Background/Introduction

The Saugerties Public Library was established as a Carnegie Library in 1915. In 1992 it became a special legislative district library, serving residents of the Town of Saugerties. In 1998 the Friends of the Saugerties Public Library incorporated as a 501(c) 3 for the purpose of supporting the library and its services. The library is chartered to serve the residents of the Town of Saugerties, numbering 19,192 in 2017.

There are approximately 9500 library card holders, 6100 of whom are active users of the library. Building history: An addition of approximately 8000 feet was added to the original 1915 building, opening in 2010. The building is now 13,000 square feet, with three reading rooms and a community room. The library is open six days per week, 55 hours per week with three circulation desks staffed.

Economic Factors

When IBM closed its campus in Town of Ulster in the 1990s, the area lost its only large-scale corporate employer. As of 2017, 38% of the jobs in Saugerties are in retail, and 32% in accommodations and food services.

Saugerties labor force by occupation:

- Management, business, science, and arts occupations 35.8%
- Service occupations 18.2%
- Sales and office occupations 21.6%
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations 14.1%
- Production, transportation, and material moving occupations 10.3%

(Data from U.S. Census Bureau Factfinder)

Community Demographics

Saugerties is an economically diverse community with 47% of students town-wide qualifying for free or reduced lunch. In the Village of Saugerties 60% of children qualify for free or reduced lunch. Overall, 9.9% of the population is living below the poverty level, and 66% of those people are below the age of 18.

The median income is $58,433 per year.

90% of the population has attained a high school diploma or higher.

31% have a high school diploma or equivalent.

34% have some college or an Associates degree.

24% have a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

As of 2017, 81.6% of children attending nursery school attended private schools. As of spring 2019, Universal Pre-K was offered at two elementary schools and will be expanded to 5 classes by fall of 2019.

As of 2017, 92% of Saugerties residents are estimated to have health insurance.
Vision Statement

“Saugerties Public Library is a center of connectivity in the community. Our vision is to provide an environment that inspires curiosity and empowers residents of Saugerties to discover, connect and grow.”

Mission Statement

The mission of the Saugerties Public Library is to serve as a multi-cultural, inclusive institution dedicated to enhancing the life of every member of the Saugerties Community by providing free access to a balanced collection of educational, cultural, informational and recreational materials and experiences in a welcoming, safe and comfortable environment.

Current Environment

Budget
The 2019 library budget was $639,144, with $580,144 from property taxes (approximately 90%).

Staffing
The library currently has four fulltime, and 16 part-time employees.
Fulltime staff include: Library Director, Assistant Library Director, Librarian 1 (Focused on Youth Services) and Children’s Program Assistant. One Library Clerk focuses on cataloging material into the collection. There are 12 part-time clerks who staff the circulation desks, one library page who shelves materials, one part-time custodian, and one part-time maintenance person. It would be beneficial for the sake of continuity to consolidate some of the part time clerks into one fulltime position. Budget constraints have prevented this from happening.

Programs for Kids
Preschooler Story Time, three times weekly
Girls Who Code, weekly
After School STEM (Tinker Tech), weekly
Therapy Dogs, twice a month
After school board games, weekly

Programs for Teens
Write Here, Write Now, weekly
Book group, monthly
Dungeons & Dragons, twice weekly,
Book group (5-8 grades), monthly
Teen Club, weekly
Programs for Adults
Fitness classes, three times per week
English Language Class, twice weekly
Electronic newsletter, weekly
Writers group and Teen Tech tutors twice monthly

Monthly programs
Healthy Lifestyle; Computer classes for adults, Book Groups; Motherless Daughters Support Group; Friends of Historic Saugerties
Online classes, including foreign languages, Classes such as watercolor painting and memoir writing,
Office of the Aging programs (periodic)
Defensive Driving program: Three times per year

Programs for All Ages
Summer Reading Program; Festival of Trees, Scrabble; Library Fair; Museum Passes; Movie streaming; online magazines and books; Artist receptions: Every other month, Saugerties Film Society film screenings.

Input from the Community

In 2018, we held 15 community conversations to find out what people value most about living in Saugerties and what they see are the biggest issues facing the town. This is a summary of what we learned from over 75 individuals including town board members, the chamber of commerce, civic groups, and individuals. This input has largely shaped this new long-range plan.

Themes from Community Conversations

In Saugerties, people want safety, economic security, and to feel connected. But they’re concerned that lack of economic opportunity, affordability, and lack of communication are in the way of achieving those aspirations.

As people talked about those concerns, they talked specifically about high taxes, lack of good jobs, and lack of civility.

They believe we need to focus on cooperation between schools and local businesses, community-building activities, and resources for under-privileged children. They said if the Town Supervisor, Library, Schools and Chamber of Commerce played a part in those actions they would be more likely to trust the effort and step forward themselves.
Outcomes and Strategies

From the information gathered in the community conversations, the library’s outreach and long-range planning committee along with staff and leaders from the Friends group, have developed the following five outcomes and strategies for the next five years. These outcomes and strategies are based on the library’s existing resources, collections and technology.

These goals are stated in terms of outcomes that are aligned with the aspirations of the community, and are expressed as ways we hope the community will grow in the future.

1. **People feel connected and part of a cohesive community.**

Strategies:

**Existing Programs/Resources**
- Weekly e-newsletters, annual reports, newspaper column, social media, and town-wide mailings.
- Programming, including weekly exercise classes, movie nights, story hours, and teen activities.
- Inviting public space
- Friendly customer service
- Responsive to community needs
- Volunteer opportunities for all ages

**Proposed New Initiatives**
- Enrich the Library’s volunteer program so that it connects volunteers to each other.
  - Staff working with Friends group.
- Create a welcome packet for new residents and work with realtors to disseminate
  - Library director/staff
- Become a clearinghouse for descriptions of local organizations, community groups, and contact information.
  - Library director/staff

2. **Groups in Saugerties and civic leaders regularly meet and work together to solve problems.**

Strategies:

**Existing Programs/Resources**
- Partnerships with schools, friends group, Kiwanis, Ulster Literacy, Police
- Accessible & comfortable public meeting/activity spaces.

**Proposed New Initiatives:**
• Members of the library board regularly attend school and Town board meetings.
  o Outreach committee coordinates
• Develop a resource for groups to communicate and listen
  o Library director/staff

3. **Young people are aware of the skills that they need to find good-paying jobs locally.**

**Strategies:**

**Existing Programs/Resources**

• Online learning tools such as Universal Class, Mango Languages, and Test Prep Courses.
• SPL provides the community with access to up-to-date computers, software, and other new and emerging technologies as they become available.
• After school STEM, Girls Who Code
• Volunteer/paid opportunities

**Proposed New Initiatives:**

• Partner with the Town and Chamber of Commerce to identify skills needed in local businesses.
  ▪ Outreach committee coordinates
• Partner with local learning institutions to discover what resources are available
  o Outreach committee
• Develop a resource to disseminate that information
  o Library staff

4. **People are tolerant of differences and there is a general climate of civility.**

**Strategies:**

**Existing Programs/Resources**

• Programs – E.S.L. Class
• Patron Code of Conduct
• Community pride in the building.

**Proposed New Initiatives:**

• Develop programs that celebrate cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity.
  ▪ Library Staff
5. **People are aware of resources available to help them adapt to and cope with a rapidly changing world.**

**Strategies:**

**Existing Programs/Resources**
- SPL provides public awareness of library services and funding through public/community communications, outreach and engagement
- SPL provides the community with access to up-to-date computers, software, and other new and emerging technologies (as vetted by the MHLS) as they become available.
- Tech support for all devices.

**Proposed New Initiatives:**
- Find new ways to advertise tech help
  - Library staff
- Expand the number of tech helpers
  - Library staff/friends?
- Complete the green business certification
  - Sustainability Committee
- Develop programs and resources to educate people about sustainability
  - Sustainability Committee

**Evaluation of Impact**

The library will use evaluation tools from ALA’s Project Outcome in order to measure the impact of the various strategies articulated in the long-range plan. “Measuring outcomes helps libraries answer the question, ‘What good did we do?’ An outcome is a specific benefit that results from a library program or service. Outcomes can be quantitative or qualitative, and are often expressed as changes that individuals perceive in themselves. Project Outcome helps libraries measure four key patron outcomes—**knowledge, confidence, application, and awareness**—in seven key library service areas:”

- Civic/Community Engagement
- Digital Learning
- Economic Development
- Education/Lifelong Learning
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Job Skills
- Summer Reading

The Library Director will work with the staff to implement Project Outcome evaluations for all library programs in order to gauge patron’s experience, and will report the results of the surveys to the Outreach Committee.

Approved by the Saugerties Public Library board on October 10th, 2019
Review Cycle: 5 years