

## **Mastics- Moriches- Shirley**

### **Community Library**

#### **Long Range Plan**

**2021-2024**

#### **MMSCL Mission Statement**

The Library provides Technology, Learning and Culture – all personalized with a caring, friendly and non-judgmental attitude.

The Library does this by giving accurate information, supplying cutting-edge technology, and supporting and promoting lifelong learning, the arts, entertainment, cultural awareness and intellectual freedom.

#### **Philosophy of the Community Library**

A philosophy of service constantly grows and changes. It is useful, from time to time, to evaluate where we are as an institution. What follows is a summary of the Library's current philosophy.

A community establishes a library to provide its public with shared services. Through its elected representatives, the community itself decides what services it wants (and is willing to pay for) and, to a large degree, how those services are to be delivered.

After receiving input from the Trustees and wider community, the staff attempts to provide the type of service the public wants, in the manner the public desires, as efficiently as possible. The staff response is constrained only by economic, legal, and practical considerations.

#### **Purposes and Objectives of the Community Library**

The Community Library's purpose and function is to provide library service to the entire population of the William Floyd Union Free School District. The wide variety of services offered should provide opportunities for the education, cultural enrichment and development, recreation, and entertainment needs of citizens of all ages, from infancy through the senior years.

Immediate objectives which will enable the Library to fulfill this purpose and function are as follows:

1. To offer the services of the Library at a strategic location or locations throughout the district so that all patrons have reasonable physical access to its facilities.
2. To provide general reading materials, audio-visual materials, reference and information materials and other library services for all ages.
3. To provide programs that will enlighten and enrich patrons of all ages.
4. To improve and enhance the public image of the Library in the community and familiarize the public with its multitude of services.
5. To strengthen and improve the skills and knowledge of the Library staff so that the best possible services can be available to the patrons.

### **Technology**

The library has made significant changes to the technology used by both patrons and staff to improve services over the last few years. The Committee believes that technology will continue to play a large role in the library's delivery of services to the community, especially as streaming content improves. Implementation of new technology will be subject to cost/benefit analysis.

Our patrons' use of technology is becoming more mobile with the use of tablets, smartphones, and laptops. Research shows that on average, patrons using the library have a minimum of two (2) wireless devices. Sources of frustration expressed by patrons include the lack of electrical outlets in convenient locations to charge their devices, wireless access points reaching capacity at peak times, and a lack of wireless printing.

#### Recommendations:

- Improve the wireless capacity throughout the library building. Add additional electrical outlets, where possible, throughout the Library.
- Install charging stations for patron use.
- Complete the implementation of RFID technology.
- Investigate providing a supply of laptops or tablets and mobile hotspots as a pilot project to increase WFSD student access to homework help and library resources.
- Provide listening devices for use by both hearing impaired patrons and those who wish to create a private listening atmosphere.
- Continue to provide coding classes and other technology training for patrons of all ages, with an emphasis on STEM programming for youth.
- Expand patron access to content creation technology and training including 3D printing,
- Continuously revise the library website/mobile app
- Implement linked data so library resources are easily discoverable through Internet searches.
- Explore the implications and possibilities for the use of artificial intelligence in Library programs and services.

## **Customer Connections**

The Library is used as a community center for our patrons. It continues to be a place to socialize, learn, and work. As the needs of the community change, the library will remain an agile organization, able to respond to the community needs in a timely manner. The Library will engage with customers in meaningful ways, continuously developing our reputation as a trusted place to go in the community for information, education, and entertainment needs.

### Recommendations:

- Continue to provide the community with excellent and diverse programs which appeal to all age groups and segments of our community.
- Provide opportunities for our customers to help co-develop our program offerings based on their unique interests.
- Create/revise welcome brochures and packets that can be shared with new customers and with local real estate agencies, health clinics, and other appropriate organizations to promote the library to current and future residents.
- Continue and expand our outreach efforts to bring library programs and services where our customers are, including fairs, festivals, business events, school district events, community events and more.
- Continue to reach out and inform the community of library programs and services through traditional methods and social media.
- Conduct an ongoing evaluation of how the Library is meeting the community needs with the programs, collections, and services. Each Department Head will prepare and present a strategic plan with both short-term and long range goals and objectives.
- Survey customers through on-line tools, in person interviews, and focus groups to gauge needs and develop plans for improved Library service.

## **Community Partnerships**

The library serves a vital role as a space where people can come together to share their experiences both as individuals and as a community. By documenting and recognizing these shared experiences, the library is an important force in creating community identity. We will continue to fulfill this role of both documenting and participating in community events, achievements, and milestones.

The community's Local History Collection will continue to focus on the acquisition, identification, preservation and dissemination of documents and artifacts that reflect the unique identity of our local community.

#### Recommendations:

- We will continue to seek out opportunities to leverage our role as a catalyst for preserving and building community identity. Through collaboration on community wide events and celebrations such as Tri-Hamlet Day, William Floyd's Birthday, National Night Out, and participation in important civic events and festivals, we will position the library as a community partner.
- Items from our Local History Collection highlighted on social media to build community pride and sense of our rich history.
- Collaboration on Tri-Hamlet Day, WF Birthday, NNO, and/or other community-wide events.
- Getting the good news out about our community through all library channels.

#### **Staff Development**

The library staff members are tasked with providing outstanding service to all members of our community in a rapidly changing environment. The rate of technological change is increasing, as is our patron's reliance on our staff members to help them stay up-to-date. We offer large group classes, one-on-one training, and online education for our patrons. We need our staff members to have a solid understanding of the technology, devices, and tools we provide which are proprietary in nature, as well as those that are available in the consumer market. Staff members also need ongoing training on traditional workplace topics to keep the library running effectively. Lastly, staff need to be kept current on the changing socioeconomic profiles of our communities.

## Recommendations:

- Provide Library staff with annual technology training appropriate to their position to address community needs.
- Support Library staff with ongoing supervisory and managerial training appropriate to their position to address the internal needs of the Library.
- Offer a mix of in-person and online training to meet the varied schedules of our full-time and part-time employees.
- Support attendance at in-person and virtual professional conferences and training sessions.
- Host an annual staff education opportunity that provides an overview of the unique demographic and economic state of our community.

## **Public Awareness**

One of the greatest challenges we continue to face is making the community aware of the library's services, resources, programs, classes, and events. The library promotes events using a mix of printed material and social media targeted to distinct groups.

## Recommendations:

- Create a formal public relations plan with the assistance of a public relations firm.
- Continuously obtain email contact information and mobile telephone numbers for all patrons to use for notification of future programs, services, and events.
- Continue to identify a network of individuals and organizations that would benefit from receiving information about the library programs and services.
- Create standard presentations about Library services in multi-media format that can be delivered to community groups by a Library Board member or staffer and/or consumed online on demand by the public.
- Highlight accomplishments of community organizations at the library to bring additional awareness of library services to their members.
- Continue publication of the library's monthly newsletter and e-mail newsletters.

- Continue and expand promoting the library programs and services through social media.
- Find additional ways to reach or customers through paid advertising in print and online.
- Develop niche advertisements for customer segments most likely to respond to the information by interacting with the library.

### **Finance**

The Library strives to operate in an efficient manner that builds customer trust and support for the institution. We take pride in providing transparent access to operations information, making financial records and Board documents readily accessible on our web page and at the library for customer reference and review. The Library adheres to the standards and laws applicable to school-district public libraries in NYS. An annual financial audit is conducted by a professional accounting firm as part of our adherence to best practices, and for a process of continuous improvement. For each year the Board members request an increase in the annual operating budget, the community can vote on that budget, signaling their approval/disapproval with the spending plan.

In 2012, New York State mandated a tax cap which imposed greater restrictions on the year-to-year increase in the tax levy available for library operations. The library's tax levy limit may be overridden by a resolution by a 60% vote of the total voting power of the library's governing board and approved by a simple majority of voters (more than 50%). If the library successfully overrides the tax cap, then the taxpayers will not be eligible for a portion of the Star property tax exemption. While the allowable levy growth factor from the state keeps shrinking, mandated costs (pension and health coverage) keep increasing. The long-term implications of staying within the tax cap will be challenging for both patrons and the Library Board and staff.

Members of the Board, the Director, and Library staff are encouraged to seek private donations and grant funding wherever possible.

Members of the Board, and the Director, are encouraged to advocate with residents and their elected officials to educate them on the importance of Libraries as an essential educational service and to recommend additional funding. Elected officials will be contacted on a regular basis to inquire as to supplemental funding available for Library operations, capital projects and special projects.

## Facilities

The Board of Trustees is tasked with maintaining a facility that addresses community needs including adequate space, lighting, shelving, seating, power, and data infrastructure that is ADA compliant.

The Mastics Moriches Shirley Community Library (MMSCL) was created by the voters of the William Floyd School District in 1974. On December 12, 1979, a bond issue was approved to build a permanent Library on donated land and opened in March of 1982. A 24,000 sq. ft. addition was dedicated in 1995.

In 2010 the community rejected a proposal to expand and renovate the existing facility in its current location.

As a community resource, the library was at a crossroads after the failed bond vote, and the Board of Trustees sought the community's help to decide how to proceed, given the facility's need for renovation, repairs, and asbestos abatement. The Board and the community determined the best course of action through a community driven process. A series of facilitated meetings (*Envision our Future*) were held in 2014-2015 to gather community input.

The library board members pursued the path outlined by community members at the three 8-hour public *Envision our Future* charrettes. More information about the process and the workshop videos and reports can be found at <http://future.communitylibrary.org>. The meetings were open to the public and attended by a diverse group of residents, elected officials, community leaders and library staff. A summary of recommendations from participants follows.

The Envision participants identified the following options to explore:

- Option 1: Renovate and expand existing building
- Option 2: Demolish existing building and rebuild on existing site
- Option 3: Construct new building on new site
- Option 4: Satellite facilities

Facility Goals as identified by Envision participants:

- Parking – ample and easily accessible
- Pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation access
- Flexible space
- Information Technology – expanded computer spaces and improvements to data wiring and electrical capacity
- Improved infrastructure/utility revamp – MEP, daylighting, etc.
- Improved acoustics
- Expanded internal space
- Accessibility
- Less noise
- More meeting rooms
- Adequate toilet rooms
- Service entrance
- Green Building – LEED Certified
- Improved circulation – clearly navigable non-disrupted pathways
- Community space/center – large community gathering space
- Outdoor space for gardens, relaxation, discovery, and recreation
- Security
- Property ownership

To achieve the above goals, the Envision participants voted in favor of the Library Board members pursuing a new facility at the former Links golf course located on William Floyd Parkway. Subgroups of the original Envision group continued to meet regularly with the Library Board and administration in the following months to develop a conceptual plan for the new facility.

A bond referendum for the proposed new library was proposed and voted upon on February 7, 2018. The referendum failed.

The library board then hired architect Rick Wiedersum of H2M Architects to help identify another solution that the community could accept. A plan was developed that would create 2 satellite branches, one in Mastic Beach, and one in Moriches on school district property, and completely renovate the existing library building.

On December 10, 2019 the community residents finally approved a \$22.7 million-dollar bond to create a 3-building library system: a branch library in Mastic Beach, a branch library in Moriches, and renovated Main library in Shirley. The library committed \$4 million from its capital reserve fund to make the total project investment \$26.7million dollars. The construction project would complete the two branches first, then close the main building and operate services from only the branches for up to 16 months while the main building is renovated.

During the process of planning for the new construction bond, the William Floyd School Board entered into an agreement with the library to use acreage at the Moriches elementary school site for a library branch. Part of this agreement included having the library take over the site of the Little Red Schoolhouse. The Board of Trustees committed \$1 million dollars toward the restoration of the Little Red Schoolhouse in Moriches. The expectation is that grants and community fundraising will be needed to complete the required budget for restoration. There is currently no timeline for completion of the Little Red Schoolhouse.

The library also leased property from Suffolk County on Neighborhood Rd. in Mastic Beach across from the proposed library branch location, to create outdoor program space. The library established a budget for the project, but grants and community fundraising will be necessary to Bring this project to completion.

Construction on the branches began in Q1 & Q2 of 2021. Once complete, the main library project will begin. It is expected all three library facilities will be open during 2024.

#### Recommendations:

- Continue to execute the building project plan as approved by the residents of the district. Modify plans as needed to stay technologically current.
- Provide excellent service to our residents during the closure of the main facility for renovation. Staff will need to be creative and flexible in their efforts during this time. We will look for off-site locations for additional programming to supplement offerings at our branches. We will rely on our strong Suffolk County Library partnerships for inter-library



loan and in anticipation of our patron's increased usage of neighboring libraries during this period.

We look forward to a highly successful building project that will establish three state-of-the-art facilities to serve the residents of the William Floyd School District for years to come.

Respectfully submitted,  
Plan Committee

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Wendy Gross, Vice-President of the Board of Trustees  
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*Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees December 20, 2021*