



Norwell Public Library

Branch out – at your library!

NORWELL, MA

LONG-RANGE PLAN

2015-2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Mission Statement	2
Planning Process	3
Description of Norwell	4
Norwell Public Library- History	7
Demographic Information	8
Norwell Public Library- Planning for the Future	9
Service Priorities/Goals and Objectives	10
Long-Range Planning Committee Members Board of Library Trustees	
APPENDIX	
A. Figure 1-- Chart-Municipal Appropriation Requirement vs. Total Appropriated Municipal Income	
B. Figure 2-- Chart-Direct Circulation Period Comparison	

Our Long Range Plan is the result of extensive review and analysis by the Long Range Planning Committee, staff members, service statistics, patron feedback and responses from a survey distributed to town residents in 2012.

We believe that the goals and objectives derived from the planning process represent an optimistic, yet realistic strategy for enhancing and expanding library services during the next five years. Norwell Public Library will continue to promote reading, provide access to information and be an anchor in this town that originated as a ship building community.

Factors considered in the development of the plan were:

- Reduced municipal library funding, which has necessitated several concurrent applications for waivers to the MA Board of Library Commissioners in order to remain certified for state aid grant awards and reciprocal borrowing privileges. (Certification qualifies a library for modest grant funding, but more importantly, certification ensures that Norwell patrons are able to borrow materials from other libraries in the Old Colony Library Network (OCLN) and beyond. (See FIGURE 1)
- Challenges of collecting and disseminating information and materials in diverse formats across multiple platforms with limited funding support.
- Need to adopt and sustain rapidly evolving technology hardware and software for library operations and for public resources while hindered by insufficient funding.

Libraries are inclusive and welcoming to all. They are the grassroots of democracy and improve our communities by fostering civic engagement and promoting education and literacy. People of all ages, abilities, ethnicities and income levels rely on librarians to connect them with information, research data, computers and technology. In order to ensure that the unique and essential library mission endures no matter how the formats of information change, we are challenged to procure adequate funding in order to remain viable and vital. Libraries are places of contact, community and pride.

Our Long Range Plan reflects our commitment to strengthen our roles as a gateway to knowledge and as a stimulant to creative imagination. It also reinforces our desire to provide sufficient attractive space to allow the community to benefit from all that the library has to offer. Sustainable, stable and adequate funding for collections, technology infrastructure, staffing and programming will ensure that the library can effectively fulfill its mission.

The committee used the American Library Association's "Planning for Results: A Public Library Transformation Process" as a guide to planning. Other libraries plans were examined and committee members and staff visited other libraries. The public, students, staff, town employees, Trustees and Friends of the Library were invited to participate in the planning. Feedback from the 2012 survey, assessment of the library's resources and several meetings resulted in the selection of service responses best suited to meet user demand and serve the Norwell community.

Seven Goals are identified through the planning process. From these goals, many objectives were derived. The Service Priorities for the next five years will concentrate on the following:

Information Literacy- the rapid evolution of technology is tasked with collecting and in disseminating information and materials in diverse formats across multiple platforms. Norwell Public Library will function as a technology evolves, facilitating access to hardware and software in a networked and wireless environment.

Library as Commons –The modern library is an essential community meeting place where people of all ages come to browse books, research, use the Internet, attend programs, read magazines, and interact with other people. As we become more wired and become more isolated library visitors often seek the comfort and company of others sometimes connecting but at other times just wanting to be in the presence of other human beings. Libraries offer a place that fosters social networking and making connections in a neutral setting.

Lifelong Learning- The library of the 21 century offers learning opportunities in virtual classrooms and lectures, workshops and multiple programs for all ages. As the population ages more people than ever before in history strive to advance their knowledge beyond their formal education.

The Norwell Public Library is a publicly funded center for the pursuit of lifelong learning with a commitment to maintaining a strong professional staff, a high quality collection of materials and an attractive, functional building. The library welcomes all and strives to be responsive to the changing needs of its users, provides opportunities for intellectual stimulation and is a refuge for contemplation and friendly discourse. Access to the extensive collection is available through print materials, emerging technology and online services. Norwell Public Library is dedicated to being an educational and recreational resource to the community.

In FY 2012 the Norwell Public Library submitted a survey to residents in Norwell to investigate perceptions it had about its public library. As with many surveys the questions themselves educated participants to the services it currently provided. Respondents were provided an opportunity to articulate shortcomings and strengths in service, the building and grounds, staff and hours.

Survey responses revealed a high level of satisfaction with the staff and services provided. Many people wanted more of everything as well as services not currently offered. Survey responses led to positive changes. A drop off box was installed in the parking lot for patron's convenience, parking light posts were upgraded with halogen lamps, The Friends of the Library installed additional lighting and repainted the meeting room, clearer signage was put into place throughout the building, the reference collection was weeded to allow for more shelf space as formats have emerged, and most recently, the website was redesigned with responsive design features for electronic devices. Additional staff, space, technology and resources will require budget increases.

In the spring of 2014 The Board of Selectmen created a Town Hall/Library Study Committee to determine building needs and priorities for two aging buildings in town. The committee will be expected to present to the Board of Selectmen and residents at the May 2015 annual town meeting a proposal that will address solutions to the aging, inferior buildings that lack adequate space, lack sustainable features, nor do they provide space for services required by residents. A library building program will be created for the library and town hall in the winter of 2014. A consultant for the library was hired in August of 2014.

In August 2014 the Norwell Public Library began the process of preparing its five-year plan. The Planning Committee consists of members of the library community (a former trustee, a current trustee, a member of the Friends of the Library, one staff person, one Seed Lending Library Committee Member, a former Books to Go Volunteer, a library outreach position) two members of the community and a town employee, the Superintendent of Recreation (Norwell). The group met throughout September and October completing its assignment.

In August, the director and assistant director attended a one week course offered at the Harvard Graduate School of Planning and Design to learn about trends in library use, design and service. This intensive course required visits to libraries in Boston that had been renovated using the modern design features and many of them were awarded LEED certification. (LEED, or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices. (To receive LEED certification, building projects must satisfy prerequisites and earn points to achieve different levels of certification. Prerequisites and credits differ for each rating system, and teams choose the best fit for their project).

Norwell is a landlocked, bedroom/suburban community located on the South Shore approximately 20 miles south of Boston and 6 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean. It is intersected by Routes 3, 53, and 123 and is surrounded by Hingham to the north, Hanover and Rockland to the west, Marshfield and Pembroke to the south, and Scituate to the east.

Historically, Norwell was called South Scituate and was originally part of the town of Scituate. Norwell was incorporated in 1888 and was named for a Boston merchant and summer resident, Henry Norwell. Norwell is approximately 21 square miles in area with almost 50% being wetlands. There is a town water system served by an aquifer and several wells, but no town sewage system. Norwell experienced rapid growth from the mid '70s into the early 1990s. During the past decade, population growth has slowed considerably as buildable land became scarce. A sector in the northwest part of the town is zoned for commercial and industrial use. Accord and Assinippi Industrial Park, houses such facilities as a nursing home, auto dealers, professional offices, a lumber yard, etc.

For the most part, Norwell is a residential community and is attractive to white collar professionals with families, as well as those over 55 years of age. The population in Norwell currently is 10,084; the projected population in 2020 is 10,739.

In December 16, 2008, the population was 10,699; this exceeds the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's projection for total population for 2020 which was 10,025. There are four 40B developments at this time, and others are being presented to the town. Norwell currently has about 3,400 housing units. If the town reaches its 10 percent affordability threshold solely through developer-sponsored 40Bs, Norwell will have approximately 4,900 housing units. These additional 1,500 units is approximately a 40% increase over its existing housing stock. Trends predict more numerous smaller households and an aging population.

Since the last Long Range Plan residents 60 to 80 plus years has grown from 1,651 to 2,615; this is a 58% increase in this age range. The median age has risen from 40 to 44 years. On the other hand, those in the family formative years of 21-32 years and the somewhat older 35-44 age range decreased significantly over the last decade. Of the population age 5 to 20 years old, 47 claimed a disability, and of the 21 to 64 age range, 287 claimed a disability. In the 65 years of age or older, 405 or almost 24.2% of those in this age range was disabled.

The Norwell schools are consistently winning awards for excellence. Norwell High School graduates have been enormously successful over the years. The population age of 25 and over with a High school diploma (including CED) or higher is 98%. The South Shore Charter Public School is also located in Norwell; it has 524 students enrolled (2009-2010). South Shore Regional Vocational Technical School has an enrollment of nearly 600 students. South Shore students continue to excel in meeting state and national vocational and academic standards.

Town government is known for its fiscal responsibility. As the economy has placed a burden on towns throughout the Commonwealth, Norwell strives to maintain town services to meet the needs of its residents. Norwell's town government supports its public safety departments, is committed to recreation and enrichment for residents of all ages, and is proud of its blend of historic homes and open space. The new Clippers Community Complex, athletic fields which will serve school as well as youth league sports officially opened in September 2014. The town continues to grow at a slow but steady pace.

Nearly 85% of the population commutes to work by car, 6.8% use public transportation, 1.3% walk and 6.1% work from home. (2006-2010). Homeownership rate: 91.1 % with an assessed median home value of \$\$538,676 (FY14)

Library services have been a valued part of the Norwell Community since 1975. At the time the new building in a forested area off South Street was eagerly anticipated by townspeople. In 1972, the town agreed to build and fund the Norwell Public Library. Up to that time, the town had two small libraries, the James and the Leonard. The James Library still exists in a small, 3-story Victorian building associated with a nearby church. The James has grown as an arts center and still maintains a small library featuring new bestsellers and a lovely children's room.

The Norwell Public Library is an attractive but aging building. The exterior has redwood siding; the library's design blends into its natural setting. The rear wall of the building is almost entirely glass, and its design is staggered in such a way as to set off different browsing alcoves within the library, as well as to bring the library and the woods together. In 2014 a Capital Improvement project replaced most of the windows; a couple of doors will be replaced as well.

Air ducts are exposed and have been painted bright colors to complement the interior scheme of the building. The colors, though widely used in the 1970's, now date the building. Natural light enters from two high clerestory windows, one in the main area (7,000 sq. ft.) and the other in the Community Room (1,500 sq. ft.). Sadly, the building has long been inaccessible. Due to the addition of shelving to meet an expanded collection the airiness is gone and the overall appearance is crowded and seating spaces are minimal. To the disappointment of many patrons, a gallery formerly in the community room has disappeared over a decade ago to make room for books on CD. During scheduled programs when the door is closed, this collection is unavailable to the public. Depending on the wind and the rain direction, leaking often occurs despite repeated repairs to the flat rubber roof. Display areas are sorely needed throughout the building. Approximately 1,655 users enter the Norwell Public Library's doors each week. The collection contains 92,944 items (including MLS E-Books). NPL was one of 50 libraries that participated in the Massachusetts E-Book Project in 2014. Shelf space limits the collection's size to 65,000 capacity.

There is very little room in the children's area for preschool play, browsing or reading. Seating is limited to thirteen spaces. Computer space is severely limited for children of all ages; there is no space available for quiet study or for a small group of children to work on school projects. In 2014 the Friends of the Library raised funds for new furniture for the children's room; the furniture will be replaced in the fall of 2014.

For the last six years the library has had to request a waiver to meet the MAR (Municipal Appropriation Requirement). The current goal is to increase the budget to achieve adequate funding, expand hours and increase staff to meet patron expectations. Currently, more space is needed for the collection, library and community programs and making the library accessible to all users.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

8

Socioeconomic Data

Current Population	10,501
2013 Unemployment Rate	5.6%
2013 MA Unemployment Rate	7.2%
2012 Per Capita Income	\$51,122
EQV Per Capita	\$52,968
Number of Registered Voters	7,398
Total School Enrollment (2010)	2,414
Median household income (2012)	\$115,339
Average assessed value for a home (FY14)	\$538,676
Average tax bill (FY14)	\$8,818
Cost of Living compared to US Average	87%
US Average	100

2014 Census

Sex and Age

Male	5,035
Female	5,471

0 to 9 years	1,318
10 to 19 years	1,679
20 to 29 years	670
30-39 years	784
40-49 years	1,698
50 to 59 years	1,719
60 to 69 years	1,356
70-79 years	722
80 - Years	537
Median age	44

Race

White	9,591
Black or African American	56
American Indian and Alaska Native	15
Asian	136
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1
Some other race	36

Sources:

Massachusetts Municipal Profile 2009
<http://www.city-data.com/city/Norwell-Massachusetts.html>
Profiles of MA, Third Edition 2012, Grey House Pub
<http://www.housing.ma/norwell/profile>
Sperling's Best Places www.bestplaces.net
MA Dept. of Revenue www.mass.gov/portal

Norwell Public Library continues to be a popular destination year round. Patrons are using more electronic resources than five years ago, information is accessible without leaving one's home, and mobile devices allow patrons to view information anywhere, anytime. Although nationally print circulation has gone down in most libraries the Norwell Public Library has a healthy circulation and continues to be a net lender, indicating that our collection is requested at home as well and elsewhere. The OCLN (Old Colony Library Network) voted to adopt the Commonwealth E-Content Project this September; users will have more publishers to choose from in addition to Overdrive E-Book content.

Space limitations continue to be a challenge; extensive weeding of materials is done on a regular basis. The library as a member of the Digital Commonwealth NPL digitized Norwell High School Yearbooks in 2013, as well as town reports. Next, there are plans to digitize postcards housed at the historical society.

Notwithstanding the overcrowded building the library continues to see itself as a vibrant community center offering resources to students, parents, town officials and the residents on the South Shore in its population group. (See Figure 2). It offers many innovative programs, such as a Seed Lending Library, Dinner and a Movie, summer as well as year-round children's activities, all of which help make the Norwell Public Library a popular gathering place for people with a wide range of ages and interests.

SERVICE PRIORITIES

10

The Long Range Planning Committee voted on the following service priorities:

- Lifelong Learning
- Library as Commons
- Information Literacy

The goals and objectives for the Norwell Public Library 2015-2020 will focus but not be limited to these goals and objectives.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong Learning: A library that provides *Lifelong Learning* service helps address the desire for self-directed growth and development opportunities.

Goal 1.

Library patrons will have timely access to varied, comprehensive, high quality collection of current materials in multiple formats and platforms; provide workshops, seminars and demonstrations to enhance and introduce skills in the library and remotely.

Objective: Staff will research emerging formats as they become available and incorporate them into the collection such as streaming video tutorials and training and other electronic products that facilitate learning from multiple devices.

Goal 2.

Patrons will be informed of the events and resources provided by the library.

Objective: Ensure that residents are informed about events, programs and materials and resources available at their public library through a variety of new ways in addition to what is currently being done.

The library will provide service to all residents in the community.

Objective: The library will continue to find ways to assist residents that are in need of services, to collaborate with agencies, schools and organizations to learn about the underserved such as the Commission on Disabilities, Rehoboth House in Norwell, parent groups and civic organizations. To become more aware of community issues library staff is encouraged to participate at local functions, meetings and events.

LIBRARY AS COMMONS

Library as Commons: A library that provides a *Commons* environment helps address the needs of people to meet and interact with others in their community and to participate in public discourse about community issues.

Goal 1. The Library will encourage use of its facility as a gathering place where residents come together to socialize and learn, make connections, create and explore.

Objective: The staff will investigate through professional research, patron inquiry and surveys the kinds of events and programs they would like to see at the library to stay abreast of current and emerging trends.

Goal 2. The library will provide new spaces for contemplation, research and learning, quiet study as well as provide dynamic “noisy” spaces for small and large gatherings.

Objective: The Board of Trustees, staff and local officials will propose a plan of action to provide the necessary space for people to gather, explore, recreate and learn.

INFORMATION LITERACY

Information Literacy: A library that provides *Information Literacy* service helps address the need for skills related to finding, evaluating and using information effectively. Information Literacy is critically important because we are surrounded by a growing ocean of information in all formats. Not all information is created equal; some is authoritative, current and reliable, but some is biased, out-of-date, misleading, and false. The amount of technology available is going to keep increasing. The types of technology used to access, manipulate, and create information will likewise expand.

Goal 1. The Norwell Public Library will provide the newest trends and technology available for its users to become better acquainted with emerging trends in information literacy.

Objective: Library users will feel confident that they have the tools necessary to explore electronic resources such as E-Books, databases, social media, government information and more for applications requested.

Goal 2. The Library will provide instruction through a variety of ways (webinars, blogs, and in person) to meet the demand for expanding their knowledge and confidence to pursue their curiosity and knowledge.

Objective: Staff will continue to expand the body of information necessary to meet the growing demands of the public for current and emerging materials and resources.

Objective: As demand grows and expectations increase for attention adequate personnel will be available to help.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Penny Wilson	Former Chair Friends of the Library
Pattie Hainer	Norwell Seed Lending Library Committee
Sheila Platt	Citizen
Steve Ivas	Water Commission
George Grey	Superintendent Recreation Department Norwell
Pam Hunt	Library Volunteer
Henry Goldman	Former Library Trustee Chair
Victor Posada	Library Trustee
Sahana Bail	Student Representative
Ryan Markham	Student Representative
Louise Painter	Former Books to Go Volunteer
Emily Goodwin	Library Employee
Rebecca Freer	Library Director

NORWELL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
ADOPTION OF LONG RANGE PLAN 2015-2020

Victor Posada Chair

Sarah Summers Chair

Jeanne Hagelstein-Ivas

Mike Yee

Christine Smith

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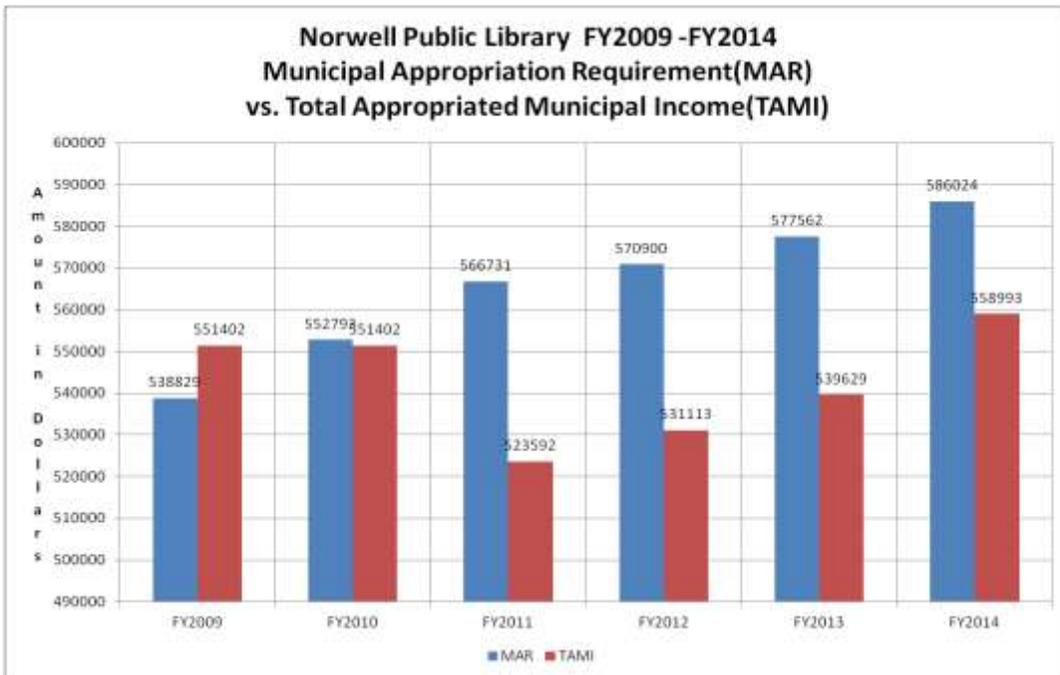


FIGURE 1

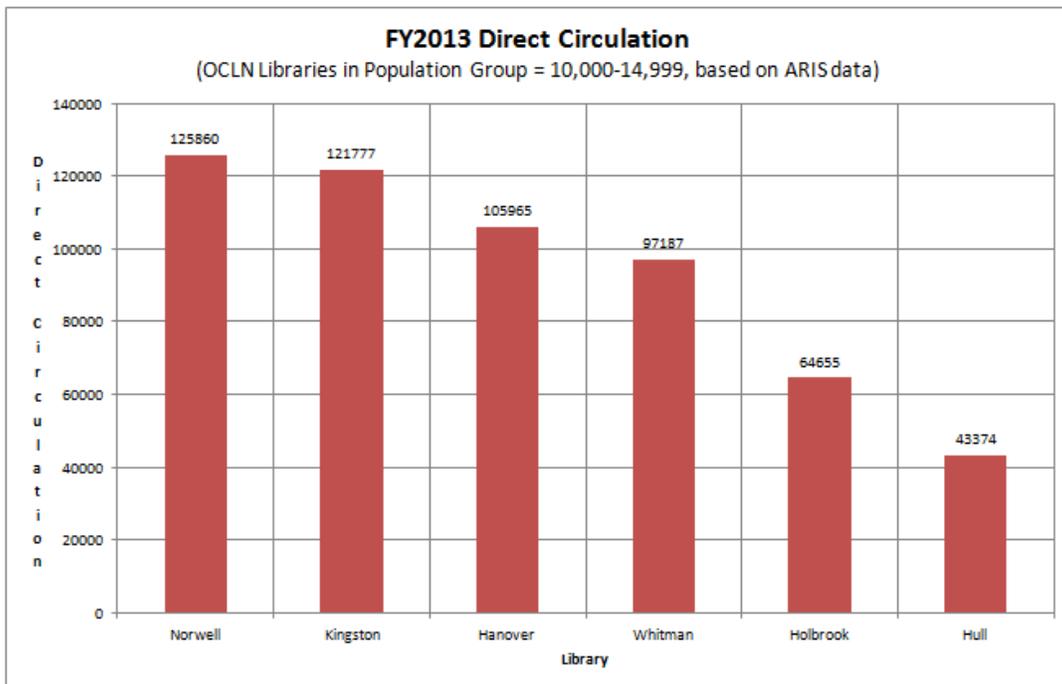


FIGURE 2