



**Report presented to the Board of Trustees
by Margaret Morrissey, Director
presented June 24th, 2025**

Budget

- The Library budget for FY2026 was approved at the Town Council meeting May 29th in the amount of \$586,208.00. The Materials Appropriation Requirement (MAR) was recalculated due to the electricity utility now being a centralized expense. The new figure provided by the state is \$577,738.00. Requesting \$45,000 from the board, to add to the operating budget line item to make the MAR.

Building

- ADA Accessibility Assessment report commissioned from CMRPC and Center for Living and Working Inc. has been received. Even though the library was only refurbished in 2000, there are many items that need attention in order to be compliant with the ADA. A punch list has been developed and the issues identified are starting to be worked on.
- DPW completed the work on the closet in the Craft Room, changing the damaged dry wall and replacing with moisture-resistant material and installed shelving.
- Waiting for a response from Norel Services regarding the audibles on the second floor. They are still researching the issue.
- Requested quote for the restoration and insulation of the windows in the 1914 and 1966 sections of the building. P and P Contractors have conducted a site visit. Researching whether there is a de-leading certificate on file.
- SS Service Corp. were here 6/9 to do the preventative maintenance on the HVAC system and returning 6/10 to finish.

Chess Park

- Group met 5/15. New member joined the group. Joe Coan, Landscape Architect has prepared the bid documents but has indicated the fundraising is the first step. Reviewed potential donor list and discussed strategy.
- Request to Town Manager to have credit card donations for the chess park processed by Town Hall has been made. The Department of Labor Standards has deemed that the project is subject to Prevailing Wage Rate which will significantly increase the costs, letter dated June 12, 2025.

- Bernadette Meade in her capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Chess Park Committee, met with Michelle Hill, Finance Director 6/18. Town EIN will not allow use of Venmo, PayPal or Go Fund Me platforms. The town will facilitate a presence for the Chess Park to donate online.

Children's Room

- "Level up at your Library" is the 2025 theme for summer reading. Programming scheduled through August 8th
- Registration began June 23. Already there are 32 signed up.
- Registration week activities include
 - Art Class with Simone Germain 6/23, there were 23 in attendance.
 - Book Craft and games with Susan Luna from Seven Hills 6/24 at 11 am
 - Ice Cream Novelty Social 6/25 from 1 pm – 3 pm.
- Prizes for summer reading are on display to encourage the kiddos to sign up for the program.

Circulation

- Staff has been contacting patrons with overdue materials. In some cases, the contact information does not work. Records are updated so that if the person applies for a card again, the issue has to be addressed.
- Hotspots are circulating again.

Collection Development

- Children's staff continue weeding in Non-Fiction
- Displays created by staff to promote the library materials.
 - Pride 2025
 - 2025 Reading Challenge-A Book that spans multiple generations
 - PTSD Awareness
 - African American Music Appreciation
 - Juneteenth

Digital Commonwealth – Boston Public Library

- In a follow up call to Jake Sadow of the Boston Public Library (BPL) the schedule for digitizing the Southbridge News has been delayed into 2026. Given the state of the economy and changes happening with lightning speed, I have requested that BPL would harvest the copies that have already been digitized by the newspaper, for which we have been given unconditional access. Apparently, this is a new process and the staff will need to discuss and decide. I sent an email on 4/28, 6/10 and 6/24.

FOJEL

- Group met on Monday, June 2nd, in the Pioppi Room. No meeting in July.
- 501(c)(3) has been awarded to the Friends of the Jacob Edwards Library, dated May 27, 2025, received 6/9. Bernadette Meade spearheaded the application and persisted throughout the interim period, attempting contact and eventually connecting with a person at the IRS and FOJEL was awarded the nonprofit status.
- The group is preparing a raffle basket with gaming theme to align with summer reading. Bernadette is preparing the basket for display.

Grants and Donations

- Applied again for the MA Office of Disability Municipal ADA Accessibility grant in the amount of \$250,000.00 towards the cost of modernizing the US Ascension 2000 elevator. A report was commissioned from Syska Hennessey Group (May 2025) and the estimated cost is \$340,000.00.

Long Range Plan

- Staff continues to promote the electronic and streaming services subscribed to by the library. Staff is also working on other promotional materials.

Museum and Pool Passes

- The Andrew J Petro pool opens 6/28 and the Friends of JEL will buy one pass and the second comes complimentary, once available.

Outreach

- Open Sky Resilience Group conducted 'office hours' for unhoused community members on the first Monday of the month 1-3pm (6/2)
- Distributing the Water Quality Report for the Water and Sewer Department
- Attended the Friends of Harrington Hospital meeting 6/9.

Poet Laureate

- Waiting on a response from the administration regarding the setting up of a Scholarship from the donations from poetry anthology *Southbridge: My Triggering Town* by Bill Tremblay.

Programs

Reference:

- 92 transactions
- 1-on-1 Tech Trainings: 1
- Adult programs:
 - Meditation (1 sessions)
 - Artist Meet & Greet Pride in Southbridge curated by Billy Bolster had twelve artists show their work 6/5. Attendance: 65

- Crocodile River Music 6/12: 30
- Meditation (1 session)
- Book Club ("All the World Beside" by Garrard Conley): 4
- Museful intent (6/26)
- Summer Reading program begins on Monday, June 30th. Registrations are both in person and via Google Form.
 - Prizes are a chess set, a breadmaker, and a garden tool set.
 - Winners will be selected mid-August.
- Once again, the Sturbridge, Charlton and Southbridge libraries shared programming events for Pride.
- Added some Monday evening programming, as presenters are offering more programs.

Safety and Security

- Police officers have been doing walk-throughs more frequently.
- Draft procedure on ICE crafted and submitted to Town Manager for review. Waiting for a response.
- Follow up call from the Dudley District Court Magistrate regarding the vandalism of the bathroom sink 6/5.

Service

Library was closed

- Monday May 26th to honor Memorial Day and
- June 19th to honor Juneteenth

Staff

- Interviews have been conducted for the Circulation Assistant position (30 hours per week). The job has been accepted and the HR checks are underway.

Technology

- Created the eNewsletter/social media/displays/statistics/promotional materials/collection development / website maintenance
- The draft website designed by CyberOptik is now available for viewing and staff is checking its functionality, accessibility and compliance and will present a list of comments to the developer.
- The new site needs to be in place by October 2025.
- Uploaded materials to the reference section of the JEL website
- MUNIS accounting software migration 6/4.
- Provided feedback on the draft Digital Equity Report from Kimley Horn regarding connectivity in Southbridge.

CW MARS tickets

- Library funding message displayed on our catalog and on public computers
- NSB01 on Staff Wi-Fi for use with Czur scanner in Tech Services
- Attended training on Cloud9 software 6/11.

Teen

- Summer Reading program begins on Monday, June 30th. We have begun taking registrations both in person and via Google Form.
- Prizes are \$10 gift cards to
 - Nakama's Smoothies,
 - Moon Magick Cafe,
 - Taqueria La Siguanaba, and
 - Scoops of Hope.
 - Two prizes will be awarded per week.
 - Activities are planned for each day after lunch: crafts, anime, STEAM projects, etc.
 - New Hope will be here weekly on Tuesdays.

Training

- Attended Niche Academy webinar, "Building Community-Based Wellbeing or 'Social Prescribing' in the Library" 5/28
- Participated in the online training for the State Aid ARIS report 6/18.
- Attended Summer Feeding Training 6/20