

BML Strategic Planning Minutes, March 16, 2026

Convened at 4:39 p.m. in Meeting Room B and online

Present: Ann Varilly (Chair), Sirkka Kauffman, Bob Ferrante, Starr LaTronica, Jeanne Walsh, Lindsay Bellville, Tara O'Brien, Amanda Whiting

- Agenda changes: none
- Public participation: none
- Minutes of Jan 6, 2026 approved as read

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Marketing

Communication Plan Update (Collaboration with Seth)

Ann suggests coordinating efforts to target specific groups at specific times, and making sure we're not duplicating efforts or leaving gaps. Leo: what is internal communication like around external marketing? Lindsay, Tara, and Amanda shared about how we engage in marketing in our various departments. Lindsay noted that they sometimes don't market a popular program in the CR because they're already overfull with attendees! In program planning, they respond to the annual seasonal calendar of kids'/families' lives.

Is more communication needed in-house? We noted that there is a lot of organic connection and also considered possibilities for more formal coordination.

Amanda does that about once a month with newsletter and social media clicks to see what's getting attention. Sometimes she coordinates that with Tara, who uses feedback forms at programs, including a question about how people learn about events. Those replies are all over the map, though the e-news is probably the most popular. Starr noted that with programs, there are also variables like weather, other programs in town, etc.

Tara takes in new information by serendipity as well. The senior art program happened to be in the afternoon, and it turned out to be a great time for that

population in the winter. The information was anecdotal, but we acted on it right away to create more programs.

The majority of our marketing is about programs, but we also have many other services that we tend not to market that might benefit from a formal marketing plan. Amanda likes to use checklists of the various ways we can promote services. Sometimes we can't get to all the items on the checklist.

Bob: any tools that might help? Lindsay said that Canva has been very useful. But Lindsay and Jeanne both voiced concern that new tools might not be the whole solution, given the constant work of staff serving the public day to day. Lindsay also noted that those of us who have been in our jobs a long time have already developed efficiencies through experience, e.g., Lindsay can plan a Rhyme Time very quickly. Tara noted the outward-facing involvement with patrons that she is part of along with the rest of the staff, e.g., filling in at the desk for lunch breaks while also working on her outreach & programming responsibilities. Starr noted that Tara maintains the rooms calendar and coordinates access to the rooms, which is important and also takes a lot of time.

Tara noted that we're also hosting lots of programs by people who come to us. We're not only developing our own programs—the number of collaborative programs has increased.

Bob: can we use programs to also promote services we have? We do that to some extent already, often tied into the theme of the program. Jeanne suggested we could promote one service at each program, whether or not it's directly related (though we noted that it's hard to find a service that *isn't* related to a program!)

We talked about QR codes, and we have different feelings about them. Starr spoke to Johnny at BCTV to see if they can present static promotional info about the library between programs. He said yes, if they can include QR codes. Leo reminded us that different people like different forms of communication. Some folks really like QR codes!

Ann asked whether we use AI for efficiency in composing memos, etc. Matt and Jeanne are both investigating AI use in libraries through staff programs in the library community. Amanda noted that there are probably good uses for AI, but it isn't necessarily doing a better job of writing promotional materials than we can do using our brains.

- Strategic Plan – Update

Waiting until roughly September. That might be good timing to include the new library director. We'll want to be sure to include staff in a meaningful way.

- Amended By-laws – on hold

- Library Director Transition

Starr can connect with Ann to help transition this committee to a new Director if needed. She'll be available.

Place Holder

- Signage Collaboration with Building and Grounds Committee

Next meeting will be in two months: May 18th (the third Monday in May).

ADJOURNED at 5:40