



Your Library's Community Report

The Board and Staff of the Goshen Public Library & Historical Society (Library) are pleased to share these fiscal year end (July 2022-June 2023) highlights with our community and library supporters. We are excited to report that your Library is a vibrant flourishing civic institution that provides outstanding programs, resources, and services. The ending FY2023 financial statement reflects a fiscally responsible and well-managed institution led by a dedicated and thoughtful Board and administrative team.

Public libraries are in an era of re-writing what a library could and should be. In May 2023, the Library Board, with input from Library Staff, took up this challenge and adopted the 2023-2025 Plan of Service (strategic plan). The Plan of Service will guide the Library's work over the next two years.

The Plan of Service seeks to deliver on the promises made at the time of the bond referendum (2015) by responding to digital literacy needs, job seekers, and adult learners, in addition to continuing important youth literacy programs, teen and senior programming, and general informational, health and well-being, educational, and cultural programs. The Plan of Service also looks to develop a response to community voices, including those of working parent families, that have expressed an interest in longer hours, evening and weekend programming, and year-round Sunday hours. The Library has begun to respond to these community voices with modifications to staffing schedules and cross-training efforts that are intended to ensure that the highest level of service is provided to all library users at the times they are able to use the Library.

In FY2023, the Library had over **64,952 visitors** and based on month-to-month comparisons we are already seeing this year's visitor count surpass last year. For example, there were 8,393 visitors in June 2023; a 37% increase over June 2022 which saw 5,262 visitors. In addition, each month thousands of library users visit the Library's website for information and to use one of the Library's **81 databases**. These databases range from Ancestry.com to Consumer Reports to Tutor.com to educational resources and employment resources to assist the unemployed and underemployed improve their employment options. The Library's databases are linked from the Library's website under the e-Library tab.

128,059 items, both electronic and print, were checked out by community residents. 20,583 items circulated to our library users from our partner RCLS libraries. Residents also stretched their family budgets by checking out yard games, Roku technology, and games and puzzles from our expanding **Library of Things**.

Librarians responded to over **12,023 information and reference questions** via email, phone, and in person. These patron interactions, measured on a monthly basis, more than doubled since the start of the year.

The Local History Room team welcomes in-person visitors from around the U.S. and responds to mail, email, and phone information requests. In recognition of this valuable and important community resource,

an expanded community Historical Society Committee was formed to discuss programming, policies and procedures, and other history project ventures. Look for exciting announcements in the coming months!

The Library continues to address the digital literacy needs of our community. On average, nearly **150** individuals a day use the Library's computers to access software or the internet to address their needs, whether they be employment, information, or general entertainment. In addition, nearly **200** individuals use the Library's Wi-Fi network each day. The Library continues to broadcast Wi-Fi connectivity to the parking lot for those users who need Wi-Fi access outside the Library's operating hours. For example, Wi-Fi connectivity can be as high as **70** users on Sunday when the Library is closed.

Digital literacy impacts many in our community, from the senior struggling to access a medical portal to a resident wanting to learn more about social media or internet security, to an unemployed or underemployed individual seeking to enhance their job skills or prepare a resume. The results of the Library's efforts to seek grant funding for this important digital literacy work will soon be announced.

In FY2023, **10,730** individuals attended 689 programs provided by the Library. These programs included early childhood development and literacy programs, YA activities, book clubs, lectures, movement classes, and art, music, theatre, and educational programs. The Library continues to be an important resource for teens completing community service hours for National Honor Society and Junior National Honor Society. In FY2023, teens completed over 1,200 volunteer hours in support of the Library's summer reading programs and other events.

Our Community Partners website page lists nearly 50 community relationships and collaborations. It is these relationships that share expertise, talent, and other resources that work to strengthen and build the greater Goshen community and we look forward to developing more partnerships in the coming year. If you have a program suggestion or want to collaborate with the Library, please reach out as we love to hear from our patrons regarding their interests and needs.

There was increased use of the Library's public spaces this last year. In FY2023, community residents used the Library's study rooms **1,756** times over the course of the year. In addition, community groups and individuals used the Library's meeting rooms and Pomares Community Room **342** times. These spaces were used for many purposes: tutoring, employment interviews, counselors meeting with special needs families, MCAT, LSAT, and GRE test takers, support groups, and community organization meetings to name a few. We are pleased to be able to provide these valuable resources to the community.

The Library prides itself on the services it provides to our community with the help of our talented Library staff. We look forward to continuing to provide our employees with competitive compensation and a robust benefits package as planned for in the budget passed by the taxpayers. Similar to most small businesses, the Library's personnel costs are its greatest expense, \$1,308,573 or 68% of its FY2023 \$1,917,417 operating budget. The Library's FY2024 budget provides for wage increases and staffing needs and implements early the upcoming 2024 New York State minimum wage requirements. The FY2024 budget reflects personnel costs of \$1,489,388, or 75% of its operating budget of \$1,974,588.

The employees of the Library have formed the Goshen Public Library Workers Organizing Committee. In response, the Library issued a statement acknowledging correspondence from the Organizing Committee and made two information requests to the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA). In response, CSEA filed with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) and at this time the Library Board is responding

to the PERB process. The Board is following, and will continue to follow, the legally defined PERB process step by step and will honor the resulting outcome. In the best interests of the Library and the community, the Library is refraining from correcting inaccurate statements in the press.

Operationally the Library took steps to upgrade its digital assets and provide secure digital access for library and public use by entering into a managed service provider contract with RCLS in November 2022. Although unanticipated, the unbudgeted \$40,000 expense did not adversely impact on the FY2023 budget as careful management of other expense lines meant the expense was covered from operating funds.

The Library facility also created unexpected financial challenges this past year, in particular the geothermal and HVAC systems. In response, the Library is reviewing its vendor service options for the new year and has invested in staff training.

Supply chain and other delays have pushed the installation of the new generator to September 2023. The generator will ensure that the Library is able to serve as an emergency center and heating and cooling center for our community. We look forward to the completion of the valuable community asset.

The Library's budget was fiscally and prudently managed resulting in a balanced performance despite unexpected facilities and other expense challenges.

On a parting note, we send a huge thank you to our donors and in particular the Friends of Goshen Public Library & Historical Society. The funding and support they provide for Library programs and events, including their outstanding History Lecture Series, and the Museum Pass program from their tireless efforts in the bookstore and at book sales is greatly appreciated by the Library.

Your Library is a vibrant and lively destination filled with activity and community conversations. We invite you to visit the Library to borrow a book or video or lawn game or puzzle, to ask a question, find a comfortable place to relax and read, enjoy a concert or a program, or work on the community puzzle in the foyer. Whatever your interest or need, your Library is here for you.

August 2023

www.goshenpubliclibrary.org