



# Roxbury Public Library...

Inspiration, Information,  
Community

Adopted by the Board of Trustees November 14, 2016

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

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## Roxbury Public Library... Inspiration, Information, Community

In January 2016, the Roxbury Library's Board of Trustees and Director began asking our community how well we were meeting its needs and wants. Using what we learned, along with our experience and knowledge of new library practices, we created the following strategic plan, hoping to become the best possible public library for Roxbury.

We kept in mind Roxbury's many intellectually curious residents as we considered innovative new paths to knowledge in our world of constant change. New ideas and influences compel libraries to re-think how they plan for services and engage with their communities.

As the world grows more complex, and technology can allow people to become increasingly isolated, the library has an opportunity to play a significant role in building community through the lively exchange of ideas and innovative resource sharing. This plan outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies for realizing this opportunity.



*"I value our library, support it, and use it as much as possible."*

## I. OUR LIBRARY

### Our Vision

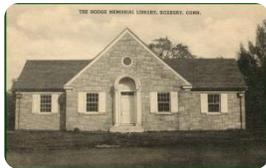
The Roxbury Public Library, composed of the Minor Memorial Library and the Hodge Memorial Library, will provide the community with inspiration, information, and a sense of place based on Roxbury's history and future.

### Our Mission

We seek to enrich the lives of the Roxbury community by providing free access to ideas and information through diverse services, experiences, and programs of educational, historical, and cultural value. We aim to offer a safe, secure, and inviting atmosphere with current and well-organized collections in a welcoming, professional manner. The Roxbury Public Library operates two buildings, and both function under the umbrella of our mission.



The Minor Memorial Library (built in 1994) is our primary circulating library.



The Hodge Memorial Library (built in 1937/addition in 1967) collects, preserves, and displays objects pertaining to the family of Albert L. Hodge. It also serves as a place to exhibit documents and objects related to Roxbury's history and culture.

## II. OUR COMMUNITY

In 2014, the population of Roxbury totaled 2,201, a 3% decrease from the 2010 census of 2,262. The average resident is well-educated and lives in a single family dwelling. Roxbury's small population is spread out with a density of 81.4 people per square mile, a low number in comparison to many other Connecticut towns.

Most residents are engaged in white-collar jobs, the creative arts, agriculture, or service occupations; specific jobs include media professionals, writers, artists, actors, active duty military, farmers, and various small business owners. The overwhelming majority are married couples living together with only a quarter of the population having children under the age of eighteen. In addition, Roxbury has a sizeable population of retirees and second-home owners who live here part-time.

Booth Free Elementary School, a K-5 school, is the only public school within the town's boundary. It has consistently been awarded recognition as a Connecticut State Department of Education School of Distinction. Most middle school and high school age students attend our regional school district's Shepaug Valley School in the neighboring town of Washington. Home-schooling and nearby private schools are other options for local children.

Roxbury is...

*"Neighborly, farm-oriented, fun."*

*"Perfect!"*

*"Enlightened, curious, community-minded."*

*"Friendly, intelligent, upbeat."*

*"Home."*

*"We, as a community, built this library. I am glad to see it serving us well."*

One of the hallmarks of the Roxbury community is the active engagement of residents who volunteer to serve on boards and commissions, engage in programs and services, and make monetary donations to community efforts. The Library is no exception; paid staff are assisted by volunteers, who log over 1,200 hours annually. Of the Library's annual operating budget, almost 30% comes from private donations.

### III. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The need to maintain robust collections.** A recent survey released by the Pew Research Center showed that Americans still have a preference for reading traditionally printed books. This preference is reflected in the steady circulation statistics of the Roxbury Library. In this, Roxbury differs slightly from a reported statewide trend of a decline in book circulation.
- **The need to increase programs.** Programs and events have grown in popularity and are a clear trend in library offerings to educate and enlighten the community.
- **The need to maintain the majority of current operations.** Most community members expressed satisfaction with library operations, the collections, and the increasing number of programs.
- **The need to realign library operating hours.** Patrons' feedback in certain demographics indicated that library hours do not work with their schedules.
- **The need to increase a focus on older children.** To improve service to the under-18 population, the library needs to add programs, materials, and opportunities for older children, in particular for ages 9-13.

## IV. OUR GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

### A. Collection

#### Goal

To offer a collection that is relevant to the needs of the community, is accessible to all, and is well-maintained (preserved, enhanced, replaced or removed) in accordance with the library's vision, mission, and budget.

*"I always feel welcome (like Norm in "Cheers") and Betty always has a good read to recommend."*

#### Objectives

- Increase circulation and use of collections and online resources.
- Improve records and access to historic collections at both the Minor and the Hodge.
- Work with local schools on acquiring relevant materials.

#### Strategies

- Highlight recent additions to the collection and online resources.
- Create a Collection Development plan for the Hodge.
- Increase school visits to the library in conjunction with students' special projects.
- Establish Hodge opening hours and collection access.
- Conduct staff training on available online resources.
- Establish methods for sharing reading recommendations by community members.
- Assist patrons with downloadable books and other resources on an as-needed basis.
- Explore connecting patrons with book selections through social media.
- Increase number of library card holders.

## B. Programs

### Goal

To create programs that support the mission of connecting the community with the world of ideas, information, culture, and entertainment.

### Objectives

*The Library can ... “provide more programs, travel links, and social opportunities to connect with others.”*

- Expand offerings for older children and families.
- Increase attendance at adult programs.
- Improve technology education offerings for all ages and abilities.
- Measure patron satisfaction with programming by participation and by post-program individual surveys to assess impact.

### Strategies

- Expand publicity and outreach across multiple platforms on a consistent basis.
- Work with other Region 12 libraries on teen outreach.
- Improve library access to new technologies that will enhance current services and create new opportunities.
- Seek private funding and grant opportunities to expand family and adult programming.
- Increase programming for grades 4 and up.
- Explore gatherings of individuals for specific topics or purposes such as language conversation groups and current event discussions.
- Increase co-sponsorship of programs and services with other community groups.

*“I am not familiar with the programs the Library offers, but I would like to be.”*

## C. Community

### Goal

To ensure the library reflects its community as we provide a welcoming, safe, valuable and central public space. It is a meeting place for personal and professional development, for cultural engagement, and intellectual growth.

### Objectives

- Improve patrons' sense of welcome in the library and in the library's online presence.
- Align the library's physical and digital spaces with patron needs.
- Increase partnerships with other groups in the community.
- Secure annual contributions to provide funds for improvements to digital access.

### Strategies

- Use survey data to reevaluate operating hours in order to accommodate more of the community.
- Analyze current technology status and plan for updates.
- Provide customer service training to all staff.
- Undertake an examination of physical space needs in relation to activities.
- Establish/strengthen working relationships with other Roxbury and neighboring town-based organizations that might offer partnership opportunities.

*"I believe the Minor Memorial Library offers a lot, but the hours are not convenient for me to attend."*

## D. Resources/Development

### Goal

To be a successful, responsive library that has a leadership role in the community by having a well-supported staff, an informed Board, and a fiscally and environmentally responsible eye toward the future.

### Objectives

- Improve staff communication, technology training, and professional development.
- Implement innovative events for fundraising.
- Focus on sustainability, both financial and environmental.
- Monitor and respond to our changing demographics and fiscal environment.
- Increase the number of ways for patrons to provide feedback and suggestions.

### Strategies

- Create a professional development plan for each employee.
- Add a suggestion box for patron comments and determine method of addressing those comments.
- Publicize the availability of the Community Studio and the Contemplation Garden as rentable event spaces.
- Conduct annual Board self-evaluations.
- Emphasize open communications with Roxbury's Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to enhance understanding of the important role of the library in community-building.
- Implement a donor management system to support fundraising.
- Create a fund development plan that includes investigation into the availability of grants and grant writing services.

# ROXBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## STRATEGIC PLAN ADVISORY BOARD AND TRUSTEES

### ADVISORY BOARD

Maxine Bleiweis, Facilitator  
Valerie Annis, Former Library Director, RPL  
Tori Baldwin, Senior Center Board  
Greg Cava, Region 12 Board of Education; Attorney  
Bill Chin, Computer Consultant  
Cathy Colella, Principal, Booth Free School  
Elliott Davis, Owner, Mine Hill Distillery  
Teresa DeBrito, Director CIA, PK-12, Region 12  
Sarah Foreman, Co-President, Booth Free School PTO  
Kimberly Gallo, Principal, Shepaug Valley School  
Barbara Henry, First Selectman, Town of Roxbury  
Marc Olivieri, Land Trust Director; Design/Construction  
Arthur O'Neill, CT State Representative  
The Rev. David Peters, Minister, Roxbury  
Congregational Church, UCC  
Wayne Piskura, Roxbury Board of Finance; Realtor  
Mary Schinke, Attorney  
Gary Steinman, Chair, Roxbury Conservation  
Commission; Secretary, Planning Commission  
Adele Tarlton, Friends of the Roxbury Library  
Jerrilyn Tiso, Social Services Director, Roxbury  
Linda Wahlers, Senior Center Director, Roxbury

### TRUSTEES

Cynthia Newby, Chairwoman  
Pam Southworth, Treasurer  
George Feifer, Secretary  
Mari Frohne, Co-Chairwoman, Hodge Trustees  
Kerri Arsenault, Co-Chairwoman, Hodge Trustees  
Mark Cohagen  
Alan Johnson  
Meg Mongin  
Joan Stracks  
Jeffrey Bennett

### LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Teresa Roxburgh

## Summary of Survey Results

### Demographics

- 149 respondents (online and print)
- 74% full time residents
- 69% have lived here more than 15 years.
- Majority of respondents are over 61 (58%). 36% are 46-60.
- Most visit the library often. Only 11% do not use the library.
- Majority do not have children at home.

### Why People Use the Library

- Programs (66%), books (74%), movies/audiobooks (53%), and art shows (61%) are the most popular things at the library.
- Most people are very satisfied with the library's services. Many remarked on the friendliness of the staff and the quality of the programs for children and adults.
  - Suggestions in this area: more new books (best sellers and award-winners), improved customer service from staff, more diverse programs.
- Operating Hours: 67% say "ok as is". Working families would prefer later operating hours. Many patrons visit other libraries that have more convenient hours (Southbury in particular).

### Programming

- Feedback on programming was positive.
- 50% of respondents who do not attend our programs would like to have different topics presented.
- Many parents and grandparents expressed an interest in more family programming.
- Parents asked for more programs geared towards older children (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade in particular)
- Outreach/PR needs to be more consistent.
- Fewer programs in the summer, more in the winter
- Adults seeking ways to network with other members of the community

### Technology

- 56% of respondents have an e-reader but only 11% have ever checked out an e-book from the library.
- 67% are interested in learning more about computers and technology.
- Personal development, access to newspapers and magazines, genealogy, and health were other areas of particular interest.
- Many respondents requested access to laptops and iPads.
- 78% say internet access meets their needs.

Full survey results are available at [www.minormemoriallibrary.org](http://www.minormemoriallibrary.org)

## Summary of Focus Group Results

### Senior Center – July 27, 2016

- People like living in Roxbury because of the small town feel and the community.
- They feel that Roxbury is changing in various ways including the aging population, being less farming-oriented, and a lack of local history knowledge.
- They feel that the library is the cultural center of the town and that the library is where people often go to catch up with each other.
- The primary uses of the library are to borrow books, movies, and audiobooks or to entertain grandchildren.
- People love the ability to borrow items from across the state with their library card, they enjoy the staff, and that there are no late fees on books.
- They would like to see more computers, a more user-friendly online system for checking the catalog, renewing books, or borrowing e-books.
- This group would like more advertising of library programs and services, more programs including movie screenings, intergenerational programming, later hours of Saturday or just more hours in general, computer instruction, tax assistance, and genealogy research.
- Perceived threats to the library include: lack of funding, fewer visitors than neighboring libraries.
- Looking ahead, some people would like home delivery of books.

### Booth School (teachers and parents) – September 12, 2016

- Parents would like to see better coordination between schools and library for curriculum and summer reading. Booth would encourage more school/library visits during the day and participation at school events such as Open House.
- The library should offer more programs for older children (4<sup>th</sup> grade and up) although extracurricular activities could be a conflict (such as girl or boy scouts).
- Library staff could be more child-friendly.
- Later hours are needed for working parents and children that have activities right after school.
- Ideas for middle-school/high-school students include having the bus stop at the library and having copies of textbooks for in-library use.
- Parents would like to see displays of children's work done in school such as art classes or robotics club.
- More program diversity was recommended to avoid repetition every couple years.

### Weekenders – September 18, 2016

- Better and more consistent advertising is needed across multiple platforms for our programs.
- The library should seek ways to gather the community to encourage networking.
- Try to use the wealth of local talent when planning programs.
- The library should provide more how-tos and guides to their services.
- Ideas for programs included book talks, play readings (using local talent and schools), hosting fewer programs in the summer when the weather is nice and more in the winter.

## Shepaug School Students – October 4, 2016

- The library needs to market their services to teens better. Many have not used the library since elementary school and do not know that we have books, movies, and community service opportunities.
- Busy student schedules are a problem. Many students are not home until evening due to extra-curricular activities. Library hours do not accommodate this.
- Students are interested in volunteering including offering one-on-one tech help, assisting with children's programs, putting together a haunted house at Halloween.
- The best way to reach these students is via their school e-mail.
- Programs for teens may not be popular due to busy schedules, but volunteering and utilizing library resources may be.