



Westwood Public Library Update
Lizzy McGovern, Library Director
September 13, 2021

Library Services:

The Library is fully open and after labor day is returning to its usual “normal” hours:

M-T 10am-9pm (Pre Covid, the main library opened at 1pm on Thursday but since the branch is closed we have been opening at 10am).

Friday: 10am-6pm

Saturday: 10am-5pm

Sunday: 2pm-5pm

COVID19: Mandatory Preventive Measures: With the Delta variant causing breakthrough infections to vaccinated individuals, the board of Health has issued a recommendation to the public to return to wearing masks while indoors in public buildings. Public buildings such as the library have many different individuals of all ages spending time inside the library together. Most notably, with the return to school, many students (who are not eligible for vaccination) are returning to the library for after school visits and while they are required to wear masks in school they are not required to wear them at the library. As we head into the colder months wrought with colds as well as other potential COVID19 variants, it is worth discussing possible mandated preventive measures to spreading the virus.

Facilities Update: The town and I would like to move forward with moving the library custodians over to the facilities maintenance department. We will increase both the custodian positions to 40 hours and this will help cover and further enhance the new Wentworth hall and main library needs. We will have a custodian in the building from 4am-12pm and from 4pm until 9pm Monday-Friday; a member of the facilities team will stop by the library between the hours of 12pm-4pm for any immediate needs. We will continue to have a weekend custodian from 10-5 on Saturdays and 2-5 on Sundays. The mechanical pump that is part of the HVAC was fixed and put back in place and is now working properly. I will be in touch with Jimmy as we move forward with a permanent replacement for the chiller. Moving forward, facilities staff and custodians will be in charge of set up for the meeting rooms at the main library.

Wentworth Hall / Islington Branch Library Update:

Wentworth Hall is just about ready to be turned over to the town, the paint is being touched up. Furniture and shelving was ordered in June 2021. We have been in touch with Tucker about the furniture and shelving but do not yet have a firm delivery date. Expected delivery is about 14 weeks.

21st century fund grant for business center: The 21s Century fund has approved a grant for technology upgrades for the branch library and its new business center! We will have computers, laptops, technology for hybrid programming, and a new early literacy computer station for the children’s area. We have ordered most of the items and expect delivery in the next few weeks.

Since we will be sharing the building with town departments that will be open M-F during the day and the recreation department will be using the community space for programs as well, we would like the branch to be open and available for the public during those hours as well. Here is what I would like to propose:

HOURS Currently:

- Branch is budgeted for 3 days a week for a total of 21 hours.

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
10AM-5PM	1PM-8PM	10AM-5PM
7 hours	7 hours	7 hours

HOURS Proposed: Branch would be open total of 42 hours

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10-6	10-6	10-8	10-6	10-6
8 hours	8 hours	10 hours	8 hours	8 hours

42 hours opened to the public, translates as 97 hours of staffing (84 hours with two staff members in the branch at all times when open to the public, and 13 hours of an additional third staff member covering lunches and programs).

In terms of staffing the hours, we need to assess and decide what we would like to offer in terms of the level of service. I would like consistency across the board between the two locations in terms of expectations of service and job duties for library assistants.

Staffing

- I am extremely happy to announce that Caitlyn Moore is our new Children’s Librarian! Caitlyn will be taking over for Kristy and has already brought her creative talents to the children’s department in the last year with storytimes, summer reading visits, engaging displays and so much more.
- Corinne Coveny started as our newest Reference Librarian in July 2021. Corinne brings us experience with programming and collection development. We are so happy to have her join the team

- Evening Custodian: Jimmy and I conducted interviews for the evening custodian in August and were delighted when Mike Schmidt accepted the offer! Mike will be the new evening custodian added to the facilities department. He has been a custodian for an office building and owns his own successful landscaping business. He is scheduled to start in the next couple of weeks and his hours will be 4pm-12am.
- I am very excited that our staff is getting involved in the library profession by taking on leadership roles and joining local interest groups:
 - June Tulikangas was elected to be Vice-chair for the Minuteman Library Network's Technology Interest Group.
 - Kristy Pasquariello was elected to join the Digital Content Working Group for Minuteman Library Network. Kristy is now a lead purchaser for children's EBooks and audiobooks for the entire network for Libby/Overdrive.
 - Felicia O'Keefe is the new Youth Services Section chair for the Massachusetts Library Association!!
- Staff Meetings/Professional Development: In the past, the main library was closed on Thursday mornings and we utilized this time for staff meetings (we usually closed the branch for the two All Staff meetings we had a year). Since October 2020 when we reopened for express browsing (and because we do not have the branch opened yet) we have been open on Thursday mornings. If we are to remain open on Thursday mornings, I would like to select dates for the year that we can set aside for staff meetings and training. The main and branch will operate on limited hours on those dates (opening at 1pm most likely). We should pick one day of the week so it is consistent throughout the year.

Strategic Plan

Mary, Maureen and myself met to go over the consultants and narrowed it down to a local consultant Conni Cranos who works with businesses and companies both in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. Last Friday we zoomed with Conni to hear her thoughts on the library and what we are looking for in the process. Conni custom builds the process to match our needs and is willing to be onsite and get to know staff and other stakeholders in the community. We will be continuing the conversation with Conni as we think she might be the best fit for what we are looking for. I am hoping to begin the Project Startup phase later this month and utilize some time during the All Staff Meeting for gathering staff input etc.

FY22 Budget/Capital Budget Request

The FY22 budget was approved at the Spring Town Meeting. Initial requests for Capital Improvement plans were due to the Finance Director at the end of August. Please see the attached sheet with the library's requests for FY23-FY27. The facilities department will put in the capital improvements requests for the physical building of the library and has put forth for FY23: parking lot repaving and fixing of cobble stone work and also a request for re-painting the inside of the library in FY25.

BookMobile: After researching and discussing options with both Town administration and a bookmobile consultant, we have another more viable option for a library bookmobile. The Council on Aging will be receiving a new van this year as part of their capital improvements, we now have the option to retrofit their retired vehicle into a bookmobile. The benefits of using the van are many, we would not need special licensing to drive it, many vans are easily outfitted into bookmobile where

patrons can enter inside the vehicle at stops and therefore could be used throughout the year and not just in warmer weather (with the firetruck it would be difficult to maneuver throughout the winter months). I think this could be a wonderful opportunity for collaboration with other town departments and I am planning on looking into local and federal grants that can absorb some of the cost of the vehicle transformation.

Poet Laureate

We need to decide on a selection committee (who serves on it and for how long) and who will be the governing agency overseeing the Poet Laureate. I am currently going through collated information on how to proceed and will draft next steps and potential guidelines for Westwood Poet Laureate.

Summer Highlights:

Adult and Youth (Children's and Teens) Services:

Summer Reading was extremely successful again this year. The entire program was held online with our Beanstack site which meant patrons could log books and reading from wherever they were vacationing from and had ample opportunities to submit their digital raffle tickets.

Participation snapshot:

- Kids: 695 (237 earned their Summer Reading Champion signs for reading 50 hours/books)
- Teens 81
- Adults: 117
- School with the most participants (percentage) winner: Hanlon School!
- Community Reading Goal of 40,000 hours: All together we read 40,187!

The Children's Department had a fun summer of programming, storytimes outside were very well attended and popular as well as a visit from the Roger Williams Zoo who came with live animals. Felicia and the teens did Balloon art and murder mystery party. The library partnered with Westwood Recreation and held two outdoor movie nights at the field at Deerfield. The adult department served up several virtual programs including learning to make key lime pie and a zoom visit from acclaimed author Lisa Windgate!

- Beginning in September the library's meeting rooms and study rooms are open for reservations.
- Programming for the Fall will be either virtual, outside, or hybrid.
- Westwood Day is September 25th and the library will have a tent with the Friends of the Library and will be giving away prizes and books. It would be wonderful to have the Trustees presence at our spot for a portion of the day. Please let me know if you are interested and available to attend.
- Memorial of September 11th: Suzie and Caroline created a special display in the stairwell commemorating the 20th anniversary of September 11. It is a very respectful and moving display with images of book covers and corresponding appropriate quotes.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lizzy McGovern, Library Director