

SNOW LIBRARY - Dept 610

Interview with Tavi Prugno and Steve Gass
For Fin Comm: Tim Counihan and Elaine Baird

SNOW LIBRARY EXPENSES	Adopted	Expended	Ex vs Ad
FY24 Budget Request	749, 379	TBD	
FY23 Adopted	722,334	TBD	
FY22 “	680,998	652,519	-28,479
FY21 “	676,502	651,142	-25,360
FY20 “	664,286	638,535	-25,751
FY19 “	631, 511	601,457	-30,054

Snow Library is an integral and much-loved resource in the town of Orleans. A strong Board of Trustees and a focused director make for an efficient and focused facility. Resources from the Snow Library Trustee Funds, and from the Friends of Snow Library contribute to the richness of its offerings. Between them, they provide museum passes, newspapers, internet, programming and supplementary books. The Friends operate a dynamic “Lifetime Learning” program of lectures.

The large difference in the library operating budget between 680,998 and 722,334 (FY22 to FY23) is \$26,491 in salaries, a 4.82% mostly union negotiated increase. The library has worked diligently to keep expenses down. The increase in book purchases (\$1947 up 2.21%) is required by the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

The library has applied for two CPC grants, one for \$8050 archival storage, and one by the town on behalf of Snow Library. This second \$35K grant would fund plans for a formal bid process for a handicapped 80’ accessible walkway to the Village Green, anticipated to be \$350K. *

Both have been CPC approved and are anticipated to be approved at Town Meeting.

Library usage of the building continues to be down. In FY18, average visits per day was 475 whereas in FY22 AND FY23 average visits per day was 200. The number of registered borrowers has continued to decline. In FY18, Snow had 9258 borrowers, in FY22 6758, and in FY23 6517. Items circulated declined as well. Staffing has remained the same 5.58 employees in FY21/22/23.

In March 2020, the MBLC suspended funding new libraries. Steve Gass, Chairman of the Snow Library Facilities Advisory Committee, is currently spearheading a drive for a new library. On the town's Capital Improvement Plan, \$180K has been included for a feasibility study, half of which will be paid for by the Snow Library Trustee Funds. The MBLC has just reinstated funding for new libraries and anticipates that 40-50 libraries will be applying for these funds. Only 9 grants will be awarded, with 1 library put on a wait list.

The revised CIP now shows funding in FY25 for a new library design (\$2.65M to be funded by debt exclusion). The Building and Stabilities Fund shows \$25K for new flooring in FY24. The \$350K for a new roof which was in the FY23 CIP last year, has been removed. Money for repairs to the building is in the Facilities budget. The original building was built in 1954 with a 1977 addition that has required ongoing maintenance. Ron Collins continues to work his magic. Mr. Prugno commented that more LED lighting could reduce electrical use.

Mr. Prugno pointed out that the library needs an Electronics Resources librarian. More and more of the Library's services depend heavily on a technological component. The weekend of 2/27/23 the CLAMS system implemented a new search system, called ASPEN, so patrons can do fewer searches with more/better results.

Mr. Prugno pointed out that security around the library has improved considerably with increased lighting.

*Note: The Village Green's 1.3 acres is .34 owned by Snow Library, and .96 owned by the town.

According to the CPC project application, the walkway will be entirely on library property

What will happen to this walkway with a new library?