



City of Fort Atkinson
Dwight Foster Public Library
209 Merchants Avenue
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

**LIBRARY BOARD PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
IN PERSON
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2026 – 5:00 PM
ROTARY ROOM**

If you have special needs or circumstances which may make communication or accessibility difficult at the meeting, please call (920) 563-7790 at least three (3) days prior to the meeting date. Accommodations will, to the fullest extent possible, be made available on request by a person with a disability.

AGENDA

- 1. Call meeting to order**
- 2. New Business**
 - a. Discussion relating to the development of a new strategic plan for the Dwight Foster Public Library.
- 3. Adjournment**

Visit us online! City news and information can be found at www.fortatkinsonwi.gov, and be sure to follow us on Facebook @FortAtkinsonWI.

SWOT Analysis Results

8/7/2026

Background

During the staff training held on August 7, 2026, library staff contributed to a SWOT analysis about the community and the library. Minetta led the activity and seventeen library staff members (including both full-time and part-time employees) participated. Regarding the structure of the analysis conversation, eight large papers were hanging on the walls labeled “Community Strengths,” “Library Strengths,” etc. Each staff person had a pad of post-it notes. The conversation began by looking at the community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Staff members wrote their thoughts on post-it notes and added them to the community papers. Minetta read out all of the responses and staff engaged in some conversation. Next, staff members turned their attention to the library. Staff members created post-it notes about the library’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Minetta read out the responses. Following discussion, staff added any additional post-it note responses and drew stars on post-it notes that they particularly agreed with. The responses from the post-it notes as well as the stars (represented by *) are recorded below. Background music was played as staff members were writing and adding post-it notes.

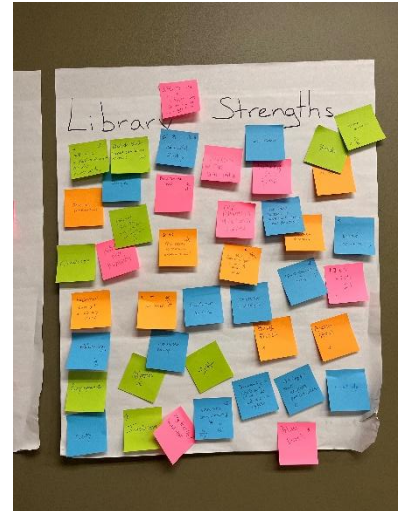
Community Strengths

Great leadership
Enthusiasm
Free events offered (baseball fest)
Community is willing to support
Supports the library
Kind to everyone/other families
Emergency resources (fire dept, ems, police)
A lot of community involved
Group gatherings
Involvement*
Partnering with us for events
Events that bring people together
Many active community groups & organizations



Library Strengths

We are a safe environment for the community**
Dedicated staff*
Great customer service*
Beautiful facility*****
Seems like most adults love it and want to support it
Connection with the community
Accessibility
Services
Home deliveries*****
Trusted institution
Accepting change
Three for Me card**
Working as a team
All welcome
Patrons feel they can ask for info, items in collection, etc.
Our reputation with customer service
Love how customers interact with one another
Staff knowledge; kindness
Loved by community*
Creativity*
Patron first mentality
Free access to resources available to all!***
Free community space for meetings, work, social**
Everyone can get a library card
No fines*****
Customer service
Respectful to everyone
Staff knowledge & caring**
Kids love it*
Welcoming*
Events for all ages
Staff
Collections*
Employees
Cozy
Inclusion*
Very friendly & helpful staff
Welcoming environment*****
Community is grateful for us and all we offer
Memory café! Music & Memory! Memory Kits!
Binge Boxes*
Positive staff*
Patron focus!!*



A staff that respects one another*

Community Weaknesses

Affordable housing**

Lack of accessible transportation*

Negativity on social media

Food shortage challenges (food pantry is not open all day)

Social resources

Ignorance

Lack of opportunities for high schoolers (teen) outside school

Shrinking/loss of resources in SDFA library programs →
how can we help fulfill more of these student needs?

Adults vs kids mindset = shared spaces

Public transportation

Community facebook page

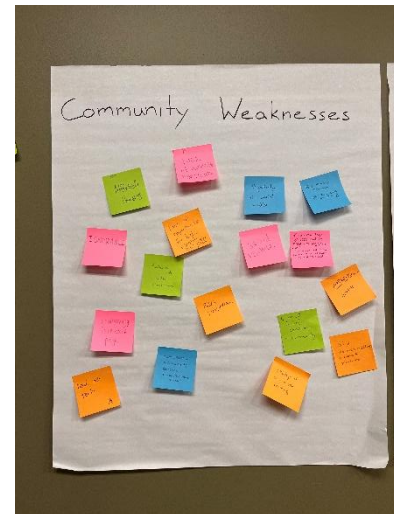
Bad at tech*

Not enough opportunities for teens (without spending money)

Lack of social service in community

Shortage of low income housing

8% of residents in Jefferson County live below the poverty level



Library Weaknesses

Hard to share all resources

Space limitations

Not treated the same by city management

More staff get together**

Smaller staff*

Need a changeable sign outside to announce things

Keeping up with new technology*

Aging facility

Lack of social services

Part time or visiting social service to partner with for community

Budget limits*

Security cameras***

Staff turn around ☹

Staff turnover

More collaboration with the community (farmers market; community events)

Parking*****

Closed mindedness/mindset

During school year, teens' behavior not always positive to library***

More promotion of events



Not having a karaoke night***

Not able to offer all programs and events suggested by patrons

Patrons and community are still not aware of all our resources (no fees; Library of Things)**

Computer layout; separating teens/adults

Not a lot of programs year round (more during SRP)*

More visible computer lab (in front of or in eyeline of ref)

Community Opportunities

Inclusive events

Mental health resources****

New housing coming

Be kind!

Supporting local (small businesses)

Growth

Open to learning sometimes

What to do in an ICE situation*

More resources for social services to unhoused

Library Opportunities

More types of items in library of things

Vending machine****

Partnering with schools and daycares (Do we?)

Makerspace

Partnering with local businesses/chamber of commerce events

Community partnerships*

Better parking*****

Bring back reading with the dogs*

Library cat!**

Hopping on the "3rd space" trend*

Changing for the better*

Partnering with Opportunities or ADRC*

Finding ways to connect with non library users***

Partnership with Literacy Council, school district, business community, healthcare resources*

New ideas and perspectives

Information about ICE/immigration*

More services for teens mental health***

More collaboration with community resources

Flyer in city tax mailing?*

Community involvement

Adding new technology*

Lots of resources



Programs to learn about things & for fun*
 Popularity of romance, fantasy, romantasy
 Reaching 20 and 30 year olds***
 Connect via social media
 More targeted event or programming for this group
 Could get video games...?*****
 Service animal programs (mental health)
 Partnering with school (middle school) to discuss behavior of students after school
 Middle school/tween behavior concerns; thinking about how potential partnership could hit roadblocks concerning student and patron confidential info
 Growth in the City means new patrons potentially

Community Threats

Resistance to change
 Other communities developing faster
 ICE*
 Bullying in schools
 Government slashes
 "Close-minded" attitude toward other groups of people
 Budget/levy limits
 Use our items as drink coasters
 Not the nicest to our items, books, reading tree, etc.*
 Growing cost of living



Library Threats

AI
 Politicians
 Budget/funding
 Keeping up with the needs of the community*
 The growth of AI*
 Budgetary restrictions*
 Other businesses with similar programming***
 Inflation
 Challenges to materials
 After school tweens annoy other patrons***
 Competition with digital/streaming resources
 Carless patrons*
 Book banning**
 Material challenges
 Patron behavior
 Alarm system/overnight guests**
 Digital resources
 Resistance to change



Not enough security cameras

Rudeness of patrons*

Internal negativity*

Digital content (lack of stopping in)

Perception of what the library “should be” (noise, behavior, etc.)****

Misunderstanding of the need for our services

Lack of knowledge of services

Books not coming back!!!

Lost books ☹

2024-2026 Strategic Plan Completion Analysis

Library Mission

It is the mission of the Dwight Foster Public Library to help people achieve their full potential by being a leading resource for information, education, culture, and recreation.

Value 1 – Staff: *The most valuable resource of DFPL is the library staff.*

Ensure a work environment in which staff members are valued and respected.	Ongoing Actions included implementing bi-weekly check in meetings for full-time staff members with the Library Director, weekly full-time staff meetings, twice yearly staff trainings for all staff members that also include time for staff members to share stories about the impact of the library, one round of check in meetings with all staff members, and a “positive postcards” initiative.
Develop all staff by providing high-quality professional development and continuing education opportunities based on annual staff evaluations. This will assist to create and foster a culture of excellent customer service.	Ongoing Actions have included twice yearly staff trainings for all staff members and opportunities for staff to participate in conferences, trainings, classes, and professional groups.
Provide staff training that is focused on emergency situations to ensure all staff are quick to act when an emergency occurs.	Completed (though refreshers should be ongoing) Actions have included training sessions about fire safety, emergency preparedness, CPR, AED use, responding to active threats, and de-escalation. Staff created an emergency procedures binder that staff are encouraged to review periodically.

Value 2 – Space: *Foster a welcoming space that adapts to community needs.*

Create an irresistible destination by making physical and technological improvements to support new and existing services.	Ongoing Actions have included replacing the computer lab floor, replacing brick pavers outside the library, replacing the library’s main server, replacing area
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	rugs, updating signage and displays, and plans to replace the library's AMH book drop sorting machine.
Update the teen space in the library.	Completed The library finished upgrading furniture in the teen room in early 2026.
Explore re-development of the current computer lab as meeting room space or as a digital media lab.	Early stages of progress Staff have engaged in initial conversations about repurposing the computer lab space but formal steps have not been undertaken yet.
Explore how space and furniture may be adapted to accommodate more remote work for the community.	Ongoing Actions have included adding an online meeting room reservation platform and purchasing laptops and meeting OWLs that can be used by the public in library spaces.
Re-evaluate the space for accessibility and make meaningful changes.	Ongoing Actions have included installing portable hearing loops at all three service desks, adding kits throughout the library with tools to make patrons' library visits more comfortable, adding an accessibility page to the library's website, creating virtual tour for the library's google profile, adding large print keyboards, adding trackball mice, adding lighted portable magnifiers, adding rechargeable lamps for tables, and plans to redesign the website with online accessibility top of mind.

Value 3 – Literacy & Learning: *Continue to develop an ever-evolving collection and events for the edification and entertainment of our community.*

Ensure an entertaining and educational collection in a variety of formats that increases in circulation over time.	Ongoing Actions have included expanding the Library of Things collection with items such as portable CD players, learn to knit kits, circulating puzzles, and passes to Little Rainbows and the Fort Atkinson Aquatic Center. Looking at circulation numbers, circulation of some collections has increased while
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	circulation of other collections has decreased. Digital circulation has continued to increase while total physical circulation numbers have been decreasing (largely due to significant decreases of DVD and CD circulation).
Provide instruction on digital technologies and resources.	Completed Actions included offering monthly tech help programs. Over time, interest in these programs dwindled and staff determined that group programs were no longer meeting the various needs of attendees. Staff continue to assist patrons with digital technologies and resources through every day interactions at the second floor service desk.
Further develop or create partnerships that provide resume development, job application skills, and job related skill development.	In progress The system-wide addition of the Law Depot database with a resume builder tool supported this strategic initiative. Library staff notice that many social workers and job coaches utilize library spaces and meeting rooms to meet with their clients. Library staff had initial conversations about Job Pods or arrangements with social service organizations, but these conversations did have not lead to formal actions.
Serve as a community storyteller through the StoryCorps program.	Completed The library was pleased to be able to facilitate 37 total StoryCorps/Community Voices interviews. Over time, though, staff noticed that interest in the program began to dwindle. When a key staff member left the library, library administration decided to not train a new facilitator.

Value 4 – Community: *Provide equitable services for our patrons that enhance their lives.*

Develop transformative and communal events that add value to living in the community. Focus development with the community, not for them.	Ongoing Transformative and communal events have included Explore Together for Homeschoolers programs, the 4K Art Gala, events with authors and creators, programs led by local subject matter experts, Memory Cafes, and the Library Memory Project's
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	spring family day. Additionally, the library developed a temporary mini food pantry to respond to community needs and direct community donations.
Develop relationships with parts of the community that do not currently use the library to understand their needs. When appropriate, provide collections and events that meet their needs.	Ongoing Actions included the development of a Spanish/English language exchange program and monthly programs for homeschooling families.
Raise awareness of the Library's services and resources.	Ongoing Actions have included officially designating a staff person to be in charge of marketing responsibilities for the library. The staff person in this position has taken many steps to share information about the library and its services.
Create partnerships in the community to expand library service capabilities to increase engagement with the Library.	Ongoing Actions have included establishing new partnerships (such as with the Langholf and the Friends of Rose Lake) and maintaining existing partnerships (such as with the school district and the Library Memory Project).
Continue to offer home delivery services and seek opportunities to create access to the collection and library services for individuals unable to access the library.	Ongoing Actions have included weekly home delivery for specific home-bound patrons and regular visits to Reena Senior Living and area preschools.