Summary of Key Ideas and
Recommendations to the Board of Library Trustees

19 June 2018

INTRODUCTION

Speak Up! is a community engagement process designed to gather feedback and input on various key issues affecting Batavia Public Library. Over the course of four community engagement sessions, participants heard foundational, informational presentations on the following topics, the fourth of which was a review of key ideas and recommendations:—

- Your Library Today: The State of the Library 2018
- Focus on the Future: Trends in Libraries
- Stewards of the Public's Investment
- Did We Hear You Correctly?

Speak Up! participants then provided thoughts and feedback to the Library by working in small groups on tasks associated with the session topic.

The following report, "Summary of Key Ideas and Recommendations to the Board of Library Trustees," expresses the general agreement of Speak Up! participants regarding what they believe to be key points to consider in developing a long-range plan for Batavia Public Library. It is important to note that these key ideas and recommendations are based on a sample of the Library population that attended Speak Up! sessions. As such, while the Facilitating Team found points of correlation between these findings and the 2014 Telephone Survey—in fact, the Speak Up! findings affirm the results of the 2014 Telephone Survey—the Facilitating Team recommends that a comprehensive feedback mechanism be employed to gather broader community input on potential solutions, especially for items that require larger expenditures.

SESSION ONE
YOUR LIBRARY TODAY: THE STATE OF THE LIBRARY 2018

Summary of Key Ideas

Participants reported that they enjoy their experiences at Batavia Public Library. They advised that the Library's employees are knowledgeable and friendly, the programs are interesting and informative, and the collection is diverse and current. Most participants were surprised to discover a program, service, or collection that they were not aware of before the presentation. Participants greatly valued the benefits provided by community collaborations. They acknowledged that there are long-term financial challenges with respect to facility maintenance and day-to-day operations.

Recommendations to the Board of Library Trustees

1-1. Expand the Library's use of social media and other technologies to promote programs, services, and collections to the public it serves (infants to seniors)

1-2. Highlight (for the public) the Library's analytical data, such as usage statistics and national rankings

1-3. Ensure exceptional services to Library users by providing and supporting quality staffing

1-4. Explore ways to maintain and expand collaborative programs with community organizations

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SESSION TWO
FOCUS ON THE FUTURE: TRENDS IN LIBRARIES

Summary of Key Ideas

Participants identified trends in society that are influencing what users expect from their Library. They want to maintain the print collection while expanding digital offerings. Participants acknowledged that technology in all areas is critically important and changing rapidly. They suggested the need to understand demographic factors in relation to Library services. Participants anticipate increased demand for meeting space and expanded hours.

Recommendations to the Board of Library Trustees

2-1. Maintain a robust collection of materials in multiple formats

2-2. Identify underserved populations and explore new opportunities for programs

2-3. Respond to changing service and technology needs

2-4. Explore opportunities to repurpose existing spaces to meet changing needs

2-5. Maintain and/or expand hours of operations

2-6. Optimize the use of technology

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SESSION THREE
STEWARDS OF THE PUBLIC'S INVESTMENT

Summary of Key Ideas

The "new" Batavia Public Library building is now more than 16 years old and starting to face major maintenance needs. The maintenance presentation explained the independently prepared Capital Asset Study, which identifies site and building needs for the next 20 years. The study also noted that delayed maintenance is detrimental to the building and expensive, because maintenance and repair costs will only escalate.

The budget presentation showed that 95% of the Library's income comes from property tax. The presentation also demonstrated that, if the Library maintains its current level of programs and services, then its income is not adequate for addressing maintenance and repair needs. Participants evaluated and ranked many possible solutions. The highest-ranking solution was to transfer the soon-to-be-retired seven-cent tax rate for construction bonds to the Library's tax rate for operations (with no tax rate increase).

Recommendations to the Board of Library Trustees

3-1. Conduct an awareness program regarding needs outpacing income

3-2. Maintain the community's investment in the Library building and site by systematically planning to address long-term maintenance needs

3-3. Ask voters to approve transferring the seven-cent tax rate for construction bonds to the Library's tax rate for operations

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