



**COVENTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**LONG-RANGE PLAN**

**2024-2029**

*Approved by Coventry Library Board of Trustees, 9/2024*

## LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Coventry Public Library is to educate, inform, entertain, and enrich the lives of all our patrons by offering free and equal access to collections and services.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

Development of this plan is based on input from staff and patrons as well as current library trends. Today's library is a community center – a place for lifelong learning to take place, a place to foster early literacy in children, and a technology hub. Use of the library changes rapidly and we are always finding new, unique ways of meeting our patron needs and wishes. Because space constraints continue to be problematic, the library has increased its offerings of digital materials and is reaching out even further into the community to offer programs at other venues while still maintaining our traditional roles.

Thank you to the Coventry Public Library community, Board of Trustees, and staff for providing their time, talent, and energy creating the 2024-2029 Long-Range Plan.

## LONG-RANGE PLANNING TEAM

### COVENTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Glenn Underwood, Chair
- Barbara Bridge, Vice Chair
- Gloria Martins, Secretary
- Colleen Duffy-Golec
- Jason Farber
- Fred Raisner
- William Rogers

### COVENTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION

- Lauren Walker, Director
- Jessica Carsten, Assistant Director

# 2021-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following are the action items accomplished from our 2021-2023 Long-Range Plan.

## GOAL 1: PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE LIBRARY SERVICES TO ALL TOWN RESIDENTS

*Completed actions:*

- Conducted a Mobile Library Pilot Program during the summers of 2021 and 2022 to serve members of the community who might not normally come to the library, including those living in low-income and elderly/disabled Housing Authority properties, children at the Parks and Recreation summer day camp, children at the Westwood YMCA summer camp, and those visiting the Coventry Resource and Senior Center.
- Acquired a permanent outreach vehicle to bring programs and services further into the community.
- Reviewed and revised all current policies with input from department heads.
- Replaced public copiers with more dependable models.
- Updated the aging server software and obsolete hardware, in order to maintain reliable and secure services to the community.
- Became a passport acceptance facility and began accepting passport applications by appointment. After nine months of offering this service, as of July 1, 2024 we had accepted 300 passport applications.
- Extended our service hours by staying open until 8 p.m. on Thursdays.
- Switched to a new Circulation Software System (ILS) that is cloud-based. This was done throughout the library consortium. All of the library staff attended many hours of training and learned and embraced this new system.
- Replaced furniture that no longer served its function with more mobile, less bulky items that maximize library space and allow flexibility for any future furniture configuration changes.
- Applied for and received a Champlin Grant to renovate the library's restrooms. This will make the restrooms more welcoming and accessible to all.

## GOAL 2: FOSTER COMMUNITY RELATIONS

*Completed actions:*

- Youth Services staff attended open houses at Alan Shaun Feinstein Middle School, Tiogue Elementary, Hopkins Hill Elementary, Blackrock Elementary, and Washington Oak Elementary in September/October 2023 and continue to attend open houses whenever possible.
- Collaborated with town departments and organizations to coordinate displays in the display case.

- Expanded our Teen Volunteer Program. When Young Adult Librarian Kylie Woodmansee revived the Teen Volunteer Program in FY21 (post-Covid) she had 47 volunteers that year. She has steadily increased engagement with this program each year and in FY24, she had 77 teen volunteers, plus 41 who satisfied their volunteer hours by providing book/media reviews for their peers, for a total of 118 volunteers.
- Continued to distribute a quarterly Youth Services newsletter through the Coventry schools as well as preschools and day care agencies in the town of Coventry.
- Our Outreach Librarian began bringing library services to after-school sites in Coventry, specifically at Washington Oak and Western Coventry.
- Collaborated with the Town, Parks and Recreation Department, and School Department to sign on to the Governor’s Learn 365 initiative, through which we received a grant to purchase a Charlie Cart (mobile kitchen) that we use to teach culinary skills to grades K-12 at after-school programs; and a Book Caddy, which we will use to bring library materials and services into the community.
- Collaborated with the Town, Human Services Department, and School Department to sign on to a Community Learning Centers Municipal Grant to “create centralized, convenient spaces for all ages to participate in education, employment, and wellness programs.” The Town of Coventry was awarded a grant to convert one-third of the Town Hall Annex into programming space for workforce development, health monitoring, and educational support. The library will have a dedicated space in this Community Learning Center that will be used for quiet study space, programming space, and a new location for the Literacy Volunteers of Kent County.
- Collaborated with other town agencies to strengthen the community through programs and services.
- Began a partnership with Black Oak Kitchen & Drinks and ACE Entertainment to co-host two trivia nights per year – one in April for National Library Week and one in September for National Library Card Sign-Up month – to promote library services to more members of the community.

### GOAL 3: MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES

#### *Completed actions:*

- Designed a new all-in-one brochure featuring all library services, which is available at the Circulation Desk and is also brought on outreach visits.
- Increased marketing efforts so that residents will be better informed of all the library has to offer. One of these efforts was instituting a monthly “Service Spotlight” in *The Coventry Reminder*, in-library signage, library newsletters, and on social media, to inform the community of one service per month. This has greatly increased the usage of most of the featured services and materials, especially items from the Library of Things.
- Created a TikTok account for Young Adult services to reach teens on social media.

## **GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS**

### *Completed actions:*

- Added to the Library of Things, including travel games, board games, lawn games, DVD/VHS conversion equipment, a projector and inflatable screen, a retro Nintendo NES gaming system, and a microscope.
- Added more adult, young adult, and children's Playaways to our collection.
- Added Memory Kits to the collection for those experiencing memory loss and their caregivers.
- Using an OSL Summer Reading Mini-Grant in 2024 we added four new at-home learning kits for school age children and their families, for a total of thirteen in our collection.
- Began participating in Baker & Taylor's Sustainable Shelves program whereby we have earned money for our discarded books and audiobooks.
- Replaced our former book donation bins with new Bay State Books donation bins. Bay State Books is an outside company that sells, repurposes, or recycles any donated books and we receive \$0.04/ lb. for these.
- Developed a collection of circulating thematic literacy based kits for Greene's Children's Room (similar to the ones already in use at the main branch).

## **GOAL 5: INCREASE LIBRARY PROGRAMMING**

### *Completed actions:*

- Added three new book discussion groups: The "Studies in Crime" True Crime Book Group, the Staff Picks Book Group, and the Millennial Book Club, which meets off-site.

## **GOAL 6: IMPROVE STAFFING & TRAINING**

### *Completed actions:*

- The Assistant Director, Head of Adult Services, and Young Adult Librarian all attended the ALA conference in 2022.
- The Director and Assistant Director attended and presented at the Connecticut Library Association Conference in 2023.
- Made Outreach Librarian a full-time position to give us more visibility in the community and help us to bring essential library services to more residents on a regular basis.

## **GOAL 7: EXAMINE TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION**

### *Completed actions:*

- Purchased ten laptops that allowed library staff to begin offering consistent technology instruction classes. Topics covered thus far include internet basics, social media basics, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint.

# 2024-2029 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## GOAL 1: PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE LIBRARY SERVICES TO ALL TOWN RESIDENTS

### *Actions:*

- ✚ Evaluate current layout of the library and its resources to identify any potential improvements that can be made.
- ✚ Evaluate current town library facilities and investigate ways to expand/update the existing library building or construct a new building.
- ✚ Evaluate the library's heating and cooling system and determine its viability and cost effectiveness going forward. Coordinate with the Town if updates need to be made.
- ✚ Continue to stay current with library best practices within the Ocean State Libraries (OSL) consortium and beyond.
- ✚ Perform a signage audit and create a unified appearance of all in-library signage, brochures, and signs using our logo/branding. This will allow signage to better direct patrons to services offered.
- ✚ Continue to evaluate Children's and Young Adult areas to accommodate different ages and activities including play, study, and browsing.
- ✚ Evaluate our website for ease of access and finding information.
- ✚ Continue to work with Town Safety Officer to improve overall conditions for staff and patrons, always keeping safety and security in mind.
- ✚ Continue to offer notary services and support the staff members who provide that service.
- ✚ Design and plan for the library's space in the Community Learning Center at the Town Hall Annex. Evaluate the needs for the space and how to meet those needs. Develop a plan for how to best utilize this space and what changes may result within the main library building.

## GOAL 2: FOSTER COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### *Actions:*

- ✚ Welcome new residents to Coventry with a packet containing information on the library and other town departments. These packets will be available at locations new residents visit such as voter registration, school registration, library card sign-up, etc.
- ✚ Increase efforts to collaborate with other town agencies to strengthen the community through programs and services.
- ✚ Donate books to the Coventry Public Schools' Child Outreach Coordinator so that each child/family seen will leave with a book of their own and information about the library.
- ✚ Continue to foster relationships with public and private schools in Coventry by offering opportunities for students to display art work, poetry or stories in the library.
- ✚ Continue to offer volunteer opportunities to young adults and revise the volunteer policy to reflect the changes that have been made to the program.
- ✚ Continue the partnership with Washington Annex (a work study program for developmentally challenged students at Coventry High School).
- ✚ Continue to bring patrons into the library by continuing to offer take-and-make activities and updating our circulating Library of Things.
- ✚ Continue to foster our relationship with the Coventry Housing Authority by bringing outreach visits to their properties and donating books to their community room libraries.
- ✚ Continue to provide donated library materials to local schools and hospitals for their use.
- ✚ Explore ways to foster relationships with homeschool groups in Coventry.
- ✚ Evaluate the collection of young adult books in the Town Teen Center and donate new additions to their collection.

### GOAL 3: MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES

#### *Actions:*

- ✚ Continue to promote library services through monthly newsletters, social media, and local publications while investigating new ways to market the library.
- ✚ Improve engagement with the library's social media.
- ✚ Evaluate the effect of our digital display outside the library's main doors.
- ✚ Investigate expanding marketing of the library through informational signs on the town's Greenway, at local campgrounds, and other potential locations around the community.
- ✚ Expand marketing of library services through targeted advertising such as a commercial.
- ✚ Continue to distribute a quarterly Youth Services newsletter through the Coventry schools as well as preschools and day care agencies in the town of Coventry.
- ✚ Add a staff member to the Foundation and explore new options for fundraising with promotional items for sale.

### GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

#### *Actions:*

- ✚ Reallocate materials budgets to collections in high demand, keeping in mind our space limitations.
- ✚ Formulate a Special Collections Policy for Greene.
- ✚ Evaluate our Special Collections to see where gaps may be.
- ✚ Evaluate our adult graphic novel collection.
- ✚ Evaluate circulation by collection and allocate physical space accordingly.
- ✚ Investigate adding Wonderbooks (read-along books) to the Youth Services collection.
- ✚ Investigate new additions to the Library of Things:
  - Power tools



- Crafting equipment, e.g. Cricut
  - Sewing machine
  - Blood pressure monitor
  - Power plug adapter for travel to other countries
  - Additional game consoles
  - An inflatable or foldable kayak
- ✚ Work with Town Solicitor and insurance company to create a waiver for the use of any Library of Things items that carry a potential risk, such as power tools, sports equipment, and health monitoring devices.

## GOAL 5: INCREASE LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

### *Actions:*

- ✚ Strive to plan and promote library-wide themes encompassing all departments. Decorate the library, implement programs, and create displays in conjunction with the determined theme for all age levels.
- ✚ Continue to work with local organizations (garden club, historical society, etc.) to present programs of interest at the library.
- ✚ Continue investigating ways to bring programs and materials further into the community.
- ✚ Continue to offer engaging, educational, and entertaining programs and evaluate which programs are of the greatest interest to the community.
- ✚ Offer programs that feature our digital offerings such as Kanopy, Hoopla, etc.
- ✚ Continue outreach to serve those who are homebound.
- ✚ Continue offering ELL and Basic Literacy services to those patrons in need through our collaboration with Literacy Volunteers of Kent County (LVKC).
- ✚ Investigate a potential partnership between LVKC and local historical sites to help English language learners feel connected to their community and American history.

- ✦ Continue to evaluate and strengthen our partnerships with the Town's Parks and Recreation Department, Department of Public Works, Department of Human Services, and Housing Authority.
- ✦ Continue drop-in game times and drop-in craft times in Youth Services and the Teen area. See if other areas of the library would benefit from drop-in activities.
- ✦ Continue to look into creative ways to increase programming in spite of space constraints, including taking advantage of the front lawn for outdoor programming when weather permits and investigating locations for off-site programs.
- ✦ Investigate hosting a local authors' fair at the library.

## GOAL 6: IMPROVE STAFFING & TRAINING

### *Actions:*

- ✦ Continue to hire staff with exceptional technology and social networking skills.
- ✦ Develop a succession plan for turnover within library staff.
- ✦ With library department heads, continue to review and revise all current policies and develop new policies as needed.
- ✦ Encourage staff to attend relevant training opportunities. These may take the form of webinars, online classes in technology, or meetings/workshops in or outside the library.
- ✦ Encourage staff to attend statewide meetings offered through OSL and the RI Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) to serve on appropriate committees.
- ✦ Encourage staff to attend conferences: RILA, NELA, PLA, and ALA.
- ✦ Continue to hold annual all-staff meetings to provide all staff members with support and instruction regarding policy/procedure updates, library news, best practices, training, and team-building.
- ✦ In addition to sharing any new information on policies and procedures at the annual all-staff meeting, department heads will meet with their departments as needed to provide support and instruction regarding department updates.
- ✦ Library Department Heads will meet as a group at least ten times a year.

- ✚ Schedule in-library staff training/professional development to instruct staff on best practices and new technologies so that they can be better equipped to perform their professional responsibilities in addition to assisting patrons with their technological needs.
- ✚ In addition to the annual all-staff meetings which include staff from both branches, the Library Director and Assistant Director will also implement an annual Greene-specific all-staff meeting to ensure a sense of connection between the Greene branch and main branch.
- ✚ Establish a summer internship for those in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade or freshmen in college.
- ✚ Review job postings/requirements to ensure that they are equitable and will attract diverse candidates.
- ✚ Implement annual evaluations of library staff and supervisors.

## **GOAL 7: EXAMINE LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY & TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION**

### *Actions:*

- ✚ Continue to encourage patrons to use our electronic materials on their various mobile devices.
- ✚ The library's Technology Plan will be evaluated and updated annually.
- ✚ Encourage our Technology Coordinator to continue attending applicable library technology meetings and OSL trainings, and to network with technology librarians at other libraries.
- ✚ The library will keep abreast of technology standards set by OSL and all necessary updates so that patrons may enjoy a full range of digital products within the library.
- ✚ Ensure that all library computers are updated regularly by the Technology Coordinator.
- ✚ Investigate adding a Mac station in the library, where patrons can use a Mac computer instead of a PC. Adobe Creative Suite software could be added to the Mac (some graphic designers prefer the Mac interface) so that patrons can use this software in the library.

- ✚ Continue offering technology instruction classes and evaluating the demand for instruction in different programs and technologies. If a Mac is added to the library, investigate offering Mac iOS instruction classes.

## EVALUATION

### ***Bi-Annually***

- ✚ The Board of Trustees and the Library Director will review the Long-Range Plan, adding, deleting, or modifying goals and actions as accomplished or needed and will evaluate the format of the plan to optimize readability and effectiveness.
- ✚ Other important library documents such as the Disaster Plan and Technology Plan will be checked for revisions annually or more often as needed.