

# JOSEPH H. PLUMB MEMORIAL LIBRARY

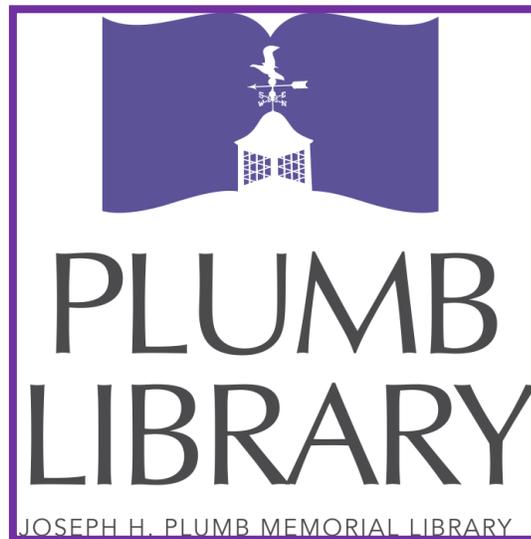
## Five-Year Plan

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2016 - 2021

Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library  
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Approved by the Board of Library Trustees on September 8, 2016

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## METHODOLOGY

The following Plan of Service was developed and written by the Library Director, in conjunction with the six members of the Board of Trustees and staff of the Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library. It is a revision of our previous Plan of Service, which covered the years 2010 - 2015.

Staff, Trustees, and Friends members were asked to write out a SWOT exercise. The focus group met once to go over their answers and discuss them together.

The planning process was and continues to be undertaken so that we can clarify our role in the community and define the needs of our patrons. We have accomplished some of the goals set forth in previous Plans, including:

- Redesign of library's website, thanks to donated services of Design Principles of Marion
- Implementing an e-newsletter
- Programs for children and adults
- Increasing the budget for nonprint materials.
- Upgrading public computer workstations
- Partnerships with the Rochester Lion's Club and other local businesses
- Increasing the children's assistant job to full-time (37.5 hours)
- Created an active book discussion group at the Council on Aging.
- Preparing a long-range plan for FY 2016 - 2021.

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Study

### SWOT RESPONSES

- Strengths: From Staff and Trustees: staff; welcoming atmosphere; town/administrative support; delivery; SAILS; balance of young and old patrons; collaboration with neighboring libraries; center of town location; Friends and Junior Friends; copier/fax/laminator; promptness; resource sharing; extensive lending program; children's programs; hours; wifi; creative uses of small physical footprint; forward-thinking plans; local contacts. From patrons: staff; SAILS network; programs especially story times and book groups; outreach; efficient utilization of space; volunteers.
- Weaknesses: From Staff and Trustees: building size; lack of reading/meeting/office space; poor signage/ size of collection; lack of community usage and support; lack of attendance for programs; classical music holdings; not enough computers; budget; rural location. From patrons: small building; community members that think print is no longer "viable"; lack of book stock due to size of building; inability to use the

downstairs; hours; institutionalized thinking stifles creativity from staff, trustees and volunteers.

- Opportunities: From Staff and Trustees: participation in library showcases and events; building expansion; SAILS growth; digital media; bookclubs; story times; technology; more of a community center; thoughtful expansion of building to embrace technology; enlarge electronic non-paper holdings; social media; digital media; networking; outreach at COA and schools. From patrons: space – need to put on a small addition; social media; more participation in Friends and/or Trustee meetings; create a permanent Friends corner; grants; expand membership in the Friends; provide a calendar to the COA monthly newsletter
- Threats: From Staff and Trustees: budget cuts/funding from State; lack of state support; internet; censorship; cost of materials; lack of building repair and upkeep; community culture; town support; outdated space/technology; inability to maintain collection upkeep to state standards; overscheduled families; questionable patrons; lower circulation; lower family trips to the library; depreciation; apathy/inaction to budget cuts; loss of power; increase material costs. From patrons: community members who do not know or care about library services and think that the library is no longer necessary; apathy and ignorance; internet – need to embrace social media; lack of town funding and support.
- Good quote from a patron: “It’s not just about the books, it’s about a center for the community. A place where ideas are discovered and expanded. It’s a place where children can learn and discover a love for reading and learning. It’s a place where people can meet and engage with each other. We need to get the word out about the good work the library is doing in our community and how it can be so much more.”

### MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library to make available to the residents of the town of Rochester a center which provides information, entertainment, education, and enrichment. We seek to provide these services to all segments of the community, and to all age groups. Our collection will reflect the wants and needs of the whole community, and we will make available, as best we can, material in many formats and reflecting many points of view. The Trustees and staff are committed to intellectual freedom, and support the Library Bill of Rights.

### VISION STATEMENTS

- Rochester will be a town that provides something for everyone.
- Rochester will have inviting, well-lit and well-maintained public spaces.
- Rochester will be a town that values education, and its historical heritage.
- Rochester will remain a family oriented community where residents have the opportunity to interact and build relationships through an array of social events.

- Plumb Memorial library will be a focal point of community life that connects and unites the people in town.

## THE TOWN

Rochester is a small, rural community located in Southeastern Massachusetts. The current population is more than 5,000 due to the presence of the commuter rail to Boston in the neighboring town of Lakeville. Two over-55 communities have been established in the town. The town, being rural in nature, does not have much of an industrial influence; its main industry is cranberry production. Rochester has an excellent elementary school and is home to Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical School. Students in junior high and high school attend regional schools. Preschool-aged children are fortunate to have several quality private preschools in the area from which to choose.

## THE LIBRARY

The library has always played a small but important role in the town. That role has gotten bigger as the library increased its hours, expanded its services, and improved its collection over the past years. Formerly located at the Town Hall, the current library building (along with the land it is built on), was donated in 1976 by Dorothy Plumb, in memory of her late husband Joseph.

The library is governed by an elected board of six Trustees. It is directed and run by a Library Director who is appointed by the Trustees, and has a small staff of one full-time Library Assistant II for Circulation Services, one full-time Library Assistant for Children's Services, and a Page. The library is also fortunate to have a dedicated group of Friends and Junior Friends who donate their time to assist with library projects, programs, and day-to-day duties. The library is currently open 41 hours a week, including 2 evenings per week and 4 hours on Saturday.

The library's collection consists of fiction and non-fiction titles for children, young adults and adults, a historical collection, and collections of large-print material, DVDs, audio books, video games, museum passes, and periodicals. All collections are continually weeded in order to make room for newer titles. Our online services are: Freegal (downloadable music and videos), Universal Class, Transparent Language, Zinio (downloadable magazines), and One-Click Digital (audiobooks). Through our membership in SAILS, we also offer Overdrive and Tumblebooks. Thanks to the MOBY (My Own Back Yard) project, an LSTA grant done in conjunction with the Mattapoissett and Marion libraries, we circulate backpacks for families on a variety of STEM subjects such as Bird Watching, Star Gazing, and Insects. We also offer a telescope (donated by a town resident and the Aldrich Astronomical Association), children's snowshoes (donated by the Friends), and an electric use meter (donated by Eversource) for loan. The library was fully automated in 1995, and is an active participant in the SAILS network, which gives us access to the collections of many other libraries, including public, college, and school libraries. Since our collection consists of 25,000 items, access

to the collection of other libraries in our network enables us to circulate over 55,000 books per year.

The library building is a one-room, open-plan, Cape-style structure with a vestibule. Lack of space has been a constant problem, and one which was addressed and attempted under the previous Plans. There are no quiet study or staff areas. A small meeting room was created, but is now not being used by groups, as it is not up to code. It is used to house the historical collection, and can be used for research, or by tutors.

The library is well-utilized by all age groups, and provides many programs during the year for children and adults. Each summer, the library hosts a Summer Reading Program with the help of the Friends and other volunteers. Access to free Internet through library computers is available as well as free wireless access. We continue to have a solid base of adult patrons who read for pleasure, but we have been noticing a downward trend in circulation and program attendance. A lot of our regular patrons have had changes in their lives, and no longer have the leisure time to read or attend programs.

The library currently operates on a minimal budget. We have had strong support of the community in our efforts to maintain our budget during these difficult economic times. We receive a small amount of LIG/MEG money each year, and have been fortunate to be awarded grants in the past, as well as donations from AD Makepeace, and the Church Family Trust. We have a Friends of the Library group that raises funds to help with library programs and projects, and we have some library trust funds that can be utilized for specific improvements in the building and collection.

In the past, we had hoped to finish the basement to create a space for programs, meetings, and storage, but this project is being reconsidered in light of building requirements such as the installation of an elevator, and the requirement of sprinkler systems throughout this building. These requirements make this project financially unfeasible, but the Trustees are exploring the possibility of expanding out the east side. Recently, the cupola on the roof was restored, since it leaked rain into the attic and then into the library. Construction was done by the Vocational School students. A local roofing company donated copper for the roof, and the equipment and manpower to put the new cupola up. Other construction projects coming up include: finishing the basement for use for storage by finishing the walls and ceiling, improving the lighting, and adding shelves along the walls.

### CURRENT LIBRARY SERVICE

The library complies with all the requirements for State Aid for a library of its size:

- Open to all Massachusetts residents
- No charge for normal library service
- Open at *least* 15 hours per week
- At *least* 20% of budget spent on materials
- Have appropriately qualified personnel

- Municipal appropriation is at *least* 2.5% greater than the average appropriation of the last 3 years.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This assessment was developed through information gathered from a focus group, and an online survey.

### Survey

The survey was hosted by Survey Monkey, using the SAILS subscription. 52 responses were recorded.

- ◆ 48% visit the library at least once a week. 32% visit at least once a month, 14% visit a few times a year, and 4% hardly ever visit.
- ◆ 100% cite Borrowing Materials as the most important service we provide. 79% view ILL as an important service. Other important services include: Borrowing free ebooks – 60%; events for all ages – 54%; access to public computers – 48%; copier and fax – 46%.
- ◆ 46% say that increasing library space will increase their satisfaction with the Plumb Library. 44% want more materials. Other responses include: more hours of service – 33%; increase programming for adults – 26%; increase downloadables – 22%; increase programming for children and/or teens – 16%; more computers – 7%.
- ◆ In rating the library’s services, Customer Service was rated “Excellent” by 94% of respondents. ILL received an Excellent rating from 68% of the survey respondents. Overall, the library received an “Excellent” rating from 67%, while 33% gave it a “Good” rating. Other services with high ratings include Online Services, Collection, and Hours of Service.
- ◆ 60% of respondents find information about library programs through the library’s Calendar of Events on the website. 54% use the library’s online newsletter and *The Wanderer*, one of three local weekly papers. 42% hear about programs by word-of-mouth, and 40% from emails from staff. 25% use the library’s Facebook page.

In the comments section, most people cited the staff as “excellent” “friendly”, and gave the library high marks for the “friendly atmosphere”. “Love the friendliness of the staff. They are helpful at all times and make you feel welcome. Whatever you do, don’t change that feeling.”

## CHALLENGES

- ◆ Circulation of “real” items (books, DVDs, etc) has been decreasing steadily over the last 5 years, down over 4000 items from 2014 – 2015. However, circulation of downloadable items, specifically from Overdrive, has been increasing, averaging 121 ebooks/month circulated in 2016, up from 94 ebooks/month in 2015, and 70 ebooks/month in 2014.
- ◆ Library use has also been declining as our senior citizens move south or pass away, and families become busier with involvement in sports and other extracurricular activities. We see juvenile use drop off after first grade, and not pick up again for many years. Once the children stop needing the library, the whole family stops coming. We lose many regular readers to sports activities. It is not practical or realistic to assume that children can get to our library by walking or on bikes. They must be driven here by parents who are also increasingly busy taking their children to their many activities.
- ◆ Other than Overdrive and Freegal, our online services are little used. Several have been dropped over the past years due to lack of use. Museum passes are also little used. Despite constant advertising, many townspeople don’t realize that we offer them.
- ◆ Space (or lack of it) is a constant problem. In the past, citizens were reluctant to fund a large expansion project, but it is hoped that they will be able to fund a smaller expansion out to the east side. This would expand our program area, and make it able to be closed off so that noise will no longer be a problem to other patrons.

## OUR GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEARS 2016 - 2021

The *goals* describe the result or the outcome that the library is trying to achieve. The *objectives* are ways in which progress towards achieving those goals will be measured. Specific *activities* are tasks to be performed in pursuit of the goals and objectives. In order to ensure that the plan is a living, changing document, activities will be developed on an annual basis and will be changed and modified as needed.

## BUILDING

GOAL 1: RESIDENTS WILL HAVE A LIBRARY FACILITY THAT IS WELCOMING AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL CITIZENS.

Objective 1. Expand out to the east side.

*Activities:*

- Find older blueprint or pay to get another one done.
- Fundraise, through the Trustees, Town, and/or Friends

Objective 2: finish basement for use for storage

*Activities:*

- Talk over plans with Facilities Manager, Staff, and Friends
- Contact Town Hall to see if they want to store documents in our basement (saving them an offsite storage fee.
- Facilities Manager purchases supplies and creates shelving along basement walls.

- Either use the tiles already purchased, or find a buyer for them.

## **SERVICES**

GOAL 2: RESIDENTS WILL BE MADE AWARE OF THE SERVICES THE LIBRARY PROVIDES TO ASSIST THEM IN THEIR PERSONAL LIVES, AT WORK, OR AT SCHOOL.

Objective 1: Market library services

*Activities:*

- Use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram); develop social media policy, and monthly schedule.
- Offer talks to community groups.
- Send special email (using SAILS Bookletters service) to new registrants
- Build an email list of all cardholders for special announcements
- Expand links to online newsletter.

Objective 2: Publicize the historic collection

*Activities:*

- Prepare resource list of materials available for genealogists or local history buffs.
- Add Ancestry Library Edition to the inhouse online services.

## **PROGRAMS**

GOAL 3: ALL RESIDENTS WILL HAVE AN INVITING PLACE TO MEET AND INTERACT WITH OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY.

Objective 1: Continue working with Marion and Mattapoisett libraries for more programs

*Activities:*

- Meet quarterly with library directors from Marion and Mattapoisett

Objective 2: Provide programs for adults and children throughout the year.

*Activities:*

- Solicit ideas from Friends and patrons via a survey.

## **COLLECTION**

GOAL 4: RESIDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A COLLECTION OF MATERIALS THAT WILL MEET THEIR NEEDS FOR RECREATIONAL READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING.

Objective 1: Update collection policy (current one written in 2006).

Objective 2: Conduct an annual survey to obtain information from library users.

*Activities:*

- Conduct an annual online survey using Survey Monkey.

Objective 3: Work with the Historical Society and the BPL digitizing program to digitize Town Reports

*Activities:*

- Create an inventory of historic collection. Request assistance from Historical Society
- Inventory the Captain Hadley Collection. Request assistance from the Historical Society.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

#### **GOAL 5: LIBRARY USERS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO CURRENT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.**

Objective 1: Replace all printers by end of FY17.

*Activities:*

- Check reviews for printers. Consider having a central printer for public use.

Objective 2: Increase wireless bandwidth.

*Activities:*

- Contact Comcast for rates for bandwidth increase.

Objective 3: Purchase tablet devices for staff to use when assisting or training patrons.

*Activities:*

- Purchase an iPad and a Google-based platform device with funds from the George and Katherine Church Trust Fund.