

REPORT OF THE WELLESLEY FREE LIBRARY BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

FY13 was another active year for The Wellesley Free Library (WFL) as it continued to strengthen its role as Wellesley's community gathering place and cultural destination for our residents. Circulation and usage at both the main and branch libraries has continued to increase. Attendance at free programs and classes has been strong, and space at the main library continues in high demand. In the face of an increasingly tight budget, the efforts of our supporting organizations and the dedication of the library staff allows the WFL to continue to set and meet high goals for standards of service to the residents of Wellesley.

Budgeting

The Library Trustees begin the budget process every year by an examination of the needs of the community based on statistics and other collected information available to them. The increased efficiency resulting from the use of RFID technology has allowed the Library to continue to serve patrons well even though the budget for the Library has remained relatively flat for the past few years. However, these efficiencies do not completely offset the burdens resulting from minimal budget increases and growing usage of the Library. Finally, the lack of a staff contract continues to challenge our budgeting process.

Strategic Planning

In FY13, the Trustees embarked on a process to create a new 5-year Strategic Plan for the WFL. The WFL Strategic Planning Committee of Trustees, staff, and library supporters analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of the WFL, with the goal of identifying opportunities to improve service to residents. Input was gathered from many sources and constituencies. The committee ran focus groups and interviews and administered surveys to teens, patrons, Town Meeting Members, administrators in other Town departments, elected officials, and staff. As a result of this process, the Trustees agreed on the following guiding principal for the WFL: *Take a proactive, affirmative approach to innovation.* The Trustees also set the following strategic goals for the next five years:

- I. Enhance usage of space within the library buildings to support the Library as a community gathering place and cultural destination
- II. Improve communications to promote free and convenient access
- III. Strengthen offerings to provide exceptional library services
- IV. Enrich partnerships to be a true gateway to ideas for all residents and an intellectual crossroads for the community
- V. Expand revenue streams to enable us to continue as a leader among public libraries

Sources of Funding

The Wellesley Free Library received roughly 80% of its funding from the Town with the remainder coming from supporting organizations and grants. The Friends of the Wellesley Free Libraries funds almost all of the programs at the Library and the museum pass program. The Centennial Fund supports the purchase of materials that enhance the collection of the Library. This includes specialized databases, eBooks, and downloadable audio books. The Wellesley Free Library Foundation has a broader mission, supporting general enhancements to WFL offerings that

enable the WFL to continue to meet community expectations, such as ESL classes, the operations of the Branch libraries and redesigning and furnishing an idea space.

Facilities

Much time was spent in FY13 working with the Permanent Buildings Committee, Board of Selectmen, Community Preservation Committee, and The Historical Commission on the Hills Branch Library Chimney Wall renovation project. With Town Meeting approval secured, the project is expected to be completed by late Fall of 2013.

Milestones

In June, 2013, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the main library building. Circulation and programming has expanded exponentially since the building first opened, and the Trustees are proud that it is still in impeccable shape. So much of the success of the WFL is due to the ceaseless efforts of our newly retired Library Director, Janice Coduri; the Trustees are very grateful for her dedication and the legacy she leaves. Janice retired from the Library this summer after 18 years tremendous of service. The Trustees have hired Christopher Lindquist to become the new Library Director; he will begin in October, 2013.

Library Usage in FY '13

Total Main Library circulation continues to increase year over year, with 741,704 items circulated in the past year. Circulation statistics describe only one piece of the picture in measuring library use. Other statistics of interest for FY13 are:

- 403,573 visits to the Main Library
- 14,218 visits to the Branch Libraries
- 93,024 reference questions answered by phone, email, in person, and through the website
- 21,007 children in attendance at 583 children's programs
- 6,119 people in attendance at general interest programs
- 561,222 visits to the library website www.wellesleyfreelibrary.org
- 23,093 patrons using laptops and wireless connections
- 17,789 Wellesley residents with library cards.

The Library's Collection

In FY13 total library holdings are as follows:

- 227,495 books
- 15,816 eBooks
- 23,963 audio cassettes and CDs
- 16,503 DVDs

The library also offers access to 4,986 audio titles in a downloadable format from the website.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann-Mara Lanza
Board of Library Trustees