



Date: December 6, 2011
To: Chairman J.J. McCament and Members of the Board of Trustees
From: Georgia Lomax, Deputy Director
Subject: Efficiencies

Pierce County Library has been building an organizational culture and staff that learns, adapts, looks forward, and continually improves processes, services and themselves. This direction was chosen to ensure that the Library continues to offer its community and customers value, that it can evolve quickly in a society that changes ever faster, and that it has a staff with the adaptability, resilience, and judgment to work well in this environment and that will help the Library grow and reach its goals.

This is reflected in the Library's core documents, from the *9 Skills and Qualities* all staff must demonstrate and the *Leadership Descriptors*, to the *Foundations of a Learning Organization*, the *Balanced Scorecard* initiatives and *the Experience Model*.

In 2005, when the Library made this decision, no one knew that an economic adjustment was lurking around the corner. It was a decision based on good management and operational practices, and a tax-supported institution's necessary adaptation to changing public expectations and lifestyle. That decision prepared and positioned the Library to accept and actively address the challenges of today's environment which require it to continually evaluate and change, and to carefully make difficult choices about what it provides, how it does things and where limited resources are used. Work that began with a vision of growth, is now serving the Library well in both short-term and long-term approaches to working with multiple-year revenue loss, and in reevaluating long-held strategies and beliefs that may not be valid in the current economy.

Regardless of the funding environment, identifying and choosing these core operational and learning strategies signaled the decision and commitment that the Library and its staff continually evaluate what is done, how and why it is done, and to adjust appropriately. The shorthand for this is "efficiencies".

Finding and implementing efficiencies allows the Library to save and reallocate resources, and to build capacity. By finding ways to do work faster, or to do less work to achieve the desired result, frees time and resources to be used on the activities, tasks and services that best support the Library's service to the community. A number of approaches are used:

- Stop what is no longer important, necessary or valued by the customer
- Automate or use technology and appropriate time-saving tools
- Work smarter/differently to improve on how things are done
- Empower customers to help themselves
- Renegotiate and find the best deals

Attached is a selection of efficiencies that have been implemented and that demonstrate the different approaches. These approaches work to help staff spend time at the highest value level in their job by focusing staff time away from routine tasks and toward activities that require skill, knowledge, and especially interaction with customers or community, as the Library works to spend its allotment of time, money, and resources on the right work and the right services.

During the board meeting I will briefly highlight a number of additional efficiencies and their results.

GL:ct

Attachments