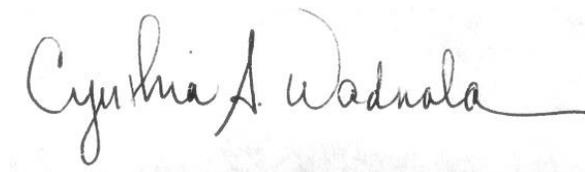


To Our Community:

We are entering a very exciting time at the Town of Ulster Library. While our patrons still value access to printed books, newspapers and magazines, we have shifted to include offering a wide range of programs, digital, educational and social tools in the form of public computers, free WiFi, e-books and e-magazines. These advances have led to higher overall use of our space. With these changes more comfortable, quieter, semi-private spaces and a separate children's area are sought. These recurring themes emerged as a result of our two community-wide surveys conducted in November 2015. The overwhelming positive response to our library and great staff empowers the Library to provide continued and new services for the community.

We, as the Board, look forward to continuing the connection with our community to ensure their needs and priorities are met.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia A. Wadnola". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Cynthia A. Wadnola,

Board President

Long-Range Plan Committee: Cynthia Wadnola, Board President; Anne Davis, Vice President; Mary Nielsen, Trustee; Theresa Brettschneider, Trustee; Tracy Priest, Director

Focus Group Facilitator: Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Coordinator for Library Sustainability, Mid-Hudson Library System

Board of Trustees

Officers: Cynthia Wadnola, President; Anne Davis, Vice President; Bruce Engholm, Recording Secretary; Walter Maxwell, Treasurer

Trustees: Mary Nielsen, Rotena Nippert, Richard Metzger, Theresa Brettschneider, Cari Grange

Director: Tracy Priest, MLS

Town of Ulster Library Strategic Plan

► **TOWN OF ULSTER LIBRARY MISSION**

The Town of Ulster Public Library seeks to bring people, ideas, information and technology together to enhance lives and build community.

► **GOALS AND PURPOSES OF THE LIBRARY**

- 1 To provide varied and valuable library services for our community.
- 2 To offer programs that can benefit members of the community.
- 3 To provide a meeting space for the community.

► **Looking Back:**

The Library broke ground at its original Morton Boulevard location on March 25th, 1965, with a vision for enriching the lives of the residents in the Town of Ulster. The first Board President was Mr. Edward Crosby. The library still owns a selection of Mr. Crosby's books on the topic of sports and memorabilia, which is presently stored at the Ulster County Hall of Records. In 1989, the Library was granted establishment as a Special Library district, and thus follows Civil Service regulations with regard to hiring and other applicable practices. In August of 2003, the Library opened at its present location on Ulster Avenue.

► **Looking Ahead:**

The Town of Ulster Public Library seeks to connect with its community concerning both the relevance of the services it currently provides and ensuring that future decisions and planning reflect the community's values and priorities.

In November of 2015, two community conversations were facilitated by the Coordinator for Library Sustainability at the Mid-Hudson Library System, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich. A community-wide survey was offered both in print and online early in 2016. The input received from the community via these two means is vital; it not only launched the library's plan of service, but will continue to drive and inspire the plan in coming years.

Major themes emerged repeatedly in the responses, most notably an appreciation of the geographic and cultural diversity of the Town, a strong sense of

pride in the history of the Town and the generations of families in service to the community, and the desire for an enhanced community-centered feeling. Generally speaking, with regard to the Library, came an overwhelmingly positive response to its current location and staff, ranking these as its top strengths. The areas cited most for improvement are the need for a community room; quieter, semi-private spaces; and a separate children's area.

Most of these goals are achievable via our annual operating budget, and the Library will seek the additional funds via grant writing. Though these changes may happen in phases, we seek to fulfil them all. We embrace the changing role of libraries and we focus on our community, which is the heart of our Library.

► **Goals:**

1. **To Sustain and improve the Library Facilities, in response to patron input garnered in our planning Community Conversations, the Library will¹:**
 - a. Responsibly investigate possibilities for renovation and/or expansion of the existing Library facility: the creation of a community meeting room that is separate from the main Library space, more quiet spaces with more elbow room and privacy at computers, and a more clearly defined children's area.
 - b. Investigate and pursue grant opportunities with the goal of easing potential costs of renovation of and/or expansion to the Library building.
 - c. Reorganize or rearrange the existing space in response to patron requests for better organization and "flow" with the goal of improving the user experience for the patron.
 - d. Investigate the possibility of a study on the light and pedestrian crosswalk at the Library's exit onto Ulster Avenue. ²

2. **Continue to communicate about the Library with our patrons; by³:**
 - a. Creating and distributing an e-newsletter at least quarterly. ⁴
 - b. Providing press releases to the Library's papers of record: Daily Freeman and Kingston Times. Additionally, sending information to popular local monthly publications. ⁵
 - c. Consistently updating the website and online calendar.
 - d. Keeping an active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other relevant, emerging media.
 - e. Keeping the information sign on Ulster Avenue up-to-date. ⁶
 - f. Continuing the Library's regular monthly spot on Kingston Community Radio (KCR).
 - g. Preparing an Annual Report to the community.

3. **The Library will work toward sustainability, greener practices and improved energy efficiency, by:**
 - a. Purchasing materials with recycled content whenever possible.
 - b. Reusing and repurposing materials wherever possible.
 - c. Exploring the possibilities and advantages of sustainable energy sources, such as solar, evaluating potential or supplementary cost savings and feasibility.⁷

4. **To provide and maintain collections of enduring value and contemporary interest that are relevant to user needs, the Library will:**
 - a. Pledge to keep the whole collection relevant by supporting a wide variety of viewpoints and interests and ensuring that it is up-to-date in areas of non-fiction, and that it remains vibrant, interesting and efficient.
 - b. Expand and update the Large Print collection.⁸
 - c. Better organize the books and materials with regard to the location in the Library and on the shelves in an effort to assist with locating items.⁹
 - d. Inventory and/or create a finding aid for the Library's special collection of books, the Crosby Collection, which is currently in county storage, to determine if any part of it might be displayed or featured here at the Library.¹⁰
 - e. Assemble a finding aid for non-cataloged repository items (including land surveys and engineering reports, and so forth) and make it available in print and online. ¹¹
 - f. Increase awareness about the digital and electronic resources that the Library offers, offering training and instruction for their use. ¹²

5. **To grow and improve technology services and digital literacy, by:**
 - a. Contracting with a computer professional for vital maintenance, updates and as-needed repair of the Library computers.
 - b. Regularly monitoring the security and privacy of all Library networks and computers.
 - c. Continuing to offer digital literacy classes and one-to-one technology tutoring. ¹³
 - d. Informing the public of technological offerings the newsletter, website, radio show and social media. ¹⁴
 - e. Rotating the replacement of the patron computers at a rate of five per year, more when possible and as our budget permits. ¹⁵
 - f. Offering both Windows and Mac platforms and technologies in the Library.

- g. Including tablets for educational, digital literacy and recreational use in the Children's and Teen sections of the Library. ¹⁶
- h. Eventually creating spaces that support personal technology, including a strong wireless connection, convenient and safe access to outlets and charging stations.

6. The Library will build on its identity as a valuable community resource through Outreach, Partnerships and Programming by:

- a. Increasing our Town of Ulster residents' knowledge of all of the many benefits of tax-supported library services for the economic, educational and quality of life, via presentations, newsletters and interaction with community residents.
- b. Growing outreach through expanded services and offering programs that include and serve new Library members; looking at ways to better serve diverse segments of the community (including but not limited to Seniors, Teens and Veterans).
- c. Maintaining our annual community first events like the Library Book Sale, Summer Reading Program and Community Halloween Party.
- d. Publishing an *Annual Report to the Community* in a distributable print version and online.
- e. Making and maintaining strong connections and partnerships with other sections of our municipality - offering joint programs when possible. ¹⁷
- f. Supporting the organization of a Library Friends Group to support the Library with advocacy, volunteerism and fundraising.

7. The Library will periodically review its basic standards of service, by the following methods:

- a. Reviewing hours of operation as compared with circulation reports.
- b. Offering special Library programs (as staffing permits) at varied times in order to make those available to a broader range of patrons.
- c. Keeping written policies relevant, compliant and up-to-date.
- d. Reviewing accessibility of both the Library building and materials.
- e. Adequately staffing the Library.
- f. Providing staff with professional development opportunities and core competency trainings.

► 2015 Annual Report Highlights

Chartered Population: 12,327

Interior Square Footage: 5,400

Total Paid Staff: 9

Hours Open Weekly: 42

Card Holders: 3,210

Annual Visits: 96,346

Annual Visits to the Library's Website: 39,698

Number of Internet Terminals: 13

Use of Electronic Resources Annually: 1,663

Total Print Materials: 38,977

Grand Total Circulation: 79,478

Annual Reference Transactions: 7,442

Grand Total Holdings: 58,832

Interlibrary Loan Borrowed: 17,172

Total Programs: 372

Total Program Attendance: 2,914

Highlights of Programs for Families, Children and Teens

Annual Halloween Party, six-week Summer Reading Program, two Early Literacy Story hours weekly, After School Program – STEM-based learning, Special Bilingual Story Hour, Birds of Prey Presentation, Lego Build Programs, Teen Night, special self-esteem poetry workshop for young women, on-site visits to Chambers School, Intergenerational Story Hour at Ten Broeck Commons, Hang Time with Pokémon, Bring Your Child to the Library Day, Marine Exploration Group "Touch a Submarine," Pajama Story Evening Hour, Read

to Zoey -a trained TDI dog, Summer Story Hour at the Town of Ulster Summer Camp and more.

Highlights of Programs for Adults

Introduction to Alzheimer's Workshop for Caregivers, What the Heck is a Key Grip Anyway? Jobs in the Film Industry Explained, Befriend Your Sewing Machine Workshop, Gmail: More than Email, Knitting Group, Monthly Book Club, Disaster Preparedness (joint program with Ulster Hose 5,) Women's Care for Life: a visit from the Hudson Valley Midwives, A Holocaust Survivor's Testimony with Tibor Spitz, Adult Project and Craft Night, How to Write a Memoir, Thursday Night Tech Time, Tuesday Tech Trouble, Family Movie Nights, Hudson Valley Bee Supply – Learn About the Importance of Bees, and more.

► Community Survey Highlights

Strengths:

What are the strengths of the Library? (Check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Location	89.7%	113
Staff	88.9%	112
Collections/Materials	48.4%	61
Access to Computers	40.5%	51
Programs	30.2%	38
Children's Programs	40.5%	51
Provides a Sense of Community / Meeting Space	34.9%	44
Hours of Operation	54.0%	68
Communication (website, newsletter, social media, etc.)	42.1%	53
Databases and other digital offerings	26.2%	33
Other Strengths / Comments		24
answered question		126

"I very much like being able to take out books electronically and read them on my smart phone and tablet."

"I like tech support that's available!"

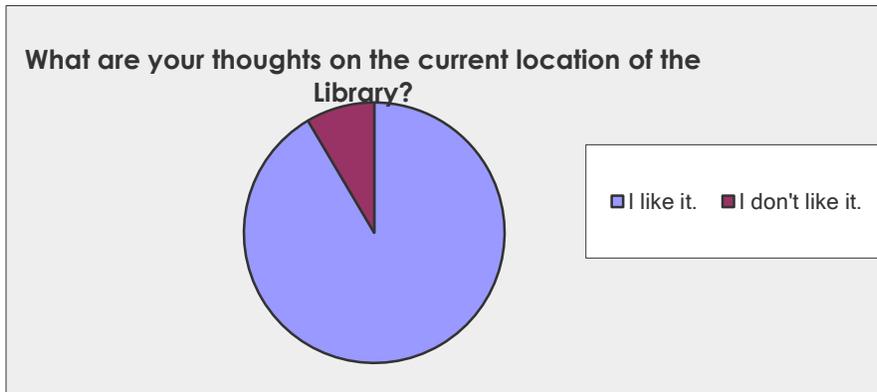
"Love the intra-library system for requesting books. It's lovely to see a book is available in say Mahopac and be able to have it shipped to the Town of Ulster library."

"The library staff is welcoming and helpful..."

"The library is well maintained, the staff is very knowledgeable and friendly with the patrons."

"The library needs more space, books, computers, conference and study rooms, semi-private tables with chairs work areas..."

Location:



"The current location is easily accessible by car or bus off Ulster Avenue. There is plenty of parking, and the building is very well lit and catches the sunlight."

"It's in a very convenient location for me and is easily accessible."

"Perfect location, easy to access and it's in a centralized location."

"A separate area for community to use for additional programs and meetings. Perhaps smaller areas for individual use (ie: tutoring) live demonstrations."

"A Community Room would be a great asset to the library and the town!"

"Conveniently located, but a little hard to exit."

"Ideally, separate area for meeting space/ children's area."

► Community Focus Group Transcript Summaries

Hopes for the Future of Ulster:

These are the hopes and aspirations of residents. The library should consider how they can utilize their resources and assets to help the community realize its ideal vision for the future of the Town.

- That the town finds a way to financially thrive despite loss of businesses
- Opportunities for those who grow up here, to stay here and raise families
- Stronger sense of community identity; a recognized community center

Top Strengths of the Library:

- Location
- Provision of Access: to information, technology, educational programs
- Staff
- Sense of Community at the Library

Significant Opportunities for the Library:

1. Marketing & Outreach
2. Facility expansion or relocation

¹ Notes on the facility: In 2013, the Library hired a part-time custodian, a position which proved a great investment in maintaining and improving the physical plant. In 2015, the Library received grant money from state Senator George Amedore to purchase comfortable seating, moveable chairs -- some with arms for computers and tablets, which are easily moved around the Library to create the sense of private spaces and provide easy seating for patrons who need rest while roaming the stacks, and for tutors to meet with students.

² i.e. timing of the light, flashing light versus signal light, timing of the crosswalk signal. This was done once before, when the Library moved to this location, circa 2003.

³ Note: The Community Conversations revealed that email and the sign in front of the Library were ways those in the group most like to receive information about the Library.

⁴ Email ranked highly as a preferred way for patrons to receive info on the Library

⁵ i.e. Chronogram and Hudson Valley Parent

⁶ Investigate replacing manual sign with a digital one

⁷ Note: In 2013, the Library introduced a recycling program, contracting for recycling and adding convenient recycle bins around.. In 2014, the Library began cursory investigating solar energy options. In 2015, the Library had an outdoor lighting energy audit conducted as part of the Town's municipal lighting upgrade program, resulting in the replacing of the parking lot and outdoor building lights with high efficiency, extra bright LED lights. These lights will provide a significant cost savings over time, have improved the overall lighting quality, and reduced the Library's carbon footprint.

⁸ As per community survey responses.

⁹ Note: In 2015, the reference and local history sections were reviewed and updated and moved closer to the circulation desk, making it easier for staff to provide assistance. Also in 2015, a complete inventory of the collection began.

¹⁰ To possibly be displayed in a case on a rotating basis.

¹¹ This project is near complete, March 2016.

¹² In 2016, we began weekly features on electronic and digital offerings on our webpage and social media pages.

¹³ Currently, the Library offers two regularly scheduled Tech Help times: Tuesday daytime and Thursday nights.

¹⁴ See item 4e.

¹⁵ First five are installed, April 2015.

¹⁶ iPads purchased early Spring 2016.

¹⁷ Notes: Between 2013 -2016, the Library made strong connections and experienced successful partnerships with Chambers Elementary School (annual visits, library card drives, Summer Reading program promotion), Ulster Hose 5 (Summer Reading, joint presentation of a Community Emergency Preparedness workshop), Town of Ulster Recreation Department (Travelling Summer Reading Story Hour, End of Summer Reading Party, both held at Town Camp), Ten Broeck Commons Health Care Facility (Intergenerational Story and Craft Hour) and Town of Ulster Police Department (Coffee with a Cop event)]