

Red Feather Mountain Library District

Three-Year Technology Plan

Effective September 2015 – September 2018

Reviewed and revised by the Red Feather Mountain Library District Board of Trustees, Aug. 26, 2015

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Scope

Technology at Red Feather Mountain Library District is a resource that facilitates the Library's work being done; technology is equally a service that for significant number of users is a primary Library offering. Because technology can in itself be time-consuming, complex, and expensive this document is intended by RFMLD Trustees to provide a three-year guideline of expected issues, solutions to those issues (as objectives) and Library assets that can be applied to meeting objectives.

The determination of objectives has been a multi-year process through the following means: Staff review and evaluation; hands-on usage; community comments from Library patrons and community members; user technological requests or suggestions; (occasionally), user frustration or complaint; Library and user 'wish lists'; and, not least user surveys and testimonials.

Objective: Financial responsibility

Development and maintenance of the Library's technology structure is dependent on sufficient financial resources to purchase, install, operate and maintain equipment. It is an annual budgetary issue by which sufficient funding is allocated for hardware and software to allow for an orderly, staggered replacement of obsolescent products as well as unexpected or emergency replacements.

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues by

- Technological expenditures are intended to be cost-effective
- Free or open-source software will be used where and as appropriate
- The Library will continue (through the Friends) to foster the continuing relationship with Microsoft
- The annual budget will include funds for the replacement of at least 5 Library computers in any or various combinations of staff and public machines
- The Library will maintain reserve technology funds
- The annual budget will include sufficient funding to maintain annual licensing fees
- The annual budget will include sufficient funds for emergency or unexpected equipment or software replacement
- Replacement will be on an 'as-needed' (and not necessarily financial) basis to ensure that poorly functioning equipment is replaced first

Objective: Financial opportunities, including granting and endowments

Maintaining technology can be expensive. While local funds are intended to address acceptable levels of service the Library will pursue additional levels of support and enhancement.

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues by

- Continuing to annually pursue USAC e-rate funding
- Funding Objectives through the Friends of the Library
- Advantage appropriate grant opportunities, including SIPA and LSTA funds
- Work with other organizations, locally, state-wide or nationally in cost sharing or pursuing funding opportunities

Objective: Staff training

Optimum use of technology is contingent on the optimum training of staff. However, there are difficulties because of issues of time, distance, limited staff, background, opportunity and money.

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues by

- Advantaging the opportunities presented by webinars and online workshops
- Advantage the opportunities offered by the Colorado Library community including remote and onsite training sessions, conferences, workshops, and as budget allows, outside training
- Review the possibilities and costs available through formal online training Conduct monthly or bi-monthly in-staff training sessions per specific Library technology issues
- Hire staff members with technology experience and aptitude as significant criteria

Objective: Public help and training

Beyond access to the technology the Library provides, users often require assistance with that technology or help with their own technology. The Library will assist.

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues by

- Ad-hoc or informal one-one-one sessions in assisting with technology issues or resolving problems
- Assess the interest in conducting workshops on particular topics
- Address pitfalls in user assistance – for example, making unintended permanent changes while attempting to help
Address the issue of circulation or non-circulation of library technology: user agreements, legal issues and the practicality of library devices outside of direct intervention

Objective: Obsolescence and replacement of machinery

Hardware and software are obsolescent when they no longer adequately perform the tasks originally designed to do or entails greater costs in time, money or effort than replacement (purchasing and training) would otherwise accomplish.

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues

- Though needs and expectations may vary, the estimated life span for any computer is four years
- Equipment no longer meeting its required function or service will be removed from operation
- Equipment will be shifted or reused where opportune. For example, a network printer reused as a personal staff printer or a laptop used for the public catalog or technical services
- Equipment removed from inventory will be either sold, recycled or otherwise properly disposed

Objective: Purchasing determinations

The Library will purchase equipment cost-effectively and appropriate to the services provided and, as best possible, familiar to the majority of Library users.

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues

- The Library will purchase
- PC purchases will be made either through ‘build-to-spec’ or ‘boutique’ vendors (because of the use of industry-standard components) or commercial manufacturers contingent by price, review and performance
- Purchased mass-manufactured machines will be purchased with warranty contracts sufficiently long enough to cover the expected life span of the machine (because of the considerable expense in replacing vendor-specific components in such machines)
- The purchase of laptops or desktop will be individually case-by-case dependent on the function and need for portability of the machine as well as the traditional use of the machine that it is replacing
- Other components – such as Mac computers and devices, tablets, Chromebooks and other devices will be purchased when that purchase facilitates the use and services of the Library, is expected by users, or is required for staff training or enhances programming or other Library functions
- Where ever possible, State Equipment Contracts will be utilized

Objective: Beyond the building

The library building – Red Feather Lakes Community Library -- is a single component in serving the library interests and needs of District residents. The need for services – and technology elsewhere within the area must be evaluated

Through the following three years the Library proposes to address these issues

- Determine needs and costs of technology in facilitating library services beyond the library in Red Feather Lakes
- Providing for emergency services and communication in the event – as occasionally happens – the primary service provider is unavailable
- Review other means of data communication – satellite, wireless service as alternatives to existing landline options
- Encourage area communication vendors to improve and facilitate service
- Advocacy for communications and data issues within the District

Objective: Continuing plan review and resource evaluation

Without review or revisit any plan fails. This section is intended as corrective and guideline.

- This plan will coordinate with the Library's Strategic plan
- This plan will be reviewed annually in May as part of the monthly Board of Trustees meeting and/or the Board Policy Committee
- The revision process for the 2018 - 2021 Technology plan will begin in the summer of 2018 with the intent of having a plan developed, reviewed and approved in the fall of the year
- Supporting documentation for the planning process – administrative and/or based on staff and user testimonials, technological trends, vendor opportunities – will be compiled to assist in this process

Resources for more area information

RFMLD technological issues are directly related to issues of distance, elevation, population, social makeup, visitation, resource availability, government and other factors. The following resources have been consulted.

City-Data.com (2015). *Red Feather Lakes, Colorado*. Retrieved August 12, 2015, from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Red-Feather-Lakes-Colorado.html>

Podunk, the power of place (2015, August 12). *Profile for Red Feather Lakes, Colorado, CO*. Retrieved August 12, 2015, from <http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/genInfo.php?locIndex=281443>

Smythe, A. (2015). Red Feather Lakes Community Library. *From Dream to Reality A Short History of How a Little Library Was Born and Grew*. Retrieved August 12, 2015, from <http://redfeather.colibraries.org/about-us/>

The Virtual Courthouse - Official Website of Larimer County, Colorado (2010, June 1). *Red Feather Lakes Area Plan*. Retrieved August 12, 2015, from <http://www.co.larimer.co.us/redfeather/>