

**Grace A. Dow Memorial Library**  
**Proposed Board Goals**  
**2007-2008**

1. Collaborate with staff to address revisions in the fines and fees ordinance resulting in a recommended revised ordinance to City Council in November 2007. The Library Board will hold a public hearing at their October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.
2. Monitor the library's performance through library statistics, the Director's Report to the Board and patron feedback to provide recommendations on the future direction of the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library.
3. Suggest innovative marketing strategies to communicate library services and programs to the community.
4. Suggest new opportunities for library collaborations with community organizations.
5. Seek dialog/feedback from the community to determine needs through solicited comments.

**Grace A. Dow Memorial Library Board  
Annual Report 2006/2007**

It was another enriching year for the Library Board, and we are pleased to report progress toward our Board goals. Our goals for 2006-2007 were:

**Goal 1: Receive and discuss parking lot and book return recommendations presented by the consultant.**

The Library Board has heard numerous requests from the community requesting that the Library install a drive-up book drop. The Library contracted with Wilcox Professional Services who provided five options for a drive-thru return. The staff determined that no one option addressed all of the issues related to the installation of the book drop and the flow of traffic through the parking lot. The Board decided that no action was required since staff was not able to present feasible options at this time.

Another factor affecting the book drop/parking lot is the direction that the Discovery Square Public Space Committee may recommend for St. Andrews Road. The Committee is looking at ways to provide safe pedestrian walkways between the Library and the Center for the Arts/Dow Garden. The Library parking lot may be impacted so a decision on the book drop will be delayed until the Board receives information on plans for St. Andrews Road. The Library Board will be following the Public Spaces Project and will provide input (See discussion on Public Spaces Project Goal 4, below).

**Goal 2: Explore at least one new method to communicate with the community about library services in order to preserve and expand our patron base.**

The Board continues to highlight this important goal. A Board Subcommittee began by discussing the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library communication methods amongst themselves. Staff members provided an accounting of the many ways that the Library currently communicates with our public: in-library items such as posters, banners, displays and bookmarks; the library's website with program announcements; print media (Midland Daily News ads and articles, city press releases, outlying newspaper coverage) and MGTV. The Library Connection Newsletter is available by mail, in the Library, and on the Library's website. Library staff participates in a large array of Midland events. We were enlightened and encouraged by the existing Library plans and actions. The staff also announced that they are working towards forming a speaker's bureau to take advantage of speaking opportunities. Melissa Barnard has presented at the Midland County Township Association annual meeting and several individual township meetings.

The Board next discussed what part of our patron base might benefit from additional communication "attention." Outlying townships show lower library usage rates, as measured in library cards per capita, than the City patron base. The question of township funding for Grace A. Dow Memorial Library services is a frequent one at township budget time. Lincoln Township was selected as a pilot for a targeted mailing in May, highlighting the value of having a library card. The actual mailing will include portions of adjoining townships due to mail route boundaries. The Board looks forward to tracking the success of this mailing.

**Goal 3: Review year-end statistics to evaluate and discuss use patterns and future directions of our library.**

The Board was interested in the decline in circulation that was noted during the 2004/ 2005 use statistics review, and worked with the Library to address this topic. The Library staff was very attentive to this issue, and worked to turn it around in a number of ways:

- Continued review and updating of the library collection, and responding to library usage patterns by expanding popular collections like Book Express, Children's Favorites, and CD music. Highlighting print materials through special displays was another method employed.
- Utilizing the Library's website to promote materials. Links have been added to direct users to new books, audio books and DVDs added to the library as well as recommended reading lists.
- Promoting print materials through programming. A vast array of programs for virtually all members of our public, ranging from the many youth services programs such as "The Battle of the Books" to an adult book discussion group, author visits, and computer classes provide an opportunity to encourage use of the Library's collection. These programs continue to see increased attendance.
- Interacting more with Library users to promote library services and programs. By approaching users in the Library, staff is able to ensure that their needs are being met. These efforts and others generate continued and increased interest in library services and facilities.

We are pleased to report that Library efforts resulted in an increase in circulation for this fiscal year.

The Board and Library staff recognizes that the future direction of the library is driven by technology, and continually acts upon that knowledge. Patron concerns and comments regarding Internet and computer usage are addressed through computer training classes, improvements and enhancements to the online catalog system, and providing wireless computer connectivity to most of the Library facility.

**Goal 4: Receive reports on the community public spaces project and how it might impact the library. Provide input as requested.**

Melissa Barnard continually updates the Board on the Project for Public Spaces. Grace A. Dow Library is delineated as part of the Discovery Square area, which also includes The Center for the Arts, Whiting Forest, Dow Gardens, Northwood Creativity Center, Michigan Molecular Institute and Alden B. Dow Home & Studio. The Discovery Square Place-making Team's recommendations include developing a crossing on St. Andrew's Road. This is a major undertaking that will take at least a year to plan and engineer, and it obviously can impact facilities such as the suggested book drop location for the Library. The Discovery Square Place-making Committee is in the process of reviewing ideas on altering St. Andrew's Road and has not yet finalized recommendations at the time of this report. A first step has been accomplished with the citywide addition of "way-finding" signage throughout our community pointing to various "destinations" in our community.

**Goal 5: Review staff recommendations on revising the fines and fees schedules and recommend revisions to City Council.**

The board continued to stay attentive to policies and policy changes. We did not review the full Grace A. Dow Memorial Library fines and fees policy this year, as that remains a "work in progress."

We did review and participate in a presentation on the fine recovery procedures undertaken by the City Attorney's office. Patrons with delinquent fines were contacted by the City to settle their accounts, or to face prosecution. This rather harsh-appearing measure was needed to follow up with patrons who have not returned materials or resolved outstanding fines. At the January Library Board meeting, City Attorney Jim Branson reported that approximately \$42,000 has been collected. The Board approved of this action.

**Goal 6: Proactively support the Arnold Center regarding the upcoming wage challenges facing the Cup and Chaucer in order to keep this service viable.**

The Library Board was made aware of the impact on the Cup and Chaucer from the increase in minimum wage. The Board heard from Mike Shea regarding this issue and assured him that we want to support the Arnold Center and the Cup and Chaucer in anyway we could.

As a result of the minimum wage increase, the Cup and Chaucer was forced to decrease its hours of operation each week. The community has continued to support the Cup and Chaucer and has commented that it would like to see the hours increased. The Cup and Chaucer is looking at ways to raise revenue by

varying the items in the menu and adding a soft drink vending machine to serve users when the coffee bar is closed. Other vending machine options may be explored. The Library Board will continue to support the Cup and Chaucer Coffee Bar by promoting its use.

### **Looking Forward, 2007/2008**

We are proud of our library's accomplishments and continued service excellence, and look forward to acting upon the following goals in 2007-2008:

## CITY COUNCIL GOALS - 2007

---

### **A) Ensure economic sustainability**

- 1) Support economic development
  - (i) Support creation and retention of high quality jobs
    - (a) Provide support to Midland Tomorrow
    - (b) Utilize available incentives to attract investment
  - (ii) Enhance retail and restaurant offerings in the community
    - (a) Support investment in Downtown and Circle areas
    - (b) Support Midland Area Chamber of Commerce Service Sector Development program
  - (iii) Support area tourism
- 2) Maintain strong financial position
  - (i) Seek resolution to Midland Cogeneration Venture tax appeal
  - (ii) Comply with Government Accounting Standards Board 43, 45

### **B) Provide outstanding quality of life via excellent services and amenities**

- 1) Maintain & improve quality of life
  - (i) Support community beautification efforts
  - (ii) Support efforts to produce housing in diverse markets
- 2) Maintain & support an excellent workforce
  - (i) Promote employee development
  - (ii) Enhance employee productivity
  - (iii) Reduce service costs
- 3) Ensure access to public transportation
- 4) Create conditions that ensure housing opportunity for all citizens
- 5) Provide Family Activities
  - (i) Offer public recreation opportunities to all age groups
- 6) Leverage technology to enhance convenience of citizen transactions

### **C) Provide effective stewardship of community resources**

- 1) Provide orderly planned growth of the community
  - (i) Update and implement the City's Master Plan
  - (ii) Maintain and extend water service agreements with surrounding jurisdictions
- 2) Improve citizen outreach, participation, & communication
  - (i) Recruit & retain high quality board & commission members
  - (ii) Expand citizen communication and input opportunities
  - (iii) Promote civil discourse in public policy debate by example

- 3) Develop & maintain infrastructure to meet current and future needs
  - (i) Transportation (system capacity)
    - (a) Develop plans for capacity enhancements on Eastman Ave.
    - (b) Pursue network enhancements recommended by the Master Plan
    - (c) Maintain viability of MBS Airport
  - (ii) Landfill
    - (a) Implement methane gas recovery system
  - (iii) Identify sanitary sewer system capacity restrictions
    - (a) Develop plans to correct capacity deficiencies
    - (b) Initiate implementation of plans to correct capacity deficiencies
- 4) Protect Natural Features
  - (i) Maintain high quality public open spaces meeting current and future needs
  - (ii) Monitor dioxin investigations & report progress to community