Overview

Shirley Amore, City Librarian (DPL) led the first Peak Performance Review. The agenda included:

1. Describe your agency’s alignment with the Mayor’s Vision.
2. Describe how your agency’s mission fulfills the Mayor’s priorities (broadly defined as Kids, Jobs, Safety Net and supported by the foundation of Sustainability and Customer Experience).
3. Strategic plan overview (visual): describe how do your tactics, strategies, and goals support your mission.
4. Convey the importance of and performance on each of these components in graphical form. Depict trends, context (e.g. performance versus other cities, etc.), and goals (where applicable). Describe meaningfulness of each (e.g. a strategic metric improved when your agency implemented a particular tactic, a metric is driven by the number of customers and not our staffing, etc.).
5. Articulate areas of improvement, both potential and current initiatives.
6. Next steps: expectations for coming months, target date for next performance review, proposed agenda for next performance review (note: subsequent reviews should isolate chosen strategies in greater detail and do not need to broadly cover the entire strategic plan, although mission-and/or goal-level metrics should always be reported).

Participants

Shirley Amore, City Librarian, David Edinger, Chief Performance Office, Brendan Hanlon, Budget Director, Michelle Jeske, Denver Public Library, Dianne Lapierre, Denver Public Library, Christian D’Souza, Denver Public Library, Letty Icolari, Denver Public Library, Penny May, Manager of Denver Human Services, Ledy Garcia-Ekstein, Office of Economic Development, Cindy Bosco, Greenprint Denver, Lindsay Neil, Mayor’s Office of Education and Children, Laura Wachter, Manager of Safety’s Office, Stephanie Adams, Budget and Management Office, Sadia Sattar, Budget and Management Office
Discussion

The strategic plan was created in 2007 and updated in 2011. The Vision is the future ‘hoped for’ goal. The Mission statement includes “individuals,” which means children, youth, adults and seniors. The focus of the agency’s vision is “to be proactive in reaching out to community and individuals.” By moving closer to this agency vision, DPL is:

• working with citizens, volunteers and community, city and external partners (“We”),
• on the delivery of programming focused on community outcomes (“will deliver“)
• meeting citizen expectations and outperforming peer institutions (“world-class city”)
• to help each person learn and succeed (“where everyone matters”)

Vision Alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citywide Vision:</th>
<th>We will deliver a world-class city where everyone matters.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agency Vision:</td>
<td>By inspiring individuals to explore, discover and learn throughout their lives the Denver Public Library creates a more literate and engaged community.</td>
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Discussion

DPL’ mission directly impacts all five priorities of the Hancock administration. Selected examples:

1. Kids: We are proactive in ensuring that kids are immersed in literacy rich environments from birth by reaching out to parents and caregivers with important early literacy information and providing engaging opportunities to develop literacy skills at the library.
2. Jobs: We provide access to computers for job seekers and provide training in technology skills essential for today’s job market.
3. Safety Net: We provide opportunity for everyone to improve themselves at their own pace and at no cost.
4. Sustainability: We are ensuring an effective use of City resources by working closely with Green Print and General Services to improve the energy efficiency of library buildings. Green Valley Ranch Branch achieved LEED gold; Sam Gary and West Denver branches will achieve at least LEED silver. Also, piloted a program (Eugene Field) that focused on reducing energy consumption through changes in staff behavior.
5. Customer Experience: This is the key focus for DPL in 2012.
Discussion

Three major community goals support the Mayor’s three priorities:

Kids: Children from birth are immersed in literacy-rich environments where they discover the joy of reading and learning, motivating them to achieve and graduate from high school.

Several research-based programs support this outcome: story times, parent outreach, Read Aloud (weekly visits to Headstart and ECE classes), Summer of Reading, After School is Cool, Reading Rockets (bookmobiles that make weekly visits to Denver schools) and Ask Colorado (24/7 online help for homework)

Jobs and Safety Net: People’s Lives are improved by acquiring the resources and skills needed to prosper and contribute to Denver’s economy.

The Library provides access to almost 600 computers and many technology related classes to help job seekers and others gain skills that are important in today’s job market.

English language classes and Community Learning Plazas help non-English speakers learn English and acquire other skills in welcoming environment that supports individual learning plans.

BizBoost offers entrepreneurs individual help with business planning.

People’s lives are enriched by reading, learning and engaging in experiences that make Denver a better place to live.

Fresh City Life and Fresh City Life/My Branch offers interesting adult programming to encourage life-long learning and community engagement.
The strategic plan is driven by the three community impacts and the initiatives to achieve them.

This outward facing work is supported by several objectives and initiatives. These objectives reflect several important perspectives on the work we do – customer, operations, employees, financial, and partners (Balanced Scorecard)

Each initiative has a logic model detailing the inputs, outputs and expected outcomes of the initiative with key measurements of success.
For Mission-Level Metrics, DPL turned to the City and County of Denver's Annual Citizen Survey. These metrics are still relatively high but trending downward. This could be because DPL’s budget has declined in recent years, which has impacted hours, led to reduced personnel and citizens are not happy with libraries being open for only 32 hours a week. While Better Denver Bond is good for DPL, we have had to close several branches for 6 months at a time for renovations. The combination of budget reductions, the downside of BDB and also the reduction in the materials budget contributed to this downward trend.

Discussion about branch scheduling:

For efficiencies sake, all branches are on 8 hour schedules. Difficult to cover all the bases and provide all the needed services within 32 hour week. DPL has attempted to keep programming at high level despite reduced hours. New technology like self-check out machines and automated return systems has been deployed to achieve maximum efficiency and allow important services to continue. The cuts to hours would have been worse had DPL not done that.
In the last few years, we have increased our efforts to reach parents and caregivers to inform them about the importance of reading and other early literacy activities beginning at birth. The target for 2012 is 3000 parents and caregivers and we will be reallocating some staff resources to reach this target.

Unlike overall circulation, children’s circulation is trending upward, partly due to the opening of the Green Valley Ranch Branch where children’s circulation is higher than adult circulation. Also, due to cuts in the materials budget, we have not been successful in keeping up with adult demand for the latest bestsellers which negatively affects adult circulation. Children’s circulation is not subject to the same pressures and we have a broad and deep children’s collection.
Children’s program attendance overall is trending upwards but we are reaching capacity due to limited hours and staffing. We plan to maintain the current level of service in 2012.

Read Aloud – We currently reach 257 out of 350 ECE and Headstart classrooms using mostly volunteers who commit to reading to the same classroom every week for at least a semester. Hope to maintain this level of service for 2012 while shifting some staff resources to parent outreach.
Summer of Reading is an incentive based program to encourage children and teens to read over the summer. Research shows that children who read over the summer maintain or improve their reading skills. Children who don’t read over the summer lose some of their skills and need to catch up when they return to school.

This program reaches about 40,000 children and teens out of a total population of 128,766 (0-18)

We would like to continue to grow this program but we are at close to capacity with staff and our hours. Can’t grow it much more without additional resources.
Attendance at technology classes is on the rise due to the creation of the Community Technology Center at Central with 127 computers for public use and two computer classrooms funded by an ARRA grant and the Better Denver Bond Program. The CTC is staffed by about 5 FTE and about 75 volunteer docents who contributed 6000 hours last year. Customers can choose from one-on-one appointments or more formal classes to improve their technology skills. Currently, the CTC offers 1-2 classes per day ranging from very basic classes to more advanced classes with many focused on skills needed in today’s job market. The CTC also holds ‘tech petting zoos’ in the CTC and at branches to help people learn how to use electronic devises like e-readers and smart phones.

In addition to tracking attendance at classes, we also conduct self-evaluations at each class to determine if participants are learning skills that are valuable to them.

As part of the state-wide ARRA grant, we will also be comparing our performance with other libraries across the state.

The ARRA grant is also allowing us to add computers and training opportunities at nine branches during the first quarter of 2012.

We piloted a program called ‘free to learn’ with a federal grant. The program helped women recently released from prison learn computer skills and apply for jobs. The program was quite successful with 25 of the 40 women getting jobs. Unfortunately, we don’t have the staff to keep it up but are at least offering weekly labs for ex-offenders.

BizBoost is a one-on-one appointment service for entrepreneurs. Reference librarians work with them to develop effective business and marketing plans using sophisticated business tools available at the library free of charge. The number of entrepreneurs taking advantage of this program has steadily increased since the inception of the program in 2007.
Another target audience is new-immigrants, especially non-English speakers.

We offer two programs:

Community Learning Plazas (CLP): self-paced, informal learning environments for individuals and families.

English Language Learning (ELL): more formal English classes in partnership with the Spring Institute.

Both programs continue to grow partly due to private funding.
We just started counting online visits per capita in 2011 but online use has been steadily increasing over the last several years. Visits per capita and circulation per capita have trended down in last few years due to:

- Budget cuts
- Fewer hours
- Closures for bond renovation projects at several branches
- Week-long, system-wide closure in January 2011 for move to new computer system
- Suspension of holds and new book ordering during the 1st quarter of 2011 related to transfer to the new computer system
- Suspension of Prospector inter-library loan system related to the new computer system

We will be benchmarking DPL compared to a handful of other urban libraries with similar populations who have a Central Library and approximately the same number of branches.

What’s the right balance between keeping the doors open more hours and providing programs? Both are important if we are to stay relevant and have an impact in the community in areas like childhood literacy, workforce development, economic development and adult learning and engagement.

We realize we can’t provide all types of programs at every branch so we provide targeted programs based on neighborhood demographics except for preschool story times which are offered in every branch due to the importance of early literacy programs throughout the city.

Programming is largely funded not through the City’s General Fund, but from private funding or through partnerships.

This year, we plan to work with a consultant to do an analysis of our customers and the community to help us determine the right mix of services and where they should be offered.

Currently handicapped by limited hours and staff.
While visits and circulation have declined, program attendance has been increasing due to the expansion of Fresh City Life adult cultural programming to six branches and emphasis on technology classes and programming to new immigrants.
Customer satisfaction is relatively high but has declined slightly in the last couple of years, due largely to the cutback in hours and the necessary temporary closures of several branches for bond renovations.

Our major focus for 2012 is the customer experience. We will be working with staff to identify quick, inexpensive ways to improve our interactions with customers. We will also be identifying opportunities to increase the number of residents who have library cards.
A key performance measure is turnover rate (inventory divided by circulation). This measures the average number of times an item is checked out. To enhance operational performance, our goal is to increase the overall turnover rate to 5. A high turnover rate tells us that we have the books and materials that people are looking for and that they are available when people are looking for them.

Like many retail operations, we have invested in self-check technology with bond funds to improve the customer experience and increase efficiency. This has allowed us to avoid further cutbacks in hours and redeploy some staff to more value-added functions. We plan to increase the use of self-checkouts to 65% of all materials checked out in 2012 and eventually reach 80-90%.
74% of DPL employees participated in the 2011 City Employee Survey with an 87% satisfaction rate, the highest of any city department. The management team has developed a plan to address the issues that surfaced in the survey and subsequent discussions with staff.

DPL encourages employees to learn and grow and also to share what they have learned with others. Both learning and sharing activities are reflected in the annual employee evaluation process. This year, DPL will be implementing new Learning Management Software to record and track employee learning plans and outcomes as well as class offerings, registrations and evaluations.
To demonstrate cost-effectiveness, DPL looks at the cost per circulation. The increase in this measure was due to the decrease in circulation and slight increase in budget due to the opening of the Green Valley Ranch Branch.

We also look at the percentage of private dollars to general fund dollars. The goal for 2012 is to keep this ratio at 10%.
To expand and fortify partnerships, DPL has made a concerted effort to create more strategic partnerships, with community and city partners. Strategic partners include DPS, Office of Economic Development and Bright Beginnings.

DPL does attract private funding. For example, the Community Learning Plaza (CLP) has been funded by a local couple for the past 2-3 years. All gifts-in-kind, such as food, prizes, Elitch Garden tickets, etc. are tracked by DPL.
DPL tracks volunteer hours and the number of active donors, both of which have increased since 2010. Volunteer hours have increased significantly due in part to the number of volunteer hours in the new Community Technology Center.
DPL is conducting brainstorming sessions with staff to collect ideas for easy, quick and effective ways to improve the customer experience. Three to five ideas will be selected and implemented over the next six months. Customer surveys will be conducted to measure any increase in satisfaction with the goal of 88% customer satisfaction.

**Improvement Efforts**

**Opportunity #1: Customer Experience**

- **Strengthen Customer Loyalty**
  - Collect staff ideas for improving the customer experience
  - Select 3 to 5 quick, easy and inexpensive improvements
  - Implement and measure improvements

- **Target for 2012:**
  - Increase customer satisfaction to 88%
To enhance sustainable operational performance and improve customer access to the collection, DPL intends to initiate floating collections in March of 2012. At present, library branches and the Central Library own their collections. Floating collections will enable DPL to become a more fully integrated system. Large urban public libraries with floating collections have experienced a 30% decrease in delivery volume.

Currently we have almost 13,000 items in transit every weekday. On top of that we have about 5,700 items in transit for holds. It may vary from location to location but in general, by implementing floating, we go from 9 touches per item to 3.

The addition of three new branches would require another driver and truck, but by floating the collection, DPL can increase circulation without the need to acquire these additional resources. It also means that materials will be returned to the shelves much faster and branch collections will be continually refreshed based on customer returns.

DPL will roll-out floating collections with DVDs for one month and then open up to rest of the collection.
In order to strengthen customer loyalty and demonstrate fiscal stewardship, DPL aims to direct efforts toward implementing e-Commerce, giving our customers the ability to pay fines and fees at self-check machines and online. Other libraries that have done this have generated upwards of 30% more revenue.
Next review

- Floating Collections Implementation
- Customer and Community Analysis Project
- Learning Management System Implementation