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Caldwell-Lake George Library

Plan of Service 2022-2026

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Planning Summary

The Library Director and Caldwell-Lake George Library Board of Trustees met with Erica Freudenberger of the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) to learn about the Strategic Planning Process. A strategic planning committee was formed consisting of the Library Director, representatives of the Board of Trustees, Friends of Lake George Library and representatives of the community. The first step was to identify community needs, wishes and dreams on how to make it a better place, which could then be used to create goals and objectives for Caldwell-Lake George Library over the next five years. A series of “ASK” exercises were performed. Planning committee members went out and met with individual community members to get feedback. The Library Director also asked individuals for their input as well as creating group meets in order to get feedback from the community. This information was the starting point for our process of learning what kind of community people wanted and what might need to happen to bring us closer to helping our community become that place.

The strategic planning process was stalled by the COVID-19 pandemic and the statewide stay-at-home order that closed the library for several months. Subsequently, the loss of our Library Director further stalled the process. Our new Library Director continued the process and worked with Erica Freudenberger from SALS to educate herself on the engaged planning process. She applied and executed a grant from the ALA (American Library Association), Libraries Transforming Communities, that enabled her to reach out directly to community members. Part of that process involved facilitator training, planning a community conversation, and reporting on the results to ultimately use the information gathered to inform our long-range plan of service.

History of Caldwell-Lake George Library & Landscape Review

Until 1903, our lakeside community was known as the Village of Caldwell. Former residents of this formerly named hamlet are who we thank for our library. Upon his death in 1887, DeWitt C. Hay bequeathed his property and possessions, including a sizable personal library, to his widow with instructions that he would like to see his collection form the nucleus of a public library in his hometown. Hay's wishes were expressed publicly in a series of local meetings the following year and resulted in the founding of the DeWitt C. Hay Library Association of Caldwell.

In 1893, Reverend Charles W. Blake (pastor of Caldwell Presbyterian Church) organized and chartered a library to be known as the Lake George Free Library. The library and its collection consisted of a few rooms in the rear of the church until 1905 when Mr. James Hayden donated land to build a library near the shores of Lake George. One year later, the library was complete and housed the combined collections of the DeWitt C. Hay Library Association and the Lake George Free Library.

Chartered in 1906 by the New York State Board of Regents, Caldwell-Lake George Library is an association library, governed by a Board of Trustees composed of 5-15 members. Library operations are guided by a plan of service developed by a committee of Trustees, library staff, Friends and community members. Our library is funded by the Town of Lake George with additional funds from county and state contributions. We are a member of the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) which serves Warren, Washington, Hamilton and Saratoga counties. In conjunction with SALS, we also work with the Mohawk Valley Library System (MVLS) to provide our patrons access to over a million items housed by our combined 57 member libraries.

Our service area includes the Town and Village of Lake George and its surrounding area, approximately 3,500 residents. Residents 65 years and over make up 24% of our service area. Children under 18 years of age make up 19% of our service area.

The diversity and size of our population changes significantly in the summer tourist season. Annual tourism to the area brings approximately six million visitors, with five million in the months of May through August. Our library provides vital resources to this changing population, including work/study space, free wi-fi, computer use, programs, tourist information and more.

Mission Statement

Caldwell-Lake George Library (CLGL) will provide quality services to the Lake George community in an open and non-judgemental environment with free access to information and library materials in a variety of formats.

Vision Statement

Caldwell-Lake George Library will work with patrons and community partners to provide exceptional services to support the Lake George community and its surrounding area.

Values Statement

Caldwell-Lake George Library exists to provide exceptional service to our community in an environment that is welcoming and accessible to all. We are here to provide everyone the opportunity to learn and grow.

Community Aspirations

The people of Lake George would like to see our area as a year-round travel destination. The Community wants engaging programs, services and businesses available all year. They hope to grow Lake George's recreational opportunities and activities including more outdoor trails, walks, bike sharing, and walking groups to promote community and health. The Community is asking for more arts and cultural programs. Year round programs in the arts are in high demand. The Community aspires for greater engagement and collaboration between community partners. They would like to see a focus on inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility and to make sure all voices in our community are being heard.

Strategic Priorities

After the engaged planning process, we have identified accessibility, programming, and community engagement to be our highest priorities. The goals that we have set for the library are a direct reflection of the knowledge gained through our planning process and will benefit the community with greater accessibility to the library and the services we provide. The library has increased our budget and staff time in support of providing more engaging programs and greater community partnerships and community engagement.

Outcomes, Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Continue to Raise the Profile of the Library

- a. Project Leader: Library Director with support and assistance of Board of Trustees and library staff.
- b. Objective: To increase awareness of the services that the library provides to the community of Lake George, its visitors and surrounding area.
- c. Action Steps/Activities:
 1. Reach out to community partners, particularly Lake George Youth Commission and Lake George School District as well as Town and Village of Lake George and area businesses to form new partnerships and foster existing ones.
 2. Maximize the use of the library and its resources by determining if it would benefit the community to modify the days and/or hours that the library is open.
 3. Build on existing community partnerships to continue to create meaningful and engaging programs:
 - Arts programs
 - Teen programs
 - Youth commission programs
 - Summer reading
 - Craft programs
 - Book club
 - Preschool storytimes
 - Outdoor activities and events

4. Promote the many services that are provided by the library by using social media, newsletter, website, sign board, local newspapers, pamphlets, etc. Services to highlight include:
 - Books, DVDs, magazines, newspapers, etc.
 - Museum passes
 - Computer use
 - Free wi-fi
 - Printing, copying, faxing
 - Meeting Room
 - Programs
 - Quiet study/work space
 - Research assistance
 - Ancestry and other databases
- d. Measurement/Evaluation: We will measure success by the number of patrons utilizing our services and attending our programs. We will continue to offer patron satisfaction surveys and conversations.

Goal 2: Create an Equitable Organization

- a. Project Leader: Library Director with support and assistance of the Board of Trustees and library staff.
- b. Objective: Promote equitable access to information and services for all people.
- c. Actions Steps/Activities:
 1. Review and update collection development policy, addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion; increase purchase of accessible media: ie., audiobooks, large print books.
 2. Weed library collection (ongoing) to ensure that the collection stays current, relevant and in good condition. Remove outdated materials.
 3. Identify and remove barriers to library and information in our programs, services and policies.
 4. Provide a wide range of programming to suit the needs of all members of our community.

5. Continue to provide free computer access and technology education for patrons. (By appointment, one-on-one assistance provided by library staff.)
 6. Pursue addition of hotspot devices to loan out. Inform patrons of programs that provide assistance for internet access at home.
 7. Pursue funding/grants for improving existing access and increased building accessibility.
 8. Research creation of a capital campaign to fund possible building renovations.
 9. Maximize the use of the library and its resources by determining if it would benefit the community to modify the days and/or hours that the library is open.
- d. Measurement/Evaluation: We will measure the circulation data on resources that we are specifically adding to our collection in an effort to create a more equitable experience. An increase in the number of patrons accessing our building (by physical count) and attending our programs will also be a measure of success. We will conduct post program surveys to enable patrons the opportunity to give immediate feedback on the effectiveness of our plan..

Goal 4: Create a Computer and Technology Purchasing Plan

- a. Project Leader: Library Director
- b. Objective: Provide a comprehensive plan for replacement of outdated technology. This will allow us to provide the most up-to-date technology for staff and public use. This replacement cycle helps the library budget for these expected expenses.
- c. Actions Steps/Activities:
 - Replace staff and public access computers on the following schedule:
 - 4 year replacement cycle
 - 2021-replace 2 staff computers
 - 2022-replace 1 public access computer
 - 2023-replace 1 public access computer
 - 2024-replace 1 public access computer
 - 2025-replace staff circulation computer (1 staff computer)
 - 2026 replace director laptop (1 staff computer)
 - 2027-replace 1 public access computer

- d. Measurement/Evaluation: We will measure success at the library's ability to budget for and replace outdated technology annually.

Goal 5: Build a Culture of Excellence

- a. Project Leader: Library Director
- b. Objective: Retain high-quality, dedicated staff
- c. Actions Steps/Activities:

Invest in Staff & Trustee Training and Education

Provide continuing education and training for all Staff and Trustees so that we may provide the best possible service to our community.

1. Provide monthly staff meetings/training which will include review of library skills and best practices.
 2. Utilize resources, grants, and workshops provided by SALS for continuing education for staff and Trustees.
 3. Budget for and provide access to memberships to professional organizations: ALA, NYLA
 4. Provide technology training for staff and train staff on providing support for patrons' technology needs.
- d. Measurement/Evaluation: A well-trained staff will be able to provide a better library user experience with less frustration. Annual technology training for all library staff ensures the full utilization of library technology resources. Part-time Staff will be required to complete a minimum of 6 training hours per year; Full-time staff will complete a minimum of 12 training hours per year. Trustees will complete 2 hours of training/education per year.

Resource Identification

In order to achieve success, we will need a budget that supports our goals and a Director who has knowledge of best practices. The library will need the support and assistance of the Board of Trustees and our community partners. The library will also need trained, dedicated staff to support the plans that we've made. We can align our budget to achieve our goals and benefit our community by being good stewards of the funds we are managing and seeking out grants and donations. We can utilize the many services that SALS (Southern Adirondack Library System) provides to member libraries and the resources of ALA (American Library

Association) and NYLA (New York Library Association.) Partnering with other community organizations will expand our reach and allow us to serve more members of our community more effectively.