



Seekonk Public Library

Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2019

The Seekonk Public Library provides high quality library service from its facility at 410 Newman Avenue. Each year the library takes up the challenge to respond to the increasing demand for service by Seekonk residents. Through careful management and creative application of public and private resources, the library met and in many cases exceeded the expectations of its users in fiscal year 2019.

Seekonk Public Library remains one of the most highly used town services. The library was open a total of 2,973 hours last fiscal year. With few exceptions, the library was able to maintain its six day, sixty-hour a week schedule. The library was visited 91,435 times last fiscal year, which averages to 1,751 people per week. Approximately four thousand individuals used their Seekonk library cards in fiscal year 2019. The library also issued 820 library cards last year to first-time users.

The library continues to struggle to offer services from a deteriorating thirty-nine-year-old building with insufficient space. There is reason to hope that Seekonk will have an adequate library building in the near future. In July 2017, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) made a tentative award of 7.3 million dollars to the Town to pay for about 48% of the total construction costs of a new library building. Seekonk was not among the first projects to be funded, so it was placed on a waiting list. Seekonk is now in seventh place on this list. We currently estimate that the MBLC will offer the Town funding in the summer of 2023. The Board of Library Trustees continues to work with an ad hoc group of private citizens and non-profit organization in anticipation of this offer. The group is working to coordinate public support and fundraising efforts for the project.

Seekonk Meadows, the passive recreation area adjacent to the library, began its seventh full year of operation in 2019. Thousands of people visited the Seekonk Meadows to walk its pathways, appreciate nature or to attend the concerts and other events produced by the library.

The library's primary attraction is its diverse and interesting collection of materials. Library users can choose items from a varied collection of

One of the MOST USED of our Town Services

Seekonk Public Library in FY 2019

- Total hours open: 2,973
- Total visits: 91,435
- Active card holders: 5,224
- New users getting cards: 820
- Total items lent: 317,998
- Reference questions: 6,776
- Times the library meeting rooms were used : 616
- Total attendance at children & family programs: 6,644
- Total attendance at adult & teen programs: 2,032

approximately 130,000 items. This includes materials in a physical collection of over 59,000 printed items and about 23,000 electronic media items, including CDs, DVDs, and Blu-ray. The Library's investment in a variety of physical and on-line media is part of an overall effort to develop a collection reflective of the diverse needs and interests of Seekonk residents.

The library now offers library users access to over 47,000 electronic items online, including, movies, TV shows, eBooks, recorded books, and music. This large increase in the number of offerings was due to the introduction of a new on-line service, Hoopla, and an increased investment in an existing service, OverDrive. The number of resources available through the SAILS network also increased significantly. In addition, Seekonk library users now have increased access to the electronic resources of other library networks throughout the state.

Books and other printed materials still account for approximately two thirds of the physical collection. Electronic resources (CDs, DVDs, electronic books) account for the remaining third. In 2019, the library continued to build its collection of Blu-Ray video discs and electronic games. The library also increased the availability of downloadable e-books, magazines, audio books, and musical recordings through services such as OverDrive and Hoopla. These electronic resources are part of an overall effort to develop a collection reflective of the diverse needs and interests of Seekonk residents.

One indication of how successful these efforts have been is that Seekonk Public Library consistently has one of the highest per capita lending rates in the state. The library directly circulated 236,950 items last fiscal year. Children's materials accounted for approximately thirty-six percent of this total. This total includes thousands of electronic items that people downloaded either at the library or from home.

Interlibrary lending continues to be a large part of the library's circulation. Many users of the library took advantage of its membership in the statewide library network to borrow or download over 39,000 items belonging to other libraries. The availability of these other items is a major benefit of participation in the

Smart Memorial Library Trust Report for Fiscal Year 2019

Town Meeting approved a bylaw in October 1985 that established the Smart Memorial Trust. The initial assets of the trust were those of the Smart Memorial Library, which had been one of the principal public libraries serving the Town of Seekonk prior to the construction of the current library building on Newman Avenue in 1979.

The purpose of the Trust is "to support the goals of the Seekonk Public Library to provide the widest possible range of informational, educational, and recreational services to all individuals and groups in the community". The members of the Board of Library Trustees also serve as the trustees for the Smart Memorial Trust., and the Town Treasurer holds and manages these trust funds. The enabling town bylaw requires the Library Trustees to report annually on the status of the Trust to the Town. Accordingly, the Library Trustees wish to report that as of July 1, 2019, the Smart Memorial Trust fund balance was \$40,539.32. The library did not expend any money from this fund in fiscal year 2019. The Trust earned a total income of \$577.75 last year.

Massachusetts Library Network. Seekonk Public Library also lent over thirty-one thousand items to other libraries. The Massachusetts library grant formula compensates local libraries for these loans to users in other communities. Last year, the Town of Seekonk received over twenty-four thousand dollars in state aid.

The many programs and classes offered by the library were another major reason that people visited last fiscal year. Last year, the Adult Services staff produced 91 programs with an attendance of 1,693 people over the course of the fiscal year. Our popular museum passes service, covering nineteen local attractions, continued to be popular with over 900 checkouts in fiscal year 2019. In addition to general technology support of library computers and related services, hosted regular iPad and Android Help hours in the library and continued its technology classes at the Seekonk Senior Center. Adult Services provided support for online services and collections, including the popular new service, Hoopla, for downloads of books, music, TV shows, movies, and comics., and the new mobile catalog app produced by the SAILS network

Partnerships continued to play an important role in program offerings. Thanks to funding from The Friends of the Seekonk Public Library and Sturdy Memorial Hospital, the library continued our Outdoor Summer Concert series.

The library also offered 258 programs for children and families. These programs had a total attendance of 6,644. About three hundred children participated in the Summer Reading Program. This popular program helps to keep students reading during the summer months. Last year the library continued its outreach effort to teenagers. The library offered thirty-eight programs specifically geared to young adults, which had a total attendance of 339 teens.



“Shredding Day” Free Document Shredding

Various groups and organizations used the library’s main meeting room 255 times last year. This was in addition to 361 times the space was used for library programs. All of these programs support the library’s larger mission to promote life-long learning, childhood literacy, personal health and wellbeing, and informed public discourse.

The library has a total staff of twenty people. Eight are full-time employees and six of these are professional librarians. Sixteen members of the staff are represented by the Seekonk Library Staff Association, American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts. In FY 2019, the Town negotiated a new collective bargaining agreement with the Library Staff Association that extended the agreement through fiscal year 2020.

All of the library staff members take great pride in the personal services they provide. Last year, the library staff members provided reference assistance and individual instruction to users of all ages a total

of 6,776 times. Many of these questions involved using the wide variety of electronic resources available through the library. The staff also devotes a great deal of time to assisting the people who connect their personal devices to the free Wi-Fi service at the library. Approximately 5,400 personal devices logged on to the library's wireless network last year to connect users to the internet countless times during the year. The public also initiated almost six thousand sessions on the library's thirty-two public computers. All of this assistance and instruction is part of a larger effort to help people become knowledgeable users and consumers of new information technology.

The library is also working to remain in the forefront of technological innovation. The library completed the second phase of its conversion to the use of RfId (radio frequency identification) technology. In FY 2019, the library used both state and local funds to purchase two self-checkout stations. RfId will allow the library to automate many routine, labor-intensive tasks. The resulting increase in efficiency will improve the quality of service offered to library users, and allow the library to keep-up with a growing demand for service in the future.



Self-checkout Station

The library could not be the popular and effective service it is without the support of the community. The library is fortunate to have the support of many individual volunteers. Sixty volunteers worked at the library last year and they contributed 3,201 hours of service. Two non-profit organizations, the Friends of the Seekonk Library and the Seekonk Library Trust, provide additional support to the library. Money raised by the Friends supplements the basic services paid for with tax dollars.



Volunteer Appreciation Brunch

These popular additional services include the museum passes, family night programs, and the summer concert series. In fiscal year 2019, the Friends of the Library donated approximately \$18,000 for these and other services. The Seekonk Library Trust exists to solicit and accept donations from private sources for library purposes. The focus of the Library Trust is on addressing long-term needs of the library. Both organizations are important parts of the public and private partnership that provides quality library service to the people of Seekonk. The Board of Trustees wishes to thank both organizations on behalf of all library users for their help in making last fiscal year a truly exceptional year.

Lastly, a critical ingredient to the library's success is hearing from you about the job we are doing. We welcome your comments, complaints, and recommendations. For your convenience, the library has set up an email account, trustees@seekonkpl.org, for you to contact the Board of Library Trustees.

Respectfully Submitted,

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Michael Durkay, Chair

Sharon Connors, Vice Chair

Alyssa Richard, Secretary

Ann Caldwell

Lynn Cristino

Catherine Capello

Cynthia Corbett