

PARTICIPANTS: 7 (Female = 7; Male = 0)

1. What's the very first word you think of when you think about the Library?

- Community based
- Engaging
- Friendly Staff
- Helpful (x2)
- Welcoming

2. Tell us a little about yourself and your family and about the Library programs and services you use (or don't use).

- Has visited the Community Room (CR) for the last five years with her 6 ½-year-old and 4-year-old children for programming and services.
- Used the Library as a child growing up. Now, a teacher at West Boylston Middle/High School (WBMHS). Borrows books for self or students to use in the classroom. Bags to use in classroom. Borrows items for personal/leisure reading and entertainment (e.g., DVDs).
- Town resident for 11 years. Oldest child is 5 years old, which is when she started using the Library. Attends children's programs and uses CR for play area. Husband borrows books. She has been using a little bit of everything during pandemic.
- Town resident for 18 years and a trustee for 9 years. She and her husband borrow books. She attends programs (authors, speakers, meditation) and borrows books for her book club. Their non-local great-grandchildren visit the Library for CR programs. Also, she presents programs for the Library (e.g., card making). She is a long-term volunteer and Library advocate as a trustee.
- Her son was born 8 years ago. Periodically attends children's programs in CR ("on and off"). Her son borrows a lot of books. Occasionally, she and her husband check out books, too.
- Daughter is 7, so she has been visiting the Library for approximately 6 years to attend children's programs, including crafts and summer reading program activities.
- The Library is a welcoming, safe space. (x6)

3. Which Library resources or materials do you use most frequently?

Most Valuable Resources/Materials:

- Children's programming has been really great during the pandemic. It was a lot of help to have extra projects on-hand and to watch story times on Facebook. (x2)
- Books for her non-Library book club. Some of her book club's members never visit the Library. She helps spread the word about the library's value.
- Children's programs (Books and Blankies, Books and Buddies)
- Before the pandemic, she made relationships in the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) Network's Stay and Play program, which was a welcoming group.
- During pandemic, she initially wondered what they were going to do when everything shut down. Library quickly adapted so books could be checked out safely. It enabled her child to maintain her reading level during pandemic.

- Values the community connection. As an WBMHS teacher, community connection is especially apparent during summer reading program. Library ensures there are audiobooks available for special needs students. Participants really enjoy participating in the summer reading program.
- Library isn't an independent, isolated town institution. It reaches out to and engages community businesses (i.e., gift card to O'Connor's was a summer reading prize).
- Other libraries aren't necessarily welcoming. Always felt very welcomed at BMPL. Attended playdates at Library and took advantage of all the children's programming.
- Really appreciates books, especially hard copies, so she appreciates that the Library continues to offer them.

Least Valuable Resources/Materials:

- No longer needs movie and TV series DVDs. Currently, only watches Netflix. (x3)
 - Can't remember last time she borrowed a DVD. But other people may still watch them.
- Doesn't need paper receipts. Wonders if they're expensive and thinks they're a waste of paper. (x3)
- Difficult to answer which is least valuable. While she may not use a particular Library service right now, it doesn't mean other community members wouldn't find it valuable.

4. How can the Library's physical space be improved?

If Could Change One Thing:

- Add more individual or study space rooms. (x6)
- More parking. There aren't enough spaces. (x6)
- Improve parking safety. Current parking layout is a safety issue (especially for handicapped, elderly, parents with children) (x6)
- Enhance crossing safety on Newton Street. Cars don't slow down on Newton Street; it is unsafe for those walking to the Library to cross the street.
- Add more adult seating in CR. Currently, there are only 2 chairs for adult seating in main CR area. There aren't any other places for adults to sit comfortably in CR. (x3)
- Open Library on Mondays (x3)
 - Would use the Library during these extra hours (x2)
 - Might use the Library during these extra hours
- Add more seating for reading on the main floor. Current set-up communicates the message "we want you to use us, but don't stay."

My Dream Library Would Offer:

- More dedicated program space that accommodates more concurrent programs and large community/group gatherings (e.g., movie nights) (x4)
- A knob on the swinging door in the children's play area that leads to the stairs.

5. How can the Library improve its programs and services?

- Offer intergenerational programming. (x6)
 - Library does well programming for segregated age groups (children vs. teens vs. adults), but it would be great if the Library could help connect everyone in the community.
- Schedule young children's programs during lunch time or vary the times/days/frequency of the most popular programs (e.g., a morning and afternoon sessions). (x4)

- Currently, Books and Blankies, Mother Goose on the Loose, etc. are usually scheduled during nap time, which is especially challenging for the youngest patrons who are still napping two times per day.
- Schedule book club after work hours, so working adults can attend. Currently, adult book clubs are during the workday.
- Appreciated the Library’s addition of a Senior Books and Blankies in response to a suggestion from the community.

6. What TWO words would you use to describe the librarians who assist you?

- Accommodating
- Caring
- Engaging
- Very Friendly (x3)
- Helpful (x3)
- Knowledgeable
- Warm
- Welcoming

Notes:

- Butted heads with one staff member on more than one occasion (x2)

7. Which of the Library’s technology resources do you use either on-site or via the Library’s website?

- Requests items via ILL (x6)
- Borrows e-books with Overdrive and Libby (x4)
- Visits Library’s website
- Uses Wi-Fi. Pre-pandemic: When she worked from home, she sometimes visited the Library to get out of the house and work or to play Pokémon Go.
- Mango
- Used to use Freegal

8. What technology do you think the Library should focus on over the next five years?

- Make the Library a strong wireless network hotspot
- Offer access to and instructions to use applications, like Adobe Acrobat and Photoshop.
- Provide access to a 3D Printer and “How To” instructions

9. Are there any barriers to service—things that impede your ability to receive the service you need or want from the Library?

- Website is easy to navigate (x6)
- Offer self-checkout option (x4)
- Automate the process to get a Museum Pass (e.g., reserve it online, possibly print at home). (x3)
 - The Museum pass program is wonderful, but the current process is too cumbersome. You must identify a time you can use the pass, call to reserve the pass, and figure out a time when you can pick up the pass while the Library’s open.
- Continue offering of contactless curbside pick-up AFTER the pandemic ends

- Communicate the process of how to recommend a book for the Library to purchase
- Asked if the Library is completely ADA compliant. The Library should be accessible to every one of every ability.

Supplemental Input from Participant’s Follow-Up Email:

My friend, who I actually met at the library, has a young daughter that uses a wheelchair. She got back to me about the barriers that some people may face when using the library. She said accessibility isn’t great.

1. Ramp is very steep
2. Ramp is closed when it’s icy
3. No Van accessible spots

10. What could the Library do to better serve West Boylston? What advice do you have?

- Cultivate a stronger collaboration with the schools (x3)
 - No cross-over noted between Library and preschool activities; could support each organization’s activities
 - Remain closely connected to WBMHS (i.e., flyer included for YA programming with principal’s communication to students)
- Ensure Library is remains welcoming to all kinds of people (e.g., BIPOC), especially since we are adjacent to Worcester. Sue has always been very welcoming. That should continue after she retires. Always be inclusive and welcoming to all.
- Ways to increase inclusivity
 - Increase Wi-Fi strength and expand access to include parking areas
 - Eliminate late fees
 - Auto-renewals

11. How important is it to have a good library in our community?

How would you feel if the Library closed tomorrow?

- Devastated
- Would struggle with that
- Didn’t realize how important the Library is until they had a child

Did it become more important during the pandemic?

- Yes. Library was one of the few places still open and providing services.
- Her kids loved Sue’s Facebook Live videos; they were amazing. Their schedule doesn’t enable them to right now and it’s disappointing because Sue does such a great job.

What should continue after the pandemic?

- Contactless pickup is convenient. (x6)
 - Possibly provide an option so when you’re placing holds, you can opt to pick up the books via vestibule.
- Extend Wi-Fi and keep it on 24 hours a day. It’s really a gift to the town.

How does Beaman compare to other libraries?

- No one can hold a candle to the CR. Ours is superior (x5)

- Neighboring library has a huge addition/more space, but how can we do that?
- This Library has so much going for it
- Adding self-checkout and more parking are the only things she can think of that she'd change. Family loves everything else.
- Outside of the Shrewsbury Library's children's area, there's an area outside for the kids to go out and "get their loud out." Wish there was a small, fenced area for brief, safe outside play at BMPL.

12. What issues now facing the town do you think may impact the Library?

- After the pandemic, partner with social workers or people versed in trauma care to offer programs that families, adults, and seniors can attend and start to heal. (x3)
- The schools need some work/love. Many people are moving out of town because the schools are not what they used to be.
 - Would hate for the Library to suffer because families are leaving.
 - If the town addressed the school issues, it would help the Library.
- Offer job search support programs, services, and resources (e.g., resume writing, add computers for job searches, provide job seeking support) to help all recover from the pandemic. Job losses and a sluggish economy will cause a ripple effect over the next few years.

13. What could the Library do to better serve West Boylston? What advice do you have?

- Offer more programs for young professionals (e.g., thirties age group). While children, teens, and retiree programming needs are being addressed, young professionals are continuously overlooked for programming.