

**RISING TO THE CHALLENGE: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries
2015 Spring Conference**

**New Hampshire Library Trustees Association
May 18, 2015**

**ACTING ON ASPEN TRENDS:
Tools and Resources for Trustees**

A Workshop Presented by Maureen Sullivan and Norm Jacknis

One of the first steps that can be taken to introduce the report and begin community engagement is to hold a Community Conversation. Trustees and the Library Director can plan this event together. To start such a conversation, select one or two questions from among the list below.

Questions to Start a Community Conversation

What are your aspirations for this community?

It is 2020 and you have just awaked from a long sleep. As you look around, you see that your community is just what you had always hoped it would be. What is happening? How is the community different? What are you doing that makes a difference?

If you could wave a magic wand and transform this community what change would you most want to see?

If you had a magic wand and could have any three wishes granted to strengthen the health and vitality of the community, what would they be?

It is 3-5 years from now and the Library and community have a thriving, productive relationship. What does this look like? What 3 steps were critical to making this happen?

What kind of a community do we want? What are the most important attributes? Essential components?

What are the core factors that give life to this community?

When you first came to this community what were your most positive and powerful impressions?

As you reflect upon the many shifts happening in the world today, describe one that gives you hope. How might this community respond to this one big hope?

What exists now that will enable our community to realize its dreams and aspirations?

Imagine that it is 2020 and your community has just been recognized as one of the five best in the country. What is said in the proclamation? What did it take to receive this recognition?

The Aspen Institute is preparing a *Dialogue on Public Libraries Toolkit*. It will include a variety of easy-to-use worksheets and activities.

- **Separate Information Sheets** – These will be pulled from the report and reformatted to be used as handouts.
 - A Renewed Vision of the Public Library
 - Strategies for Success (available now)
 - People, Place and Platform (available now)
 - The Library as People
 - The Library as Place
 - The Library as Platform
 - Jobs and Economic Development
 - Literacy Champion
 - Civic Resource
 - Strategies for Success (*completed; need to modify to a one-page vs. four-page document*)
- **People, Place, Platform Assessment Tools** – Short assessment tools on each topic will enable users to determine the positioning of their library.
- **Case Studies** – Some will highlight work already underway, and others will showcase the diversity of libraries and communities served.
- **Action Step Worksheets** – The toolkit will include one-page sheets for each of the “15 Action Steps.” Additional worksheets may be developed for other stakeholder groups, e.g., trustees.
- **Madlibs** – This activity is designed to help librarians tell the stories of their communities and to help create the vision for their community.
- **Convening a Conversation** – This document will provide suggestions for how to plan and convene a community conversation about the dialogue and how to elicit from conversation participants what the dialogue means for their community.