

## **SOUTH KINGSTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

### **Action Plan**

**July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The South Kingstown Public Library provides free, convenient and equal access to print and non-print materials, services and technologies that support our community's informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

### **PRINCIPAL VALUES**

To treat all library users fairly and equally and serve as a forum for all points of view.

To provide high demand/high interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages.

To serve as a center for free, timely and accurate information for all residents in their pursuit of job-related, educational and personal interests.

To assist residents of all ages in the pursuit of life-long learning by offering a variety of programs and other enrichment opportunities.

To strive to provide a welcoming library environment and maintain buildings that are clean, comfortable, safe, and accessible to the community.

### **Community Profile**

South Kingstown, Washington County's largest community with a geographic area of 56.8 square miles, comprises several villages. These include Wakefield, Peace Dale, Kingston, West Kingston, Green Hill, Matunuck, and Perryville. Formerly a rural area, South Kingstown is today primarily residential in nature. The Wakefield/Peace Dale area is the commercial center of the community.

### **POPULATION AND DIVERSITY**

The US Census Bureau's data shows the 2020 population of South Kingstown to be 30,348, as compared to the Town's population of 30,639 in 2010. The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey forecasted a 1.7% increase in population (equivalent to 509 people) over an eight-year period suggests a stable population; however, particular focus on the redistribution of community age groupings is of notable importance as it indicates a continued and significant loss of children under the age of 14 and a significant increase in the number of residents over age sixty. The 2019 American Community survey shows the following percentages for population by race: White alone 89.9%; Black or African American alone 2.7 %; American Indian and Alaskan Native alone 1.7%; Asian alone 2.4%; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone 0.0%; Some other race alone 1.1%; Two or more races 2.3%.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

During Calendar 2019, the average labor force in the Town of South Kingstown was 16,432 with employment at 15,917 yielding an unemployment rate of 3.1%. Statewide, the unemployment rate for Calendar year 2019 was 3.6%. South Kingstown's unemployment rate as of December 2020 is 7.3%, as compared to 2.5% in December 2019. The State of Rhode Island's unemployment rate as of December 2020 is 8.1% as compared to 3.5% in December 2019, after losing 43,800 jobs over last year due in some degree to the shutdown resulting from the

coronavirus pandemic.

## **EDUCATION**

The residents of South Kingstown are generally well educated, particularly when compared to the State overall. According to Census Bureau estimates, 95.6% of South Kingstown's citizens aged 25 and older have graduated high school or received high school equivalency, compared to 88.8% of Rhode Island residents of the same age have received a high school diploma. Additionally, more than 55.7% of South Kingstown residents aged 25 and older have received either a Bachelor's, Master's or other professional degree, while 34.2% of the state population of the same age hold such degrees.

The poverty rate in South Kingstown is estimated to have increased from 5.2% of all families in 2017 to 7.9% in 2019. As previously noted, South Kingstown's aging population is increasing and accordingly the number of families with householders over age 65 is increasing (from 1,251 in 2010 to 1,755 in 2017). The percentage of such families with incomes below the poverty level is also increasing, indicating that more families with older adults are experiencing poverty.

South Kingstown is a community with a strong tradition of library usage. This three-year action plan will help to guide the continuation of this tradition with the goal of improving the quality of life and increasing opportunities for success for every South Kingstown resident.

## **Library Profile**

A 1975 town ordinance established the South Kingstown Public Library, uniting three independent libraries. A free public library, the South Kingstown Public Library is comprised of a central library (Peace Dale) and two branch libraries (Robert Beverly Hale and Kingston Free). A seven member Board of Trustees appointed by the Town Council governs the Library. Annual operating revenues are derived from the local property tax appropriation, private endowments, and the state grant-in-aid, appropriated under R.I.G.L. 29-6-9.

The South Kingstown Public Library operates with a Library Director under the direction of the Board of Trustees. The library staff consists of 10 full-time and 20 part-time employees including 9 full-time professional librarians. The Library is open 130 concurrent hours and 60 unique hours per week.

## **2019-2020 at a glance**

- 78,887 Books
- 4,798 CD's & Audiobooks
- 4,600 DVD's & VHS
- 297 Other Physical Items
- 108,084 eBooks
- 30,379 Digital Audiobooks
- 1,703 Digital Videos
- 171,581 Physical Items Checked Out

- 33,891 eBooks Borrowed
- 30% Cardholders, percent of population
- 102,722 Library Visitors

**Core community needs for library service in South Kingstown are:**

- • A central library with strong reference services, fiction, and non-fiction collections to serve the needs of adults, young adults and children.
- • Branch libraries providing neighborhood access to services.
- • Adult, young adult and children's collections accessible in formats (print, non-print, electronic) that are relevant to the patrons' needs and interests.
- • High quality reference/readers' advisory service in-house, by telephone, and via e-mail.
- • Programs for seniors, adults, families, school-aged children and preschoolers. • Collections that support the curricula of students in grades K–12.
- • Access to materials through interlibrary loan.
- • Access to quality Internet connection through public access computers and Wi-Fi provided inside and outside the branches.
- • Access to electronic resources through subscription databases and those available on the Internet.
- • Hours of service that meet community needs.
- • Adequate and safe parking.
- • Library service in the community through outreach programs.
- • Meeting space for community groups and organizations.

**SERVICE POLICY**

The South Kingstown Public Library is a tax-supported public library serving the residents of South Kingstown. Complying with standards established by the Library of Rhode Island (LORI) and the American Library Association, the Library also provides service to other Rhode Island residents and visitors and to those residing outside of the state network.

**REFERENCE SERVICE:** Reference service is available during regular library hours. Staff responds to requests received in person, by telephone, in writing, and via e-mail.

**RESEARCH AND REFERRAL SERVICES:** Every effort is made to assist with research, time and staff permitting.

**CIRCULATION SERVICE:** Direct borrowing privileges are available to patrons holding valid Ocean State Libraries cards. The Library complies with Ocean State Libraries policies and procedures.

**STATEWIDE NETWORK SERVICES:** All circulating materials are available for borrowing through Ocean State Libraries HOLDS and through interlibrary loan, in compliance with LORI standards and the ALA Interlibrary Loan Code. Remote access to the Library's holdings is made

possible through the library's membership in Ocean State Libraries.

**MEETING ROOMS:** Meeting rooms are available at both the Peace Dale and Kingston Free Libraries.

**RESERVES:** Materials can be reserved in person, by telephone, and online from within the Library or from a remote location using the Library's website. Notification is by telephone, email, mail or text.

**DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS:** The Library makes exhibit space available as described in the South Kingstown Public Library Exhibit and Display Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees in December 1994. Exhibitors must insure or assume responsibility for items exhibited.

**PROGRAMS:** The Library offers a variety of educational and cultural programs for patrons of all ages. Library programs are free and open to the public.

## **GOALS AND ACTIONS**

**GOAL I:** To provide materials in a variety of formats both physical and virtual for persons of all ages that are relevant to the community's evolving needs and interests

### **Actions**

1. Conduct patron survey (print and electronic) every two years to determine patron usage and wants

- a. Target "captive group locations" i.e. election day, community events
- b. Post survey on website, social media and send email blast
- c. Establish an annual focus group

2. Collection development and maintenance

- a. Continue with ongoing evaluation of all collections, identifying strengths and weaknesses, with particular attention to equity, diversity and inclusion
- b. Review circulation statistics to determine high demand/interest areas
- c. Purchase materials that will support curricula and needs of grade K-12 community
- d. Review and update R.I. and Local History Collection Policy
- e. Add 1 (one) electronic resource per year

**GOAL II:** To serve as a center for free, timely and accurate information for all residents in their pursuit of job-related, educational, and personal enrichment opportunities.

### **Actions**

1. Programming

- a. Conduct a minimum 12 (twelve) informational, cultural or adult educational programs per year
- b. Create program exit survey and conduct ongoing informal surveys after each program

## 2. Technology

- a. Review and update current technology plan
- b. Increase one-on-one technology programs by 10%
- c. Hold at least 6 (six) drop-in technology help days per year
- d. Hold at least 6 (six) technology classes (i.e. Word, Excel, etc.) per year
- e. Explore emerging technologies that can be used to enhance library resources

## 3. Workforce and economic development

- a. Reach out to Chamber of Commerce to help identify needs of business community
- b. Reach out to community agencies (i.e. Jonnycake Center, Thundermist Health Center, etc.) to determine where library can assist with needed resources or training
- c. Investigate new resources (print and electronic) and maintain current collection to support career readiness and life skills

**GOAL III:** To assist residents of all ages in the pursuit of life-long learning by offering a variety of free and equitable programs, services, and technologies.

## Actions

### 1. Professional Development and Administration

- a. Provide all staff with appropriate ongoing in-house training
- b. Provide a minimum of 1 (one) in-house Ocean State Libraries network training per year for all staff
- c. Budget to provide opportunity for professional staff to attend network training and workshops
- d. Review job descriptions to ensure they reflect appropriate job duties and relevancy
- e. Develop schedule for reviewing and updating all library policies

### 2. Develop and enhance community partnerships

- a. Review current partners and identify possible new partners
- b. With the assistance of the Board of Trustees, partner with at least 1 (one) new community agency per year
- c. With the assistance of the Board of Trustees, participate in at least 1 (one) community event per year

### 3. Outreach

- a. With the assistance of the Board of Trustees, hold a minimum of 1 (one) speaking engagement to outside group for awareness of library services
- b. With the assistance of the Board of Trustees, identify outside agencies to offer outreach sessions to learn how to use library services
- c. With the assistance of the Board of Trustees, identify opportunities to set up “library information tables” at businesses, outside agencies and events throughout the year
- d. At all public events featuring Board of Trustees or library staff, library staff will make remote library card sign-up available.

**GOAL IV:** To provide a welcoming library environment and maintain buildings which are clean, comfortable, safe, and accessible to all members of the community.

#### Actions

##### 1. Buildings and Grounds

- a. Annually submit needed Capital Improvement Projects to Town
- b. Request at least 1 (one) building maintenance item to Champlin Foundation request each year

##### 2. Use of space and parking

- a. Start R.F.P. process for a feasibility study for maximizing the use of space at the Peace Dale Library by 2022/3
- b. Continue conversations for resolutions regarding Peace Dale and Kingston Free Parking

##### 3. Safety and accessibility

- a. Continue to update Disaster Plan
- b. Investigate security training for staff
- c. Develop strategy for better serving people with disabilities

**Goal V:** Maintain an up to date shut down plan and response.

#### Actions

##### 1. Define partial or complete shutdown and what services are available

- a. Building signage, website, and social media notification should be posted ASAP

##### 2. Document employees and what their roles are during the shutdown.

- a. Who will be working throughout shutdown
- b. Create and/or define access to remote workspaces.
- c. Address access to in-person workspaces.

3. Create a role and responsibilities guideline for staff members.

- a. Management
- b. Hourly staff (11)
- c. Custodial

4. Address specific plans for the physical building

- a. Book drop
- b. Electricity
- c. Phones
- d. Marquee at Peace Dale

5. Determine what the objectives are for full return operationally.

6. Review plan annually.

**GOAL VI:** To raise community awareness and usage of library materials, programs and services

Actions

1. Marketing

- a. Identify strengths and weaknesses in current practices
- b. Continue to produce monthly newsletter
- c. Send a minimum of 4 (four) email blasts per year
- d. Encourage staff and Trustees to be word of mouth advocates for library services and events

2. Website/Social Media

- a. Use pictures and video that highlight past and current events
- b. Investigate low-cost promotional opportunities on Facebook
- c. Investigate other outlets and tools (e.g. Twitter, Instagram, online registrations, etc.)

3. Events/Outreach

- a. Hold adult and children's programming meetings for staff on regular basis
- b. Hold large community event at least once a year
- c. Conduct pop-up libraries at various community locations
- d. At all public events, library staff will make remote library card sign-up available.

4. Advocacy and value of the library

- a. Participate in Library Week annually
- b. With the assistance of the Board of Trustees, actively seek exposure for services and programming from local media outlets and figures
- c. Develop basic “elevator speech” for staff and Trustees

### **PLAN EVALUATION**

The plan will be reassessed annually to evaluate progress and modify objectives.

### **COMPLETE PLAN REVIEW**

Spring 2022.

**Approved Board of Trustees**

**July 2009, July 2012, June 2018, September 2021**