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Mission Statement

Deer Park Public Library strives to deliver exemplary educational and recreational resources and programs that enrich and strengthen literacy, love of reading, and lifelong learning opportunities to provide our community with a high quality of life consistent with our history, culture and unique character.

The Library in 2021

Deer Park Public Library continues to be an active place. Our building, originally built in 1969, was expanded in the early 1990's, just before the drastic changes in technology began. The staff has met the challenge of serving a 21st century population with great resourcefulness. The Library provides both fiction and nonfiction books, DVDs, audio books on CD and in downloadable format, streaming video, ebooks, internet access, online electronic resources and a number of catalog terminals.

In 2000, the voters of Deer Park approved a bond issue giving the City authority to sell $1.75 million in bonds to update and enlarge their library. It was recognized that the Library's space had to be augmented and restructured to meet the demands of today's patron. In 2009, the planning process for the Library expansion and renovation began. On February 6, 2012, construction began on the Deer Park Public Library renovation/expansion project. After months of construction and several planned closures, the library held its grand opening celebration on April 4, 2013. In addition to added space for materials, the renovation/expansion gave the Library the ability to increase programming and technology offerings.

The renovated portion of the Library has been reworked to include a technology lab, where computer classes are taught regularly. A small conference room and a quiet study room have been added where smaller groups can meet without monopolizing the large meeting room. A dedicated teen section has also been designated in the existing public space. The new square footage also includes a new children's area and a 100-person meeting room to cover the growing number of children who attend the Summer Reading Program events each year.

Public computer terminals are loaded with Microsoft Office programs such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint for patron use. In our large meeting room, we hold three sessions of Storytime a week during the school year, kids and preteen craft programs once a month, Teen Time each week, weekly crochet class, and a sundry of other programs. Our conference room hosts a monthly Mysteries and More book club and Library Board meetings. In the summer, the Library's Summer Reading Program has grown more popular each year. We offer a variety of Wednesday morning performances from the area's most entertaining singers, actors, and puppeteers. On Thursdays there are two sessions of story time for younger children and on Tuesday, a pre-teen program. Laptops are available for patrons to checkout and use within the Library.

In 2014, the Deer Park Public Library joined other libraries in the region to participate in Gulf Coast Reads. This annual reading initiative is a collaboration of several libraries and cultural institutions in southeast Texas. Each year, a book is chosen to be read all over the region in the month of October. Book discussions and library programs are held based on the content and themes of the book. This reading initiative is intended to promote discussion and collaboration between different types of libraries (academic, public and school) and cultural institutions and their patrons.

In 2015, the Deer Park Public Library began holding a monthly programming series for adults in the large meeting room. The programs offer a variety of lectures, movies and special programs of cultural, historical and local interest. The Featured Friday series has increased the visibility of the Library in the community and attracted patrons who had never visited the Library before. Mixed in with all these activities, the Friends find time to

hold two or three book sales a year and an annual meeting. The meeting room is also used by the community when it is not in use by the library staff or the Friends' group.

Also in 2015, the Deer Park Public adopted the Edge Initiative Technology Action Plan benchmarks. The Edge Initiative was created to help libraries assess the value and usage of technology. The assessment process helps library leaders identify ways to strengthen or enhance public access technology and technology training. Libraries review a series of benchmarks to evaluate their technology offerings. These benchmarks are helpful in clarifying the plans a library wants to take in the coming years to improve access to technology for staff and the public. Later that year, the Library received a grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Edge Reimbursement Program. This grant enabled the Library to add 5 new workstation computers and monitors to be used in the Teen and Children's sections. In addition to the new computers, the Library upgraded the projector in the meeting room. The projector is used during regular programs such as the Thursday Movie Matinee and the Friday Speaker Series. The new projector provides more options for guests and library staff to present to the public and enhance the viewing experience of program attendees.

The Library faced unprecedented challenges in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic swept through the country. The Library quickly developed a curbside delivery method for materials and printed documents. We offered virtual options of our regular programming and distance learning for computer and language classes. Deer Park Public Library rose to the challenge and became one of the earliest libraries in Harris County to offer materials through curbside pick-up and to reopen our doors to patrons for browsing and computer usage.

The Library Tomorrow

The library of tomorrow must be ready for any change in the community and the publishing industry. We will strive to provide materials in a variety of the latest formats, access to the internet and software packages, as well as programming for both children and adults to retain its usefulness to its patrons and to continue its mission.

A library's value to the community is based on meeting community needs and interests while providing access to the necessary resources. The public continues to look to libraries for materials that will educate and entertain. It is vital that the Library maintain a worthwhile collection of printed titles while also keeping up with formats that patrons can utilize digitally. With storytime sessions and children's programming, the Library must continue in its historic role as a place where a child's love of learning and reading can flourish. The high level of service that the community has come to expect must be sustained. These children will one day become adults with children of their own. Reaching out to young adults is an important step in helping to nurture thoughtful and informed citizens. It must remain a safe and comfortable place for teens to do schoolwork and enjoy themselves amidst all the pressures of growing up.

Services for adults must retain their usefulness for longtime users and also seek to attract people who have not always visited the Library. Public computers with internet access and essential software will continue to usher in new users. Programs on culture, genealogy and history reinforce the Library's role as an informatory for all ages. The

Library should also help patrons acquire skills to advance their academic or professional goals by providing relevant classes and resources. Collaborations and partnerships with community organizations should be sought out that will strengthen the Library's ability to continue its mission.

The Deer Park Public Library strives to respond to the growing needs of our users. The library of tomorrow continually seeks to serve the community in new ways while continuing to fulfill the traditional role of the library.

Service Responses for the Deer Park Public Library

1st Role: Make Informed Decisions and Make Career Choices

2nd Role: Create Young Readers and Succeed in School

3rd Role: Stimulate Imagination and Satisfy Curiosity

4th Role: Connect to the Online World

5th Role: Express Creativity

6th Role: Discover Your Roots

7th Role: Invest in Staff

Definition of the Service Responses

Make Informed Decisions: Health, wealth, and other life choices. Residents will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
Make Career Choices: Job and career development. Adults and teens will have the skills and resources they need to identify career opportunities that suit their individual strengths and interests.

Create Young Readers: Early Literacy. Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write and listen.
Succeed in School: Homework help. Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.

Stimulate Imagination: Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure. Residents will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.
Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong learning. Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

Connect to the Online World: Public Internet access. Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

Express Creativity: Create and share content. Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.

Discover Your Roots: Genealogy and Local History. Residents and visitors will have the resources they need to connect the past with the present through their family histories and to understand the history and traditions of the community.

Invest in Staff: Time will be devoted to all staff to ensure that they are able to provide top-notch customer service and to react appropriately in an emergency.

Seven Goals for the Deer Park Public Library

I. Satisfy educational needs and foster a lifelong love of reading in Deer Park's children and young adults by providing high quality materials and programming.

II. Improve access to the Online World for Deer Park Public Library users.

III. Satisfy curiosity and stimulate imagination by developing a popular fiction and non-fiction collection and providing interesting programming to Deer Park Public Library users.

IV. Ensure that Library users have the resources to make informed career choices, as well as decisions in health, and wealth.

V. Increase access to genealogy and local history resources to help Deer Park Public Library users discover their roots.

VI. Ensure that Deer Park Public Library patrons have programming and resources to express their creativity.

VII. Invest in Staff to improve customer service, safety, and morale.

Goal I

Satisfy educational needs and foster a lifelong love of reading in Deer Park's children and young adults by providing high quality materials and programming.

- **Objective 1:** The Library will increase programming for special needs children.
- **Objective 2:** The Library will add new databases and increase visibility of current databases that are useful to students in their schoolwork.
- **Objective 3:** The Library will continue to improve outreach to students not enrolled in a traditional educational institution to ensure they have adequate resources needed to succeed in school.
- **Objective 4:** The Library will develop programming for teens to assist them with necessary life skills.
- **Objective 5:** The Library will develop programming for teens to assist them with success in their job and career searches.
- **Objective 6:** The Library will participate in the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program to improve literacy and to introduce parents to the ReadSquared software.
- **Objective 7:** Children's computer table will be replaced with an updated table that provides easy access to USB ports and headphone jack.
- **Objective 8:** Children will have access to headphones to improve access to multimedia technology.
- **Objective 9:** Increase participation in Summer Reading Program by improving patron's familiarity with ReadSquared through additional programs and challenges administered year round.

Improve access to the Online World for Deer Park Public Library users.

- **Objective 1:** The Library will provide access to better adaptive technology for our visual or hearing-impaired users.
- **Objective 2:** The Library will update its Express Check machine to be RFID compatible.
- **Objective 3:** The Library will explore joining additional consortia to provide more materials in electronic format.
- **Objective 4:** The Library will continue to update the website to provide greater ease of access to electronic materials for patrons accessing them remotely.

Goal III

Satisfy curiosity and stimulate imagination by developing a popular fiction and non-fiction collection and providing interesting programming for Deer Park Public Library users.

- **Objective 1:** The Library will increase shelving space for new books and audiobooks.
- **Objective 2:** The Library will increase the Large Print collection.
- **Objective 3:** The Library will increase usage of our eBook, downloadable book, and electronic periodicals.
- **Objective 4:** The Library will inventory and update the catalog to accurately reflect the Library's holdings.

Goal IV

Ensure that Library users have the resources to make informed career choices, as well as decisions in health and wealth matters.

- **Objective 1:** The library will update the non-fiction collection to support this goal.
- **Objective 2:** The library will update the reference collection to support this goal.
- **Objective 3:** The library will host a career fair for Library users at least annually.
- **Objective 4:** The library will host one program per quarter that targets the career development, health or money issues.
- **Objective 5:** The library will add additional electronic resources that support this goal and provide training to Deer Park Library users on the use of these resources.

Increase access to genealogy and local history resources to help Deer Park Public Library users discover their roots.

- **Objective 1:** The Library will offer greater selection of electronic newspapers.
- **Objective 2:** The Library will ensure that one or more Featured Friday programs targets genealogy or local history.
- **Objective 3:** The Library will ensure that all local history and genealogical resources are clearly marked, cataloged and shelved for ease of patron access.

Ensure that Deer Park Public Library patrons will have programming and resources to express their creativity.

- **Objective 1:** The Library will offer additional classes for adult crafting/creativity at least once a quarter.
- **Objective 2:** The Library will add at least one additional electronic resource that focuses on crafting.
- **Objective 3:** The Library will revamp its collection of craft books and add additional print resources for crafters.
- **Objective 4:** The Library will host one or more interactive or theatrical programs each year.
- **Objective 5:** The Library will create a maker space.
- **Objective 6:** The Library will create programming to landscape and maintain areas of the library landscape.
- **Objective 8:** The Library will use Library property to extend programming for safety and creativity.

Goal VII

Staff members will be trained on library software and procedures, as well as security procedures to provide excellent customer service and to ensure the safety of library patrons and staff.

- **Objective 1**: All library personnel will receive active shooter training.
- **Objective 2**: All library personnel will receive guidance about weather related issues, relevant to the library building, such as procedures during a flood, tornado, hurricane, etc.
- **Objective 3**: All library personnel will receive training in relation to an issue at the local plants, such as a fire, explosion or gas and liquid leaks.
- **Objective 4**: All library personnel will receive training on best practices for providing library services to patrons with mental health issues.
- **Objective 5**: The Library will upgrade the lobby camera, southeast corner camera inside the library and all cameras outside the building.
- **Objective 6:** The Library will upgrade its burglary and fire alarm system to improve security, possibly including panic buttons in strategic parts of the library.
- **Objective 7**: The Library will develop training protocol for essential software, such as Polaris, Envisionware, Readsquared and OverDrive.
- **Objective 8**: The Library will train on staff annually on the Voter Registration Implementation Plan.

Measuring the Success of Our Plan

- Staff review and evaluation of activities that contribute to the achievement of Objectives every March and September.

- Annual review and analysis of the following data:

  Number of children and adults attending children's program
  Number of adult programs and attendance
  Number of items added to the collection
  Number and type of materials circulated
  Number and type of computer classes offered
  Attendance at computer classes
  Number of hits on the Library's website and Wi-Fi
  Number of sessions on Public Internet Terminals
  Number and type of databases/electronic resources owned
  Access to databases/electronic resources owned
  Number of uses of databases/electronic resources
  Number of periodicals used

- Annual review of the strategic plan during the September Board Meeting

Prepared by: _____ Date:_____
                      Rebecca Pool, Library Director

Approved by: _____ Date:_____
                      President of the Library Board of Trustees