



GREY HIGHLANDS
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Box 280, Flesherton, ON N0C 1E0 (519)-924-2241
contact@greyhighlandspubliclibrary.com



Box 299, Flesherton, ON N0C 1E0 (519) 924-2843
museum@greyhighlands.ca

For publication – Sept. 24, 2014

Modelling local cultural governance

Governing culture could be like herding cats. How do you get community creativity to follow a straight line or fit in a box? The answer – you don't.

Instead, the Grey Highlands Public Library and the South Grey Museum have taken on the cultural governance challenge – with the community and without the cats. It may also turn out to be without straight lines and boxes too.

These two community cultural leaders have partnered to look at cultural governance processes to guarantee sustainability, determine some kind of collective community vision and allow inclusive input from a variety of local individuals, groups and organizations – what project managers call “stakeholders”.

You have a stake in this if you consider what you do, or your group's mandate or mission to be about local or regional culture. Whether you do artistic things, provide creative outlets through a group or program, offer recreation or heritage activities or are interested in the retention, development and maintenance of our local culture – the project partners want to hear from you.

Through a current Cultural Development Fund project, the public library has hired consultants to look at governance models to more closely align the library and museum goals and strategies. This part of an overall comprehensive project, also offering community outreach through a roundtable, will offer a governance summit to discuss how things will work moving forward and a later regional cultural summit for interested individuals and groups across the county.

The project is the next step in an overall strategy to promote culture in the community. The library had a Strategic Development Fund grant in 2008 to enhance library services, develop new partnerships and offer new educational tools, including the digitized Agnes Macphail collection online. In 2010, a Cultural Strategic Investment Fund grant funded a new “virtual branch” for the library, offering a 24/7 library experience.

The Chamber of Commerce completed a Creative Communities Prosperity Fund project for the community in 2011, which gathered information on cultural assets, developed a community profile and provided training on municipal cultural planning, with a final report loaded with resources. A follow-up grant from that project saw the Municipality of Grey Highlands obtain funding from the same source. The museum took the lead on that project, partnering with the library to conduct a community survey and public meeting with local groups to gather local insight. Cultural maps were developed for community facilities and businesses, creating an updated cultural assets list, which is now available online at visitgreyhighlands.ca. The project culminated in a municipal Cultural Plan, passed in April 2013.

Other organizations have completed research projects, such as the Highlands Community Co-op's “Have Your Say” initiative and the municipality's Strategic Planning process, which both sought to promote our culture.

A Grey Highlands Cultural Development Fund Collaborative Project Initiative

For more information – contact@greyhighlandspubliclibrary.com

This project will allow the Municipality of Grey Highlands to bring a broad spectrum of culture under an overall visionary model to work collaboratively with the entire community. The library and museum already work well together, so this will enhance the community's ability to work closely to benefit everyone.

For information or to get involved contact the library at contact@greyhighlandspubliclibrary.com.

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT: Wilda Allen, CEO, Grey Highlands Public Library – 519-924-2241

contact@greyhighlandspubliclibrary.com

A Grey Highlands Cultural Development Fund Collaborative Project Initiative

For more information – contact@greyhighlandspubliclibrary.com