

Capital Needs

Chief among all capital needs is to repair the building and replace obsolete and broken components and systems.

Although a complete cost estimate is unavailable now the project is estimated to cost between \$1.5-2.5 million.

Install four Electric Vehicle Charging stations in the library's parking lot.

Staffing

Since FY17, Library's staff has totaled between 5 and 5 ½ Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). In FY21, the Library employed 5.35 FTEs. Of the fifty-seven communities in the Commonwealth who serve similarly sized populations, the average staff total as of last fiscal year was nearly 8.3 FTEs.

While the Thayer Memorial Library's building size is significant, staff have been able to program, manage and supervise the building's impressive 19 15 sq. ft. without incident. However, should the Town wish to increase programming in the library, additional staff members will

be necessary to ensure the safety of the building and the persons in it. The Thayer Memorial Library provides citizens with excellent value boasting more than 43,000 titles per FTE. The average collection size in similarly sized populations is markedly less at about 40,320 titles per FTE. Last year, the Library circulated nearly 13,250 titles per FTE; the average circulations for similarly sized populations was 11,742. titles.

A Bit of History on Tough Times

At the beginning of the Civil War [April 12, 1861 – May 26, 1865], Lancastrians were confronted with challenging times ahead. Many feared the United States experiment would be torn asunder; others were anxious of knowing their husbands, fathers, or sons would be killed. However, a little more than a year after the War started, on March 3, 1862, the Town established "*a public library for the free use of all the inhabitants of the town.*" The library was then housed in the Town Hall. However, in 1866 Nathaniel Thayer, Esq., offered the Town \$5,000, which the Town matched for the creation of Memorial Hall, which opened in 1868.

Chairman of the Library Trustees, George Bartol, stated wherefore,

to erect a Memorial Hall; 1st, as being as worthy of the Town and of the object as any other monument; 2d, because, owing to the munificence of a well-known and ever to be honored townsman, to do this would not carry us beyond our means; and for the third reason, that the Town was in great need, not only of a fire-proof room for its Records, but also of accommodation for a rapidly increasing town library; the rooms which the latter then occupied threatening to prove in a few years too narrow¹.

The idea behind these pragmatic desires was captured on the stained-glass window above today's circulation desk, which says, "*They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Never shall they learn War anymore.*" This aptly described the desire to put an end to War and transform tools of destruction into tools to benefit humankind. The Thayer Memorial Library brings people, information, and ideas together to enrich lives and build the community to the benefit of *all* Lancaster citizens.

Today, Lancaster is faced with financial uncertainty and, for those who think so, existential concerns. However, it cannot be said today that the Town's problems and obstacles were more considerable than during and after the Civil War. Lancastrians love public libraries in general and the Thayer Memorial Library in particular. They patronize our services, raise non-appropriated funds on its behalf, and advocate for its continued support by the Town. George Bartol succinctly expressed Lancaster's approach toward funding its Library in the School Committee report for the year ending in March 1865: "*...no part of our public expenditure does or can, all things considered, bring back a richer return.*"

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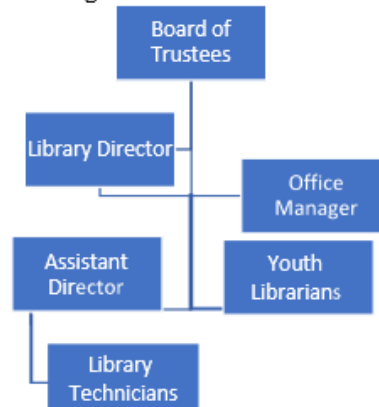
THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Mission Statement

The Thayer Memorial Library brings people, information, and ideas together to enrich lives and build community.

As a staple in the Field of Human Services, Libraries promote lifelong learning within spaces that are full of information and historical and educational resources. The Thayer Public Library enriches the Lancaster community by stimulating the minds and bodies of residents of all ages and abilities through idea sharing and cultural programming.

Organizational Chart



Responsibilities – Overview

Lancaster's Thayer Memorial Library is vital to an informed and literate population. The Department serves citizens' informational needs and freely provides circulation, programmatic, meeting rooms and historical services. The Thayer Memorial Library and *The Board of Trustees of the Thayer Memorial Library* exist by virtue of the terms in M.G.L. Ch. 78 §7-8, §10-13, §19b, § 33-34 and the By-Laws of the Town of Lancaster. The Board exercises the powers and authority, and assume the obligations delegated to it, under the State and local statutes to further the mission and goals of the Department.

Accomplishments Throughout the Past Year:

- ✓ Certified for State Aid to Public Libraries and awarded \$19,977 in funding.
- ✓ Awarded \$10,000 Library Services and Technology Act Grant for play-based early literacy programming and materials.
- ✓ Awarded \$7,499 from the Rosemary Davis Fund within the Worcester Community Foundation to educate members of the community regarding environmental and ecological quandaries and to further study the welfare and protection of endangered flora and fauna.
- ✓ Awarded \$4,000 from the Preservation Assessment Grant to be used toward the ongoing management and preservation of Lancaster's Special Collections Division.
- ✓ Coordinated, organized, and oversaw more than 165 programs for more than 2,050 attendees.

Long-Term Plans/Goals:

- ✓ Develop a feasible approach to preserve, rehabilitate, restore, reconstruct, and replace portions of the Thayer Memorial Library exterior and interior building envelope; devise a funding strategy and action plan to replace the building's internal utility systems and refurbish the public spaces including the acquisition of new furniture, fixtures, and associated equipment.
- ✓ Provide cost estimates for completing the Library Building Project including funding considerations; spearhead a robust public outreach program which educates residents on, and encourages support for, the crucial need for capital repairs to the library building and internal systems.
- ✓ Author, in conjunction with other staff, Town Departments and members of the public, an updated Strategic Plan for the Library which covers the time periods surrounding Fiscal Years 2024 through 2028.