



**Sustainable  
Libraries  
Initiative**

SLI Final Presentation - January 2024

# Kinderhook Memorial Library

18 Hudson St.

Kinderhook, NY 12106



# Executive Summary

The core responsibility of the Kinderhook Memorial Library is to meet the needs of the community and to ensure financial sustainability. Our values are learning, curiosity, connection, belonging, and sustainability.

Overall, by undertaking the SLI framework and utilizing the self-assessment tools helped to solidify our commitment to the SLI triple-bottom line. There are many areas where we were already in a good and progressive place, and with others the SLI practice and tasks helped us advance our understanding, our thinking, and our progress. We now stand ready to continue the SLI practice and further evolve the wonderful Kinderhook Memorial Library.

Commitment to the  
SLI Triple Bottom Line

# Triple Bottom Line of Sustainability



The Kinderhook Memorial Library is committed to taking steps to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Library and of the community we serve. To this end, the Library will incorporate the interrelated principles of environmental stewardship, social equity, and financial feasibility throughout our policies and practices.

# Background and First Steps

# Background Information

- In 2018, the Kinderhook Memorial Library completed a major renovation and expansion.
- Highlights of this expansion were
  - ADA Compliance
  - More efficient heating (propane vs. fuel oil)
  - Modern, high-efficiency windows
  - New meeting space for the community
  - Landscaping to address water runoff issues
  - Tighter building envelope
  - More available space and seating for patrons to meet and interact



Laying the foundation for the new building - Nov. 2017

# First Steps

- In April of 2022, the Board of Trustees agreed to join the Sustainable Libraries Initiative.
- One of the first actions taken was to create a Sustainability Committee, tasked with collaborating with the Library Director and community members to complete the required tasks by June 2023.

A waste audit showed where we needed to make changes regarding recycling and composting.



A private donation helped us add bilingual signage (English-Spanish) to make our library more welcoming and navigable.

# First Steps

- The board began the lengthy process of reviewing each policy and updating them with terminology defining our commitment to the Triple Bottom Line.
- We also began heavily publicizing our enrollment in the SLI and encouraging patrons to ask us for more information!
- Staff and trustees attended a number of webinars outlining how to achieve our goals.



Front page of our Fall 2022 newsletter



# Outdoor Spaces

# A Green Outdoor Space

- Pesticides and herbicides had not been used regularly; we have revised our policies to ensure that they will not be.
- After assessing our nighttime light pollution, we made sure that our two floodlights were motion activated; unless they're required, they are off.
- To better manage organic waste, we will have a three-bin composting system in place by spring 2024.



# A Green Outdoor Space



Our three-season pollinator garden highlights native plants that bloom throughout the year.

When a patron asked about a memorial seating area, we worked with them to add a native tree (Black Tupelo) which benefits wildlife, and a sustainably sourced teak bench to our front yard.



# Indoor Spaces

# A Welcoming Indoor Space

- With our expansion—multiuse space to allow multiple groups to meet without disrupting patrons
- Where possible, biophilic design has been incorporated into our library. This includes using live plants throughout the building, windows allowing natural light, and two functional propane fireplaces.
- Vendor contracts have been updated to include eco-friendly material usage and proper waste management as a requirement.



# Transportation

# Transportation

- We have updated our policies to allow staff to work from home when possible. This allows us to cut down on unnecessary emissions and helps our staff save money.
- We also encourage carpooling when attending off-site events or meetings.
- Library trustees and town committees in our service area are able to use Zoom for online meetings when possible.



A bike rack on premises provides a safe and easy way for cyclists to access our services while on their routes. We have even started loaning bike locks at the circulation desk!

Energy



# Energy & Water

- We contacted NYSERDA and applied for funding for a full energy audit to identify areas of the building that needed to be improved.
- After our energy audit, we took the appropriate actions to address issues identified. This included:
  - Addressed building envelope issues through caulking our doors and windows where necessary, and reglazing one of our windows.
  - Secured funding to have heat pumps installed, eliminating our remaining use of fuel oil.
  - Programmed computers to shut down when inactive.
  - Will soon replace remaining fluorescent tube lighting with more sustainable fixtures (Feb. 2024)

# Energy & Water

- We have set our refrigerator, hot water heaters, and thermostats to ideal temperatures to ensure that we are not wasting electricity.
- Signage has been placed near sinks requesting to notify an employee if there are any leaks.
- Garden beds are mulched and any limited watering is done as early in the morning as possible to reduce evaporation.
- Our facility plan has been updated to prioritize WaterSense products.

# Materials

# Conscientious Material Usage

- As part of this process, we shifted our focus to buy more materials locally, reuse or repurpose materials when possible, and specifically seek environmentally-friendly supplies.
- We added recycling bins throughout the building and a compost bin for staff to use.
- Our staff and trustees moved to digital files where possible, and use eco-friendly printing methods when not possible.



**EcoChit**

EcoChit receipt paper is not only BPA free—its fully recyclable, and the company donates a portion of the proceeds to forest restoration.

# NexTrex Recycling Challenge



- Joining the NexTrex Recycling Challenge was one of the first major undertakings.
- The Trex company collects plastic waste for use in their products. In return, communities are awarded a free Trex bench for their efforts.
- Within six months, our community diverted over 500 lbs of plastic from landfills.



# NexTrex Recycling Challenge

- Our communities have since recycled over 2,000 lbs of plastic.
- Since 2022, we have earned and donated 4 benches to Kinderhook and Stuyvesant.
- Patrons often mentioned that they are very glad that we have this, and continue to bring their plastic to us.

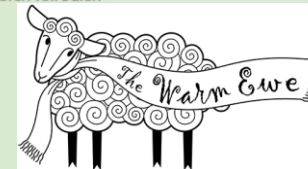


## Community Partners

JACK  
SHAINMAN  
GALLERY



Village of  
**Kinderhook**  
Birthplace of our 8th President Martin Van Buren



# Conscientious Material Usage



Incorporating sustainability into our prizes and incentives has encouraged patrons to explore green alternatives.

We are hosting the Village of Kinderhook's Climate Smart Task Force's battery recycling program. Our community has recycled over 950 lbs of batteries!



All weeded materials are donated to the Friends of the Library for book sales. They are also redistributed to schools and Little Free Libraries. Materials that are too damaged for sales are actually mulched and used on a local farm.

# E-Waste Recycling Programs



For Earth Day, we gathered recyclable electronics from the community. GE Elfun in Schenectady refurbishes computers and devices for local nonprofits!



This year, we recycled over 20lbs of CDs. In 2024, we will celebrate Earth Day by hosting a CD recycling drive for our patrons. CDs are another major source of e-waste that cannot easily be recycled.





# Collective Impact

# Collective Impact

Finding new ways to engage in the community has helped us disseminate information regarding library services while supporting local businesses and organizations!



Firefighters had the chance to hold a storytime for children, show off their equipment, and discuss volunteering opportunities with parents!



We hosted a collection box for the Zonta Club of the Upper Hudson Valley, which collects feminine hygiene products for those in need.

# Collective Impact



We partnered with Super Stories, a new not-for-profit which brings community storytelling through public art. For Pride Month, we adorned our front lawn with signs of acceptance and love created by children.

A partnership between the Rec Committee of the Village of Kinderhook and the Friends of the Library brought three beautiful Little Free Libraries, ensuring access to books in parks and along trails.



# Collective Impact



We partnered with our local supermarket, Hannaford, to encourage patrons to register for and participate in Meatless Mondays!

We are bringing a variety of programs to our patrons to help empower them to live sustainable lives. This includes green energy projects for kids, lectures on state aid for home improvements, and programs that help develop life skills.



Our new Sustainability Collection highlights books addressing the Triple Bottom Line.

# Social Cohesion

# Social Cohesion

- Our policies have been updated to reflect our diverse community. This includes ensuring that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is a key factor when developing new policies.
- We have had bilingual signage installed and expanded our collection of Spanish-language books for all ages.
- We regularly plan programs aimed at education and inclusion, so that all programs are welcoming to everyone.



Red hibiscus saplings were available for attendees at our Juneteenth 2022 event.

# Social Cohesion

- In 2023, the Board developed a profile matrix for trustees. The goal of this is to have a measure of diversity and identify areas to increase representation on the board.
- In addition to demographic information, this matrix includes information on trustees' skills, experience and backgrounds.



We had a packed house for our third annual Drag Story Hour!

# Resilience Planning



# Community Resiliency

- We are currently listed as a county cooling center, and are in the process of working with the county in developing a list of warming centers.
- A large part of our Sustainability Collection has books that address resilience and preparedness.
- Our Disaster Response Plan has been updated and expanded to ensure that our staff are ready in the event of an emergency.



For National Preparedness Month, we showed off the contents of our library's emergency preparedness kit, and distributed information for families to make their own.

# Financial Sustainability

# Financial Sustainability

- Since 2009, the Library has regularly sought funding increases from the community every other year. We have been approved each time.
- By maintaining this regularity, we ensure that the community understands the requests when we make them.
- It also ensures that we can keep our requests low and reasonable.
- We maintain a reserve fund to help with any unexpected expenses, new investments, or operating budget shortfalls.
- Our 414 strategy has become a model for other libraries attempting to increase support.

# Financial Sustainability

Since beginning the Sustainable Libraries Initiative, we have:

- Offered a SIMPLE IRA retirement plan for all employees.
- Increased all pay to at least \$17.62/hr, the living wage for our county as determined by the MIT Living Wage Calculator.
- Established a balance of local funding through taxes, fundraising campaigns, and solicited donations.
- Established a schedule of regular financial audits or reviews.

What's Next?

# What does the future have in store?

We recognize that certification is not the end of this process. We will see in the coming years:

- Continued communication with the public regarding ways that the Library can address the resiliency needs of the community.
- Regular and well-attended events and lectures on renewable energy, sustainable/native gardening, and disaster preparedness.
- More engagement with non-English speakers.
- Further outreach in the community, bringing events and services to those who cannot make it to our building or don't currently access our services.
- Annual assessments on sustainability goals using established metrics.