

Excerpt from Town of Madison Master Plan, 2002

6.6 MADISON LIBRARY

The Mission of the Madison Library is to provide informational, cultural, educational, and recreational resources and services to the people of Madison.

The Library has had a colorful history over the past 107 years. The first library in Town opened September 25, 1893, at the residence of John Burke. The books were given by the state under the 1891 laws establishing a public library system. By 1905 the collection had grown to 835 books and the library needed a building of its own. Until then it had been housed in the Burke home, the Lary residence, the post office building, and back again in the Burke home. In 1920 the Burkes wanted to donate a library to the Town, but Silver Lake and Madison could not agree on a location, so the offer was withdrawn. In 1928 the private Silver Lake library burned. It had been run by the Misses Forrest in the Silver Lake Hotel. The library moved several more times.

In 1950 Madison High School closed and the students began attending Kennett High School in Conway. Children at the one-room, five-grade schoolhouse consequently moved to the former high school, making their former building available. The one-room school became the Town and School Library, remaining so until 1994.

Beginning in 1991, with a grant of \$30,000 from the Town and a parcel of land adjacent to the Fire Station, the Building Committee launched a fund drive to raise \$200,000 to construct a new facility. Through the dedication of a number of key individuals and tradesmen, the library was built in 1993, the 100th anniversary of the first Madison Library. In the new building, attendance and circulation have both increased approximately 20% annually, and the number of cards issued to community members has grown to almost 1,700.

The Library is administered by a part-time librarian, part-time assistant librarian, seven trustees, and a number of loyal volunteers.

The library has completed the process of bar-coding for computerization of the circulation and cataloging of its collection, and two workstations are installed at the desk for cataloging, circulation, e-mail, and communication with the State Library System. The State's inter-library loan system gives Madison access to the resources of a considerably larger library. Another workstation is located in the public area of the library for patron use of the catalog. The automation project cost of \$20,000 and labor to bar-code and catalog the collection were donated by the Friends of the Madison library.

The Library has access to the internet, and a computer (provided by the State) is available to the public in the reference section. Another computer, donated by International Paper Company, is reserved for children. Both have internet access and CD-ROM capability with a selection of encyclopedia and learning programs on disk.

Long Range Plans. One of the Library's major goals is to become an Associate (level one) Library in the State of New Hampshire library system. [NOTE 2014: These standards were never adopted by the State of NH.] For a town like Madison with a population under 2,000, the State library standards are:

1. A level one library shall comply with federal and state laws, rules and regulations regarding governance, policies and procedures manual, tri-annual review of these policies, annual reports, area library forum participation, and maintenance.
2. Hours of service for a level one library shall be 22 hours per week.
3. Reference services including an encyclopedia, world atlas, quotations (all no more than 5 years old), a dictionary (no more than 10 years old), general periodical index, and subscription to a materials selection periodical and a daily or weekly newspaper.
4. The level one library shall have a section designated for services to children.
5. The library shall provide and/or support programs for all age groups.
6. Personnel — A level one library shall have 1.25 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) staff on the basis of a forty-hour workweek. A library shall have at least two staff members, one of whom may be a volunteer, on duty at all times as a safety measure.
7. The board of trustees of the level one library shall appoint a library director who shall be qualified by educational background.
8. The library shall have a policy providing for staff participation in educational workshops, etc.

Over the past several years the library board of trustees has worked to meet these standards, most of which are currently met.

Recommendations. Keeping the above standards in mind, the library will need the following in 1 to 5 years:

- Staff - Recruitment of more volunteers and increased paid staff is needed to maintain our open hours, keep up with the demand for all types of circulation materials, and meet safety needs. The increase in paid staff is needed to operate the computer hardware and software and to assist others not conversant with this medium. Increasing amounts of information and reference materials are becoming available through Internet sources.
- Programs for children - need to be continuously updated and expanded.
- Funds. Both public and private funds are needed to continue purchases of new books (fiction, non-fiction, and reference), videos, audios, subscriptions to magazines and newspapers, CD-ROM disks, and other circulation material.

Needs for 6 to 10 years include:

- An addition to the library to provide a children's area separate from the main room. This would also provide for a larger reference area, study area, and stack area.
- A larger public reference area with additional equipment, internet access, and a library of information in digital form for individual research by patrons.