

Appendix I

SWOT analysis and inventory

STRENGTHS (internal to RFL)

What are the RFL's strongest contributions to our community? What do we do best? What does our library do that no one else does? What do our patrons like best about RFL?

We are small, our patrons are "known," and we provide individualized service. There is strong integrity of the director and staff, the staff is professional and willing to learn, there is a good working relationship between staff and trustees, and trustees have a strong commitment to the mission. We provide fast internet with 24-hr access, our building is in good condition with a homey/cozy/welcoming interior and is located in proximity of the park for outdoor programming. We offer all the services of a larger library, and have a large physical collection relative to our size. We are open to all, and serve all members of the community, with home book-delivery as an option for less mobile patrons. We have a good connection with RVS and literacy development with volunteer mentors, we are a strong role model of lifelong learning. We offer a diverse array of programs throughout the year. We have a fund created for keeping technology/computers updated, and produce the local newsletter, the *Roxbury Newsy*, four times a year. Community support is strong and currently we are adequately funded.

WEAKNESSES (internal to RFL)

In what areas does RFL have fewer resources than we need? What else needs improvement? What should we avoid? What do our patrons wish we did better?

Our space constraints limit future planning, there are no private conference rooms or work rooms. A larger space would allow for more group learning/training activities during regular hours, and allow for more educational opportunities etc. Parking is sometimes an issue (large events, heavy snow winters). We have limited hours of operation and limited after-school hours. Our building could use better energy efficiency (insulation) where our heating costs are higher than they could be. Digital trends means there is less personal face-to-face service to patrons. Recruitment and retention of volunteers is challenging, we need more volunteers. We could improve our communication and advertising about events, and could improve fundraising ideas and implementation.

OPPORTUNITIES (external to RFL)

What could we do if only RFL had the resources to do it? What is happening in the world now that we would like to take advantage of? How can our strengths open doors to opportunities for RFL?

With more human and funding resources, we could develop a broader audience for programs/services, increase patron diversity (there are “power groups” driving library use: homeschoolers, active seniors and families with kids). We could collaborate with other libraries on programming (collaboration ≠ consolidation). We could have a book mobile to reach geographically distant East Roxbury, or offer programs there. We could find ways to increase access to information and the number of books, expand our collection of physical objects and “kits”, and reach out to summer camp staff and campers to use the library. RVS closure presents an opportunity for a larger space if it returns to town ownership: would provide more access for patrons (such as workspaces), or could use other town buildings to expand the RFL to overcome space constraints and expand services.

THREATS (external to RFL)

What is happening in the world that could impact RFL negatively? What library services are provided elsewhere with greater ease for patrons, either locally or regionally? What weaknesses leave RFL vulnerable to cuts in funding or in competition for your services?

Climate change may make us more vulnerable: we are located in a flood zone, and are subject to Village power outages , which could be addressed with installation of a generator and sump pump. The shifting political climate in our nation is not supportive of libraries or educationb(though this may not be the case in our region). There is local competition for limited funding resources, and a potential for funding cuts due to the perception that libraries are non-essential services. The “digital age” could be driving a decrease in use of the physical space and resources (more online, ebooks etc.). Our direct competition is from larger libraries with greater hours of operation, and both public and private work and conference areas. We need a formal building maintenance agreement with our Selectboard.