

JENSEN

Memorial Library



Strategic Plan

October 2015 - September 2018

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Introduction

For more than 60 years, Jensen Memorial Library has served the Minden community as a place for entertainment, education, and community support. Every decision, change, program and service at JML is done in effort to make the library an even better place for the community.

The development of this Strategic Plan document was a combined effort of the Jensen Memorial Library Staff, the JML Board of Trustees and the City of Minden, along with input from city leaders and JML customers.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Jensen Memorial Library is to meet the needs of community members by providing resources to assist in their pursuit of lifelong learning, cultural enrichment, recreation, and solutions to everyday problems.

Organizational Objectives

1. To serve the community as a center for reliable and timely information.
2. To support the educational, civic, and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
3. To identify community needs and to provide programs of service to meet such needs.
4. To cooperate with other organizations and develop partnerships to aid in providing such needs to the community.
5. To provide facilities for groups and/or individuals for their educational, professional and entertainment needs.
6. To provide an environment that helps customers build skills necessary for lifelong learning.

History

In 1906, the Minden Public Library Association was formed. Membership was open to any resident for an annual fee of 25 cents, which was used to purchase books.

A committee from the Library Association met with the County Board in August of 1906 to request a suitable room in the new courthouse be reserved for use as a library and reading room for the community. The SW room on the first floor of the courthouse was reserved for library use. Temporary housing of the library had been in the Christian Science Hall, which stood at the southeast corner of Block 28 in Minden.

The present library building was built in 1953 with funds provided by the Andrew Jensen Family. An expansion and remodeling project was completed in 1989 with federal, state and local government funding along with private support from the Minden community, and a gift from Arthur Jensen's widow Irene. At that time, an arboretum was also added to the grounds.

Between 2011 and 2014, renovations of the library were completed with funds from a bequest from the Arthur Jensen estate along with grant monies from the Nebraska Community Foundation. Updates featured the expansion of seating areas, new windows throughout the building, new furnishings, rearranging of collection areas, and addition of the Crane and Heritage Rooms.

Administrative Overview

Facility and Service

Jensen Memorial Library is located in Minden, Kearney County, Nebraska on the southwest corner of 5th Street and Kearney Avenue, one block east of the downtown square. The building is 4,900 square feet. The library's physical address is 443 North Kearney Avenue with a mailing address of P.O. Box 264, Minden, NE 68959.

Services of the library primarily cover the Minden community with services extended to residents of Kearney County. Persons outside this basic service area are also welcome to use the library.

The library is open 51 hours a week, 52 weeks a year. Holiday closings coincide with those of the City of Minden, with discretion for holidays falling on weekends.

Operation/Budget

Jensen Memorial Library is a public institution, operating under the supervision of a five-person administrative Board of Trustees, in cooperation with the City of Minden. Members of the board are approved for selection by the Mayor and City Council.

The Board is tasked with the establishment of rules and regulations for the government, operation, and maintenance of the library. Selection of a Director is done by the Board.

Daily operations are overseen by the Director. This individual is also responsible for supervision of budget, personnel, policies and procedures, building and grounds maintenance, and any other issues that may arise regarding the library. Reporting to the Board of Trustees takes place at monthly meetings.

The Director is also responsible for working with the Minden City Council and City Administrator regarding budgets, annual reports, personnel, and other areas which concern City funds and interests.

Budget and finances of Jensen Memorial Library are managed by the Director and Board and regulated by the Minden City Council. The library's 2013-2014 budget was \$117,363.

Administration of the Library Foundation is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees with funds managed through the Kearney County Community Foundation.

Associations

Jensen Memorial Library is a member of the Central Plains Library System and accredited with the Nebraska Library Commission. The library has been a member of the Minden Chamber of Commerce since 2010.

The Director and Board of Trustees are certified through the Nebraska Library Commission.

The Director is a member of the Nebraska Library Association and the American Library Association.

Service

During the 2013-2014 fiscal year:

- 29,258 items circulated.
- 2,086 registered borrowers.
- 41,787 items held in the collection.
- 192 events, classes, and workshops held bringing in 2,191 participants.
 - 182 events for children, 2,120 attendees.
 - 10 young adult events, 71 attendees.
- 23,799 visits.

Computers/Technology

- Six public stations with access to internet, Apache Open Office programs, black & white printer.
- One public station with access to internet, Apache Open Office programs, color printer and scanner.
- Two public stations and printer in Heritage Room reserved for genealogy research.
- OpenDNS filtering software.
- WiFi access through secured and unsecured networks.
- Internet – wired and wireless – provided by Spectrum Business (formerly Charter).
- Copier for staff and public with black & white and color capabilities.
- Microfilm reader with printer.

Community Profile

Location

Minden, the county seat of Kearney County in south central Nebraska, lies 13 miles south of Interstate 80 Exit 279, at the intersection of U.S. Highways 6 & 34 (east-west) and State Highway 10 (north-south). Minden is the county seat of Kearney County.

The community, with a footprint of 2.1 square miles, is 21 miles southeast of the City of Kearney and 32 miles west of the City of Hastings. This proximity allows for more job and retail opportunities; however people often leave Minden to work and shop in one of these cities.

Population

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 2,923 persons lived in the Minden Community, with an estimate of 3,029 in 2014. Approximately 6,548 persons resided in Kearney County in 2014.

Median age of the population is 43 years, with 22.9% under the age of 18, 6.7% between 18 and 24, 22.9% ages 25 to 44, 25.4% ages 45 to 64 and 22.1% over the age of 65.

The population skews slightly more female than male (53.5% to 46.5%).

Education

Minden Public Schools consists of a public preschool, East Elementary School for grades K-3, C.L. Jones Middle School for grades 4-8 and Minden High School for grades 9-12. The school district has a total enrollment of 778 students. Each of the three schools has a library available for its students. Numerous private and religious-based preschools and daycares are available for care of young children.

	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Teacher/ Student Ratio</u>
Elementary	237	1:19
Middle	299	1:18
Senior High	221	1:9

Language and Ethnicity

English is the primary language in the community with 3.7% of the population also speaking Spanish as the primary or secondary language. A small percentage (>.4%) also identify German as a secondary language. The city consists of a 96.6% Caucasian population with 5.2% recognizing themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

Household and Family Economics

Median household income in Minden is \$40,092, 2% higher than the state average. The median family income is \$47,356, 1.4% lower than the state average. Minden median household income showed a growth of 26.41% from 2000 to 2012. The income growth rate is lower than the state average rate of 30.91% and is about the same as the national average rate of 26.32%.

Community Organizations

Numerous civic groups and community organizations have a presence in the Minden community. Some of these include Optimists, American Legion and Auxiliary, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Red Cross, Classic Car Club, Danish Brotherhood, Gun Club, South Central Nebraska Genealogical Society, Teammates, and several County-based organizations.

Older citizens in the community are served by the Minden Senior Center for social activities, entertainment, and educational programs along with daily noon meals. The Center also provides hearing and foot care sessions, and blood pressure clinics. Bethany Home, HinterLong Living and Longterm Care provide residential accommodations for senior and elderly long and short-term care.

The Kearney County Community Foundation has served as a go-to organization for charitable giving since 1992. The KCCF has given more than \$26,000 to support projects and programs within the county and has awarded over \$24,000 in scholarships. The foundation helps to fund community projects, meet goals, and strengthen community ties. KCCF is the administrator for several major community funds, including the Jensen Memorial Library Foundation Funds which are used for library improvements and renovations.

Tourism

The city of Minden was established in 1876 by German immigrants and is most widely known as being the home of Harold Warp's Pioneer Village. Minden is also known as "The Christmas City" and home of the "Light of the World" pageant performed each December.

Pioneer Village serves as Minden's foremost tourist attraction and is known as one of the best planned and most comprehensive collections of Americana. Housing more than 50,000 objects in 26 buildings, the attraction also offers a motel, gift shop, and campgrounds.

In 2000, the renovated Minden Opera House opened its doors and has since served as the home to meetings, receptions, conventions, art showings, local and national theatrical and musical productions, along with other school and public events. The Minden Community Players work with a board of directors to help provide high-quality local entertainment.

Minden is also home the Kearney County Historical Museum, featuring more than 7,000 items in four buildings native to Kearney County. The museum is home to artifacts from

the Minden community along with the other four towns in the county as well as historical objects including photographs, books, magazines and newspapers.

Recreation

Local recreation opportunities supported by the city's Parks and Recreation department include an outdoor public swimming pool (open May through September), four public parks, an outdoor classroom, two public campgrounds, a public golf course, a public tennis court, and the county fairgrounds. The Minden Area Sports Commission runs summer baseball and softball programs, including T-ball and Legion Baseball teams.

Fort Kearney State Historical Park and Recreation area is fifteen miles north and west of Minden, offering a re-created military post and historical center at the Historical Park, while the Recreation Area serves as a spot for camping, fishing, swimming, and the location of a hike/bike trail which crosses both channels of the Platte River.

Harlan County Lake and the Republican River, located 50 miles southwest of Minden, are also a popular recreational area for residents. The area offers 13,000 acres of water and 75 miles of shoreline along with nature, horse, hike/bike and ATV trails, canoe and tubing areas and a motocross track along with camping, fishing, hunting, and bird-watching areas.

Engaging Minden: a roadmap to 2023 analysis and application

In 2012-2013, the City of Minden and its residents took part in a community planning process to develop a vision for the Minden community. Information contained in *Engaging Minden: a roadmap to 2023* was used to determine a community needs assessment. The overall vision identified for the community is “to promote and grow a diverse economic base while keeping the emphasis in overall community growth and development, including a proactive approach for attracting new residents.”

This document was developed by Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers in cooperation with the Minden City Council, Mayor Roger Jones, City Administrator Matt Cedarburg and members of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Community feedback was gathered from residents, property owners and business owners through public input sessions and a Community Needs Assessment Survey.

Major community needs brought up in this analysis included:

- Infrastructure updates including water and streets.
- Additional commercial businesses such as restaurants, hotel and retail.
- Improved gateway entrances into the city.
- Connecting with the 45 and under age group to retain current residents and attract new residents.
- Recreation and entertainment opportunities.
- Amenities and quality-of-life opportunities for the under 18 population.
- Lack of housing and job availability.

Seven main goals were established for the City in the comprehensive plan, including:

- Improve Public Infrastructure
- Create Gateway Entrances
- Housing Improvements
- Promote Commercial Development
- New Swimming Pool
- Become a Leadership Community
- Support Minden Public School District

These identified needs and goals along with the other areas of concern were taken into consideration in regards to the library’s strategic goals. Community needs addressed by the library’s strategic plan are those through which the library can most contribute to the advancement and enhancement of the community.

Currently, three major projects are being addressed through private and city plans. Work on a comprehensive overhaul of the water distribution system throughout the city began in September 2015. Construction of a new High School began in the summer of 2015 with work projected to be completed on the main structure by the 2017-2018 academic year. Initial

planning has also begun for a new swimming pool/water park facility in the community, although no specific goals or timeline is currently in place. Royal Engineered Composites, the community's largest employer, will soon be expanding to increase plant size and workforce over the next five years using grant monies received.

Library S.W.O.T. Analysis

Internal Strengths

- No charge for non-resident cards.
- Number of service hours.
- Popularity and diversity of DVD collection.
- Recent renovations – nice building with pleasant atmosphere.
- Helpful and friendly staff – familiarity with community and residents.
- Genealogy Collection – variety of research databases and materials available, dedicated room, volunteer will do research.
- Meeting room availability.
- Numerous seating and study areas.
- Children’s play area.
- Open WiFi for cardholders and non-cardholders.
- Internet-access public computer stations.

Internal Weaknesses

- Limit of handicap accessible entrances – no automatic door on interior doorways (door is propped open during operating hours).
- Limited programs offered for teens and adults.
- Inadequate use of volunteers.
- Absence of Friends Group.
- Limited parking – lot area consists of just four regular and one handicap parking spot and is located on a one-way alley. Street parking is limited as building is surrounded by residential lots.
- No baby changing station.
- Insufficient promotional materials to inform community of services and collections offered.
- Lack of consistent message and look on publicity and marketing materials.
- Staff inadequately proficient in regard to technology.
- Aging technology equipment.

External Opportunities

- Limited number of entertainment outlets in the immediate community.
- Almost 23 percent of population under the age of 18.
- Active community groups and organizations willing to work collaboratively.
- Good word about library slowly spreading throughout community.
- Increased positive working relationship with City.
- City is in midst of several community-improvement efforts including infrastructure and economic development.

External Threats

- Stagnate to slow community population growth.
- Competing activities in community.
- City revenue contributions reduced over past years.
- Community perception of library for many in community has been adverse or mixed.
- Proximity to larger communities.

Peer Comparison

Jensen Memorial Library was compared to its peer libraries in Nebraska in accordance to standards set by the Nebraska Library Commission. (2,960 ± 15%, equaling 10 comparison libraries)

JML in top 25%:

- One of only 4 libraries that do not charge non-resident fees
- Service hours
- Number of children's programs
- Total children's program attendance
- Total number of library programs
- Total attendance at library programs
- Number of FTE staff
- Number of reference transactions
- Number of videos held

JML in bottom 25%:

- Building square footage
- Total materials held
- Number of adult programs
- Attendance at adult programs
- Number of public internet computers
- Number of volunteers
- Volunteer hours per week

Community Needs Assessment

Community Need #1: Connecting with the 45 and under age group

Goal 1: Increase community knowledge of library services and activities.

Library customers and non-customers do not know about all of the services and opportunities offered by the library.

Objective 1: A publicity/marketing campaign will be organized to increase community knowledge of library services, determining services most underutilized by public.

Objective 2: Events and classes will be held monthly at the library through which unique services are explained and demonstrated, utilizing staff knowledge and expertise along with guest presenters to develop classes in group and one-on-one settings.

Goal 2: Re-establish Friends Group

It is important for the library to be able to extend its reach into the community through a friends' group through means of advocacy, volunteer opportunities, and financial support to keep the library strong, relevant, and well-funded within the community.

Objective 1: Develop a core group of interested persons to meet with Director to outline establishment of group.

Objective 2: Director, Board of Trustees and core group develop executive board to the begin process of establishing the group, creating organizational outline and recruiting at-large members.

Objective 3: Establish as a 501(c) (3) organization, develop written by-laws, and outline operating procedures, purpose, mission and priorities of service. Determine requirements for membership, including dues structure and incentives.

Goal 3: Catalog and organize genealogy collection.

Proper organization and cataloging of the genealogy collection will allow for easier access to information sought by researchers. The library has seen a steady increase in the number of persons interested in using the collection for history research, including an increasing number of persons in the 35-60 year-old age category.

Objective 1: Assistance will be sought from the Kearney County Genealogical Society and Kearney County Historical Society to determine relevance and usability of items in current collection along with items which may need to be added to the collection.

Objective 2: Through research with peer libraries and professional historical and genealogical organizations, the library will define the best way to categorize and organize the materials.

Objective 3: Catalog, label, and shelve items in accordance with Objectives 1 & 2.

Community Need #2: Becoming a Leadership Community

Goal 1: Provide quality training and continuing education for staff.

To assist the community in being on the leading edge regarding research and technology, Jensen Memorial Library staff members need to be up-to-date on library services, research capabilities and methods, and new technologies.

Objective 1: All staff will take part in bi-annual in-service training sessions. These meetings will utilize peer knowledge to teach each other about specific topics or guest speakers may be brought in to speak about matters relevant to library services.

Objective 2: Staff will be expected to participate continue educational opportunities and become involved with local and state organizations which support job knowledge. Each staff member will be expected to participate in at least two such classes, workshops, meetings, or the like each year.

Objective 3: At least one staff member (in addition to the Director) will become certified through the Nebraska Library Commission's Public Librarian Certification Program.

Community Need #3: Support Minden Public School District

Goal 1: Expand opportunities for teens to participate in the library.

Teen and pre-teen age groups in the community are limited with extra-curricular options outside sanctioned school activities. This group has been identified as one which needs to be involved with the community so they may stay in the area after high school graduation and/or return after college.

Objective 1: Develop a teen advisory group utilizing current teen library users and volunteers, offering CAT hours needed for school community service requirement.

Objective 2: Draw upon ideas gathered from TAG group to host at least three teen-only events by May 2016.

Objective 3: The current volunteer program will be expanded upon by taking current pool of volunteers and offering additional ways through they can earn credit hours at the library. Teen volunteers will contribute 10% more hours via tasks such as shelving, cleaning books and holding informal peer-led events.

Objective 3: The library will call upon school groups to assist with events and activities such as book sales. The assistance of at least three school groups will be utilized per academic year.

Evaluation

This plan will be reviewed by the Jensen Memorial Library Board and Library Director annually and as otherwise needed. At that time, goals and objectives will be evaluated for progress along with any possible revisions. Revisions and amendments will be added to the Strategic Plan materials.

At the end of the stated three-year period, a full assessment of these goals will be done. Additional and/or revised goals and objectives will be put in place for the next three to five year term.

Summary

The Director, staff, and Board of Trustees of Jensen Memorial Library all share in the vision of continuing to improve the library through quality collections, meaningful events and activities for all ages, involvement in the community and superior customer service.

Through the aforementioned goals, the library will be able to continue to reach increasingly higher standards in these areas and overall continue excellent service to the Minden Community.

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