Annual Report
The Hoboken Public Library
2020
A year like none other

Library Mission
The Hoboken Public Library connects people with each other, ideas, and opportunities to support lifelong learning, personal growth, and community development.

Library Board

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During 2020, the Library marked the 130th Anniversary of its Founding with an unprecedented celebration. The event was capped by a larger-than-life video review of the Library’s history projected on the facade of its 123-year-old building.
About Us

**Hoboken Library Staff:**
- 44 Personnel:
  - 32 Full-Time
  - 12 Part-Time

**Three Sites:**
- 500 Park Avenue
- Grand Street Branch
- Learning Center at HHA

*The COVID shutdown in March sent staff meetings Zooming starting in April.*
How did we do in 2020?

In spite of having to shut its doors from mid-March until June, the Library continued to fulfill its mission of “connecting people with each other, ideas, and opportunities…”

- **Circulation**: The Library circulated 237,812 books, media, downloadable and streaming materials -- a 17% decrease due to pandemic. However...
- **Visitors**: The library welcomed 72,466 visitors through its doors.
- **Programs**: The Library ran 1,328 programs, a 3% increase.
- **Program Attendees**: The Library attracted 115,561 attendees to its programs.

New Programming Feature

Virtual Programs

- **Virtual Programs**: 955 (of 1,328 total)
- **Virtual Program Attendance**: 99,782 (of 115,962 total)

Library Finances

**Budget**: $5,937,247

- **Operations**: $2,782,247
- **Personnel**: $3,155,000
- **Capital Expense**: $85,477
Highlights

January - February

• Board, Administration, and staff started planning for Library renovation.
• Just as the Capital Grant was announced, the Library postponed the renovation of the 3rd floor and began application process for the entire building renovation project.

March

• COVID-19 Pandemic started; Library building closed in accordance with state-wide emergency.
• Migrated ALL programs and services to online channels.
• Library materials shifted to digital and downloadable collections.
• All staff shifted to working remotely, supporting
  • virtual programming
  • digital material orders
  • professional development
  • building resources related to pandemic and economic stimulus
  • supporting online reference help and processing library card applications.

April

• Launched the COVID-19 Assistance page (at HobokenLibrary.org/assistance), to serve as a one-stop, up-to-date information resource for individuals and businesses.
• Other libraries reached out, asking to adopt the idea.
• Site is updated as new information is released from reliable sources.
April - May
- Building was thoroughly decontaminated.
- Plexiglas barriers and screens installed at all public service desks and staff workspaces.
- Signage posted throughout the building to let EVERYONE know what was expected.

June
- Staff returned to Library in “Alternating Teams,” to limit potential cross-exposure.
- Launched Curbside Pickup, where customers who had ordered materials online could make an appointment to obtain their items outside the Library.
- Reopened the Book Return Bin; established the Materials Handling “Quarantine” Room for safely processing returns.

July
- Building opened for limited computer-use visits
- 24/7 Self-Service Lockers installed (FIRST in NJ!)
- The stacks remain closed.

August
- The Library brought the Grab & Go service inside
- Launched the meeScan app/service, for improved customer self-service.
September
- The Library opened its doors for browsing the stacks.
- Already-available *Grab & Go* and *Computer Appointment* services grow in popularity.
- Free WiFi service expanded into neighboring Church Square Park.

October
- The staff rose to the challenge of celebrating the Library’s 130th Anniversary.
- What had been planned as a live, in-person event was instead performed as a live, VIRTUAL event.
- Hours of activities during the day of October 3 were capped by a presentation of the Library’s history, projected in the south façade of the building.

November - December
- Robust virtual programming continued with combination of digital resources while slowly expanding physical collection.
- Gradually re-opened the Grand Street Branch.
- meeScan self-checkout stations installed on 1st Floor of the Main Library.
During 2020, we emphasized

**Literacy**
- Significantly expanded Literacy programs
- Regularly run virtual ESL classes
- Early Literacy Workshops for parents
- Career Change Workshops
- Virtual school class visits

**Digital Collections**
These are just a few of the most popular digital collections we make available to our customers

**Library Space Utilization, and the Future**
- **Relocated Teen Room temporarily to 3rd floor** accommodating social distancing requirements.
- **Finished Renovation of Annex 2,** relocated staff to enable using more space for public service.
- **Applied for Capital Grant,** continued with planning to apply for the next round of Grants.
- **Prepared for 3rd Floor Renovation and installation of the new HVAC system.**
- **Installed a new Walk-Up Window in the Learning Center** to facilitate service while maintaining social distance.
- **Planning incorporation of library services into the two townhouses.**
Mission: To raise money and public awareness in the community to support the services and programs of the Library.

Activities:
- Ongoing Book Sales (Suspended March 2020)
- Novella Night, and Novel Night (Suspended March 2020)
- Membership Drive

Supported: Museum Pass Program • Saturday Family FUNday Programs (Continued throughout COVID Crisis) • ESL Programs

Discussions are underway to merge these two organizations