

# Wadhams Free Library

## Long-Range and Strategic Plan

### 2023-2028

Submitted by the Director and the Board of Trustees of the Wadhams Free Library  
January 19, 2023

#### **Wadhams Overview**

Wadhams is a small rural community of approximately 518 year-round residents in the Town of Westport in Essex County. It is situated on the Boquet River in the Adirondack Park. The hamlet of Westport to the east of Wadhams, has an approximate year-round population of 1146. Both communities gain additional summer residents.

Wadhams was first settled in 1825 and was known as Wadhams Mills. Today, there are several year-round businesses located in Wadhams. As of 2023, those businesses include a hydroelectric company, a bakery, a plumbing and heating service, a geo-thermal business, a day care center, and a massage studio.

Students attend the Boquet Valley Central School District (BVCS D). The elementary school is in Westport and is known as the Lake View campus. The junior high and high school is in Elizabethtown and is known as the Mountain View campus. There are 439 students in the BVCS D as of 2022.

#### **Wadhams Free Library Overview**

The Wadhams Free Library is one of two libraries in Westport. Both are chartered to serve the residents of the Town of Westport.

The Wadhams Free Library is a small rural library association established in 1897. The permanent charter was granted in 1967. The library moved to its present location in 1963. New York State was instrumental in funding a major renovation in 1996 which added a bathroom, electric heat, a dedicated children's area, and expanded the available shelving. The renovation also included public computers, printers, and copiers along with a central area for meetings.

The Wadhams Free Library is funded by the Town of Westport, taxpayers by a library tax administered by the BVCS D, an annual grant from the Lake Placid Education Foundation, investments, donations, and various fundraising events. It is governed by a Board of Trustees with each trustee serving a five-year term. The responsibility for managing the library, collection development, and provision of library services to the community is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the Library Director, who is appointed by the board and is responsible to the board.

The Wadhams Free Library is a member of the Clinton Essex Franklin (CEF) Library System.

The Wadhams Free Library is mandated by New York State to be open to the public a minimum of 20 hours per week. The library employs a Library Director and a part-time library assistant. Volunteers are essential to the operation of the Library, helping to cover open hours, maintain the building and grounds, and fundraise.

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Wadhams Free Library is to assemble, preserve and administer, in organized collections, books and other related education and recreational materials in order to promote the free communication of ideas, an enlightened citizenship, and enriched personal lives in the community of Wadhams and beyond.

#### **Vision Statement**

The Wadhams Free Library's purpose is to serve as a center for reliable information and provide a place where patrons may encounter critical ideas so necessary in a society that depends on the free competition of ideas. It will support educational, civic, and cultural activities of groups and organizations. It will provide the opportunity and encouragement for children, young people, and all people to educate themselves continuously. It will provide programs of service to meet the needs and interests of the community, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies, and institutions which can provide programs or services to meet the community's needs. It will provide opportunities for recreation through literature and other art forms.

## Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal 1. Support the community and our patrons.

Objective 1: Engage patron base

- Action: FY All. Promote the wide number of resources available at the Wadhams Free Library
- Action: FY All. Promote the resources available through Interlibrary Loan via the CEF Library System.
- Action: FY ALL. Evaluate the technology needs of our patrons.
- Action: FY All. Expand community events and programming in the library and evaluate their efficacy.
- Action: FY ALL. Create a biannual newsletter to reach out to patrons and showcase library news and events.
- Action: FY ALL. Market and promote the library through social media and print sources.

Objective 2: Broaden the patron base

- Action: FY All. Seek out local organizations interested in developing partnerships.
- Action: FY All. Develop a strong volunteer program that includes coordinating and training volunteers to help with different aspects of the library, such as fundraising, building maintenance, and collection development.
- Action: FY All. Keep the Library's collections current and relevant by weeding outdated material and expanding high demand selections.
- Action: FY ALL. Develop programming that brings more people into the library.
- Action: FY 2023. Establish a committee to oversee programming.

Goal 2: Maintain and preserve the physical structure and the grounds creating a convenient, accessible, comfortable, and safe space for community needs.

Objective 1.: Maintain the library building and grounds

- Action: FY All. Develop a strategic plan annually for the maintenance of the library building and grounds.
- Action: FY All. Provide and maintain the outdoor seating areas, the gardens, and the fencing.
- Action: FY All. Enlist Trustees and volunteers to maintain the building and grounds.

Objective 2: Existing Space

- Action: FY All. Assess the existing space in the library to determine if the needs of the community are being met.
- Action: FY 2023. Form a committee to be responsible for the building and grounds.

Goal 3: Recruit and maintain exceptional staff and trustees that will work together as an organization that is responsive to current needs, changing information, and future trends in the library.

Objective 1: Staff and trustees will work together to recruit and support exceptional staff members.

- Action: FY All. The Director and trustees will perform an annual review of staffing needs, including scheduling, staff needs, and volunteer opportunities.
- Action: FY All. The Director will attend, whenever possible, the CEF Directors meeting and workshops.
- Action: FY All. The Director will develop a constructive framework for communication and review. She/he will evaluate staff and promote the use of their strengths.
- Action: The director and the board will provide tools, training, and an inspirational environment for staff to succeed in their work.
- Action: FY All. The Director will communicate with the trustees and promote the involvement of trustees in the Library.
- Action: FY All. The Director along with the trustees will develop an annual budget

Objective 2: The Board of Trustees will recruit and support a board of no more than 15 members who are active participants and have complementary skill sets.

- Action: FY ALL. Trustees will take required training established by New York State.
- Action: FY ALL. Trustees will be encouraged to participate by serving on committees, participating in Library fundraising events, and taking advantage of volunteer events created by the Board of Trustees.