. Our new plan will approach these challenges in terms of continuing to do our best for our communities, while seeking new ways of assessing our priorities and new avenues for meeting our goals.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

In May of 1513, explorer Ponce de Leon sighted the Florida Keys and claimed Florida for Spain. The Spanish sailors gave this area of mangroves the name of "Los Martires," or The Martyrs. On later maps, various Keys were identified as Cayo Hueso (Bone Key), Islamorada (Purple Island), and a host of other names that changed with the identifier and mapmaker.

When Florida came under British control in February of 1763, many of the local Indians moved to Cuba. Twenty years later, under the second Spanish Reign in Florida, Loyalists left for the Bahamas and other British possessions. Florida became a U.S. Territory in 1821, with the ratification of a treaty between the United States and Spain, and later that year Juan Pablo Salas, who had received Key West as a Spanish land grant in 1815, sold the island to John W. Simonton, a Havana merchant, for the noteworthy sum of \$ 2,000.00. Simonton then sold parts of the island to fellow businessmen Whitehead, Fleming and Greene.

In 1821 Spain ceded East and West Florida to the United States. President James Monroe appointed General Andrew Jackson as Military governor, and instructed the General to set up a new government. Jackson's first action toward this goal was to organize Florida into a single territory composed of two counties. Thus West Florida became Escambia County with Pensacola as its county seat, and East Florida became St. John's County, with St. Augustine as the county seat.

On July 3, 1823, Monroe County became the sixth county in the State, when it was formed out of St. John's. All of the mainland areas now known as South Florida, as well as the Florida Keys, were included in this formation. This large area remained one county until 1836, when Dade County was formed, through a series of political maneuvers. Its borders included the eastern half of the mainland and the Keys north of Bahia Honda. Those Keys from Bahia Honda to Old Rhodes Key were not returned to Monroe County until 1866.

The original formation of Monroe County was divided over and over again through the following years. From its initial boundaries came Dade, Lee, Hendry, Collier, Broward, and a part of Palm Beach Counties. Key West was established as the County seat a year after the island's first settlers arrived; that same year it was made a port of entry. The few Keys settlers were scattered across the islands—probably not more than 150 Europeans in all. No accurate population data exists from that period.

The Florida Keys have played a major part in Florida's growth, both historically and economically. There are 822 Keys large enough to be shown on government charts; many of their names have changed over the years. Indeed, a large

number of them have changed names with almost every generation of mapmakers. (An extensive study of this history has been carried out by Library staff; the fascinating results are available on the newly-developed website: <http://keys.fiu.edu/gazetteer/index.htm>)

It is noteworthy that there are only five incorporated areas in all of Monroe County: Key West incorporated in 1828, Key Colony in 1955, Layton in 1963, Islamorada in 1998, and Marathon in 1999.

HISTORY OF THE MONROE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 1835, a young attorney, originally from Kentucky, wrote to relatives from his new home in Key West, "The society of the place is, of course, small, but there are many families from the Atlantic States now our residents, that would be very desirable acquisitions were they to return to the places of their nativity. There is the same taste, luxury, and display that you find in the large cities in their dinner and evening parties. More good books, reviews and late publications are found here than you have the most distant ideas of." In 1835, a Sunday School library circulated books among the people of the community. Old records of that year explain that on "Saturday, April 4, 1835, on suggestion of the Mayor and unanimously resolved, the fees paid by members of board absent during the year, \$ 12.00 in amount, be presented to the Sunday School Library of Key West."

The Monroe County Public Library has a unique place in history as the oldest Library in South Florida. Its beginnings can be dated as far back as 1853. The first written record of the Key West Library Association is mentioned in the diary of William R. Hackley, who writes that he had paid his dues to that Association in July of 1853. A microfilm copy of that diary is now held in the Florida History Room at the Key West Branch of the Monroe County Public Library, while the original can be found in the collection at the Florida State University. The Association stored its book collection within a wire enclosure, and upon selection by patrons, the books were passed through a wire wicket. The Library was housed in a variety of locations on Duval Street and guided by various civic groups over the next sixty or so years, until in 1915 the Key West Woman's Club assumed the operation of the Library Association as its foremost project.

The Key West Branch, which became the Headquarters Library, moved into its present location in 1959, with a major expansion in 1992. The Key Largo Branch began in the Key Largo Civic Club Building in 1962, moving once in 1967, and taking up its current location in 1989. The Marathon Branch began in 1962 and took up its present location in 1982; Islamorada's Branch opened in 1966, with expansions in 1983 and 1997. The most recent Branch was established in Big Pine Key in 1995, with an expansion there in 2003.

Over one hundred and fifty years have passed since those earliest steps toward a County Library system; today the Monroe County Public Library is a vital part of the fabric of its communities. Each branch reflects its own area, and each area reflects its own people, with distinct characteristics, interests and needs. Library service is ad valorem tax-based, funded by the General Fund of the Monroe County budget. The five branches, with staff totaling forty employees, provide on-site services six days and four evenings each week. Our Library card-holders number more than half the population of Monroe County. Our website now provides 24/7 access to the full Library catalog, including renewal and request services. Our collection has grown from the 10,000 books of the Key West Branch in 1959 to over 190,000 items in a variety of media, including digital databases. The Library has grown and developed through its history, and continues to do so, as services and patron usage increase yearly.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LONG-RANGE PLAN

In order to remain a viable and living institution, the Library must grow. Without a long-range plan, growth becomes unmanaged and unmanageable. A long-range plan provides a framework for future growth, and becomes a blueprint for decisions regarding all aspects of Library development and operations. It is important to set goals over a several year period as an effective procedure for sound planning and for making cost-effective budgetary decisions. This has become even more vital with the current fiscal uncertainties. Goals and objectives laid out in this plan will complement the Library's mission and service responses to meet the needs of the communities which it serves. Such a plan must be a living document, subject to regular measurements and review. It must be open to modifications in its objectives and in the activities that may be needed to carry out its intent, as well as being designed and able to adapt responsibly to resource availability. Again, this more true today than ever before.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS/NEW COMMUNITY NEEDS

Monroe County is in the process of undergoing a number of changes, which will have great impact on its communities and their service needs. The rate of growth has been and probably always will be a major factor in community planning; it is a topic which lends itself readily to much debate. Economic changes have been matters of great concern since the tragedy of 9-11, and the impact of those events on the State of Florida have come to rest heavily upon this tourist-driven area. The incorporations of Islamorada and Marathon have likewise affected the economic life of the unincorporated areas. Although many of the services for these cities are provided from within, the Library still operates as a Countywide service provider—there is one public Library system for the whole of Monroe County.

Changes in the makeup of County population are other factors that are to be considered in Library planning—as the population ages or more young families move into the area, as literacy rates increase or decrease, as language barriers become more or less prevalent—all these variations create new challenges for the Library, and all must be included in our plans to meet future needs. Collections, programs offered to the public, all the services that the Library offers need to be geared to adaptation and modification.

Among the demographic changes in Monroe County between 1990 and 2000 are:

- Decrease in number of children under 5 years of age, from 5.7% to 4.3% of the population
- Decrease of adults between 25 and 44 years from 35% to 31%
- Increase of adults between 45 and 54 years from 12% to 18.4%
- Increase of adults between 55 and 59 years from 5.5% to 7%
- Decrease of adults between 65 and 74 years from 10.5% to 8.5%
- Increase in Hispanic population from 12.1% to 15.8%
- Increase in non-family households from 38.7% to 41.9%.

Interestingly, this year, introducing a change in the recent trend of downsizing in the schools, it has been noted that school registrations have increased throughout the Keys. All of these changes may have a bearing on community needs and interests, and should be taken into consideration when planning collection development, programs, and other services to be offered.

As we study our communities and their changing natures, and begin to plan for the accompanying changing needs and service demands, a vision takes shape for the future of Monroe County and its Library System in relation to its people:

VISION FOR MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY

The people of the Monroe County community will:

- Have the information they need to succeed at school, at work, and in their personal lives;
- Discover the joy of reading and develop an appreciation of learning;
- Enjoy a high level of access to electronic information resources, through the latest information technologies in the provision of Library services;
- Develop the technological, information seeking, and information evaluation skills needed in an increasingly complex world;
- Use the resources of the Monroe County Public Library in a way that will improve the quality of their lives and that of the community as a whole.

SERVICE RESPONSES

With this vision in mind, we have identified the following as the service responses that are our commitment to our community:

- General information
- Current titles and topics
- Lifelong learning
- Local history and genealogy

From these service responses the mission of the Monroe County Public Library is formed:

MISSION STATEMENT

The Monroe County Public Library will meet the changing needs of our communities for information, education and recreation in a variety of materials formats and technologies. The Library responds to the needs of users of all ages by providing equal, easy and open access to materials and services delivered in an efficient, timely and professional manner by staff who are friendly, helpful and knowledgeable, in buildings that are inviting, comfortable and fitted for technological growth and development.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

SERVICE RESPONSE 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

GOAL: The Monroe County Public Library will provide timely and accurate information in print and electronic formats for residents of all ages.

OBJECTIVE: The Library will maintain a collection of printed materials that are current, organized, and accessible, covering a broad variety of topics.

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Overall assessment of specific areas of the collection, establishing benchmarks for currency and completeness of information in time-sensitive areas such as medicine and law

FY 2009: Application of the established benchmarks through organized weeding and inventory of the print collection; set in place a plan for collection development in deficient areas as observed during the weeding process through use of benchmarks

FY 2010: Expand a plan for the on-going weeding and maintenance of the collection in all formats, focusing on the non-print materials

OBJECTIVE: The Library will expand a collection of materials in a variety of formats to meet the users' needs for information

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: institute a program of training for staff in use of current databases; all staff should be trained by end of year; institute a plan for patron education in use of databases currently under subscription; handouts for each database should be prepared

FY 2009: Investigate electronic database availability, content and costs; all current and at least six new databases should be studied with focus on cost and value analysis; research potential partnerships within the community and explore other possible sources of database subscription funding

FY2010: Re-evaluate and re-format criteria for databases through purchase and/or subscription

GOAL: The Library will offer reference service through phone and on-site access, and explore potential for technological expansion

OBJECTIVE: Staff will be trained in the reference process and the use of print and electronic reference sources

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Establish and implement a program of basic reference training and review for all staff who will be working with the public; all staff will have a training session in each database currently in use

FY 2009: Explore possibilities of expansion of reference services through technology, such as the State-based "Ask a Librarian"

FY 2010: All unit staff members will have a cross-training session in at least one other service unit

OBJECTIVE: Patrons will receive timely and accurate reference service

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Prepare and implement an exit interview study to determine patron satisfaction with reference interactions

FY 2009: Based on study results, determine areas for additional training and/or collection enhancement

FY 2010: Begin program of action in above areas of need

SERVICE RESPONSE #2: LIFELONG LEARNING

GOAL: Library users of all ages will find the means to continue to learn throughout their lives and to access, evaluate, and use information in a variety of formats.

OBJECTIVE: Programming for children, both in-house and outreach, will be designed to reach a broad audience of children and their caregivers

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Establish a program of system-wide cooperation in program planning and implementation, as well as sharing of materials

FY 2009: Analysis of current collection of children's literature and parenting materials; evaluate needs and sources

FY 2010: Outreach and onsite programs will be evaluated in terms of attendance and satisfaction rates; attendance at such programs will grow by 5%; standards for satisfaction rates will be established

OBJECTIVE: The youth of Monroe County will be targeted as a part of the community not yet fully served

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: A Teen Page will be added to the Library website, offering items, information, and links of special interest to that age group; branches will coordinate a review of YA materials

FY 2009: Each branch will be evaluated and developed in terms of collection and physical space dedicated to the Young Adult reader; benchmarks will be established

FY 2010: YA collections will be current, increased by 5%, and Young Adult readership and patronage will increase by 5%

OBJECTIVE: The Senior Citizens of Monroe County will find sources of information and entertainment at the Library reflecting their particular needs and interests.

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Analysis and enrichment of the Large Print and audio collections; publicity planned and implemented

FY 2009: A program of presentations geared to the interests of Senior Citizens will be prepared for each Library community and at least two such presented annually

FY 2010: A regular series of classes in computer and software use will be implemented, making use of the mobile computer lab throughout the system; each branch will offer at least one of these classes

SERVICE RESPONSE #3: CURRENT TITLES AND TOPICS

GOAL: Patrons of the Monroe County Public Library will have access to the high-demand popular materials that they want through their local branch Library.

OBJECTIVE: Branch Managers will coordinate efforts to ensure that copies of high-demand print materials are available to all patrons, while over-duplication of these materials is avoided.

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Managers will meet to establish and implement a plan for coordinated use of the "Automatically Yours" ordering system from Baker & Taylor

FY 2009: Readers' Advisory Services will be studied and staff training provided in these services

FY 2010: Systems for coordinating materials selection and ordering will be studied for possible implementation

OBJECTIVE: The Library will use technological advances as well as traditional means as tools for enriching information services

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Branches will present a schedule of at least four special displays annually celebrating various authors, genres, and special book-related events; these will also be noted on the Library website

FY 2009: Web usage will be expanded to provide more in-depth information on available materials for all patrons

FY2010: The automation system will be upgraded as new features for patron service become available and properly adjusted for public use; all staff will be trained proactively for each such upgrade, and patrons will be notified in advance of any changes affecting their catalog usage; a system of e-mail service to patrons will be planned and tested for effectiveness

GOAL: Library programming will be presented for education and entertainment for patrons in all age groups.

OBJECTIVE: The Library will form partnerships with local groups to enable a forum for public presentations on various topics

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Three community groups in each area will be surveyed and studied for interest in and commitment to local needs in concert with the Library mission

FY 2009: Partnerships will be established with at least one new appropriate group in each area

FY 2010: A joint program will be presented in each area of the Library community

OBJECTIVE: The Library will work with support groups already established, such as the Friends of the Library, to initiate a new series of joint activities

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: Ground work with Friends groups will be begun to discern their areas of expertise and interests that can be expanded on and developed in programming; staff will meet with each group of Friends during the year

FY 2009: Branches will coordinate joint ventures with Friends groups for community attendance and enjoyment; each branch will regularly provide publicity for such endeavors on their website and through the print media

FY 2010: A year-round series of programs will be initiated

SERVICE RESPONSE #4: LOCAL HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

GOAL: The unique features of the Florida Keys will be highlighted in special collections in a variety of formats and ephemera.

OBJECTIVE: The collections of materials relating to Keys History, natural history, and genealogy will be expanded and publicized, encouraging use and appreciation of the unique nature of this island chain.

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: The materials collections will be expanded in a system-wide coordinated effort, to maximize coverage and minimize unnecessary duplication; broader staff training in the access and use of these collections will be initiated; two staff members in each branch will be in the initial training groups; all staff will be made aware of collection holdings

FY 2009: Available materials will be publicized through programs, displays, news resources, and the Library website; use of these collections will increase 5%

FY 2010: Communications with historical groups in the Keys and outside the area will be developed to expand the audience for these rare materials; outside access to and usage of these materials will be expanded through available technology

GOAL: The Florida History collection will be made more widely accessible to promote formal and informal research on all levels of interest and scholarship.

OBJECTIVE: Branches with specialized holdings will implement a system of organizing, indexing and cataloging non-traditional format materials, with a view to improving access without endangering the preservation aspect of frail matter.

Achievement/Measurement Plan:

FY 2008: The digitization process, begun in 2003 under the auspices of an LSTA grant, will be continued and expanded, with access on scanning photograph holdings into the newly-established computer base for world-wide-web access.

FY 2009: Preservation efforts will be explored, especially through the area of grants that become available in this field; priorities for preservation of materials will be established

FY 2010: A plan for the indexing and cataloging of historic materials will be outlined and set up, and a needs assessment carried out to determine priorities for its implementation.

Although not mentioned specifically in the outline of activities listed above, one new element will be added to every goal, objective, and activity that is a part of the new Library long-range plan: we will aggressively seek out new and renewed sources of funding to supplement our budget. We will pursue partnerships within our communities and beyond, we will investigate potential funding sources such as grants and foundations, we will work closely with our Friends groups who have proved so generous in their gifts of time and money in the past. Every opportunity for reducing expenses will be explored and every possible instance of coordination of resources within the system will be implemented and expanded. We are fully cognizant of the vitally important part our services play in the lives of our communities and we do not hold our obligations to our patrons lightly.

CONCLUSION

This plan for the next three years is an outline only—a map of where we would like to go and how we hope to get there. Many elements must come into play in unison for the success of this plan—some of these are already in place and need merely to be fine-tuned; others will be new to us and we will need to learn how best to bring them together into the developing events. Some basics remain at the heart of this plan—the mission and goals of the Library are a constant. It is the work of the Library to support the growth and development of individuals, families, and groups, as is pledged in the Mission Statement of Monroe County Government.

The Library serves as a constant link between the people of the County community and their sources of business information, educational support, and cultural development, and it is our job to assist the people in realizing their goals in these areas. The Library is a tool by which the community is enabled to survive, to recall its past, and to grow. In order to accomplish this, we must look to our own resources: technology, with its potential for enhanced service delivery, is essential to maintaining our role as service provider, and the Library staff, the most vital element in this plan, must be given the opportunity for training to enhance their skills and develop their capabilities. Effective planning for the future requires the blending of both the personal and technological elements, along with a constant examination of what we are doing, how well we are doing it, and how we can do it better. With this plan, we must unite these factors with a willingness to adopt new ways of thinking, learning, and doing. We must be always open to change, to adaptation, and to improvement, so that our pledge of service to our communities may be not just kept, but constantly renewed.