

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WINTHROP PUBLIC LIBRARY AND MUSEUM
MEETING MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

In Attendance:

In Person

Trustees: Gillian Teixeira, Alyson Dewar, Gary Skomro, Annie Ferreira, Betty Peabody; Library Director - Greg McClay;

Absent:

Trustee Marie Matarazzo, Executive Assistant Alana Locke

Call to order:

Meeting called to order at 6:00pm

Minutes:

Minutes from June submitted for approval

- Motion by Gary Skomro
- Seconded by Betty Peabody
- No discussion
- In Favor: Betty Peabody, Gary Skomro, Alyson Dewar, Gillian Teixeira
- Abstain: Annie Ferreira
- Motion passed

Chair Report:

Upcoming Election: Three Trustees Seats

There is an election coming up. Papers for all offices are due September 16. Chair (Gillian) has pulled papers. Two new people have also pulled papers. To the best of the Chair's knowledge, Marie has not pulled papers for re-election and Betty is not running. If you are interested in running or if you know someone running for a different seat, remind them to get their paperwork in.

Ribbon Cutting Accessibility Ramp/Press Release

There was a ribbon cutting for the new exterior accessible ramp from the parking lot to the children's room. No Trustees were present nor were any Trustees informed before or after the fact. The article submitted to the newspaper gave the town undue credit for both the interior and exterior ramps. The town does not deserve credit. Both projects were long overdue and would still be long overdue if not for the advocacy of the Trustees and Gary Skomro specifically.

Director McClay takes full responsibility for the lapse in informing the Trustees of the event. His top priority was making sure that the Disability Commission (also deserving of credit for securing the over-all grant that

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ultimately paid for both ramps) was able to attend. He apologises for not getting the Trustees involved.

Trustee Alyson Dewar was surprised to find out about this on Facebook. She lives around the corner from the library and could likely have attended. Barring that, she would have expected a notification between the event and the publishing on social media and the newspaper of the news of the event. There was an entire week to inform the Trustees that it happened. We should not have to find out about these things through the newspaper or social media. Ideally we would be informed beforehand and invited to such events in advance. Barring that, we would be informed after the fact but before the rest of the world.

Trustee Annie Ferreira echoed Alyson's sentiments. She said she likely would not have taken time off from work to attend but the option would have been nice as would a notification after the fact.

Trustee Teixeira was mollified that the Town Council was also not present. (we can take that out. Lmk)

Meeting time:

Previous meetings were held at 5:30pm. The time was moved to 6:00pm for this meeting to make it easier to attend. How is that working? Discussion ensued; meetings will begin at 6:00pm for the remainder of this term (through the December meeting) and the time can be reevaluated after the new Board is sworn in.

Director's Report:

Disability Grant:

All funds from the grant have been spent. The exterior ramp was approximately \$180,000.00. The interior ramp was approximately \$25,000.00. Any remaining funds went to elevator maintenance. Making the Hazlett Room accessible remains on the to-do list. It is likely not getting done in the next two years but will stay on the long-range list.

Trustee Skomro points out that there will be no new grants forthcoming while the town remains non-compliant with MBTA 3A. Grants are done for the time being at least.

The director apologizes again for neglecting to loop in the Board of Trustees for the ribbon cutting. He felt that having the Town Manager and Disability Commission there were the priorities. The event was last-minute and rushed because the project took more time than expected and the final inspection added to the time delay.

ARIS/Financial Report:

Both of these reports go to the State. ARIS has been submitted, The Director will have a printed version at the next meeting. The printout will contain the year-to-year changes. The financial report (which determines State Aid) is due October 3. The State takes the 3 year average budget and then multiplies that by 2% to determine our compliance with the State Aid metrics.

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Mural Outside the Hazlett Room:

The family of the (word, benefactor, donator, sponsor??) of the mural was unable to do a dedication of the mural at the time of (word again) funeral. They are spread out and unlikely to reconvene for a dedication. The Director has ordered a plaque from Honan Signs. Once that is in place the library will put an announcement in the newspaper.

TV Donation:

Ed Rossi, a patron who is also a financial advisor and has frequently used our meeting space, has donated a 60" television and wall mount for placement in the Hazlett Room. Various Trustees expressed their excitement for the addition that should make the room even more functional for those who use it. The library is waiting on the town to mount it on the wall.

Summer Reading

Summer Reading is always a big hit. The Director supplied some graphics regarding numbers. See attached.

Our programs had great attendance. The alpaca program alone had over 250 people. We are considering bringing them back; both children and adults expressed interest in seeing them again or expressed dismay that they missed it.

Christine Cattaneo (the circulation assistant) took charge of Adult Summer Reading. That also had excellent participation.

Libby: Pay per Circulation

We budget \$500 each month to make certain titles available on demand to patrons. This is for specific book titles. If the title is in the "on demand" category for the month, there is no wait time. If someone clicks on it, they are able to check it out and the library gets billed for the use. (Other items are available on a first come, first served basis where we have access to a finite number of copies, and once those are checked out, patrons are added to the wait list. When the first patron finishes - or the check-out window is over - the next patron in line is notified of the title's availability.) We have consistently seen patrons take advantage of this and the cost is between \$350 and \$500 each month. An area where it was not as popular was with the required titles for summer reading. There were three titles that were required summer reading for students. Overdrive made each title available on demand (this is not always possible, publishers do put restrictions on books) but they were only used for a handful of checkouts. The theory is that while our children and teens do read ebooks regularly, they like to have a hard copy of required reading that they will need to answer questions about. Nothing beats a hard copy of a book for looking forward and backward to find information. It's much harder to do this with ebooks. The Director anticipates continuing to offer this service (based on availability from Libby/Publishers) but he does not anticipate it being well used. The library is only billed per use on the books, though, so there is no upfront cost to doing this and only a cost that is directly correlated with its popularity.

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We also ran a "school supplies for fines" program at the end of summer reading. We got quite a few donations (nearly all usable and appropriate) and gave them to the schools.

HVAC Removal

There are several HVAC units on the exterior of the building - mounted on the ground on cement slabs. They do not work and have not worked for a long time. The Director has asked Rich Cifuni to get an electrician to disconnect them. The Director got a quote from Pete's Disposal for removal of the units and the slabs upon which they sit. Removal of the old units was quoted at \$1,450 with an additional \$1,300 to demolish and remove the old concrete. (If we get new units, it is highly unlikely that they would require concrete pads. Often the newer ones sit on a rubber mat which sits on the ground.) Currently the library is cooled using a combination of window units and floor units. The director is getting quotes for mini-splits for a variety of areas in the library. The museum, for example, could use more consistent temperature control. What the ultimate solution will be (short term and long term) remains to be seen.

There was a discussion about ideas for using that space going forward. We don't want to install something (a garden, seating, whatever) if it will be removed to install new HVAC units. We will have the winter to think and plan and figure out a good use of the space and a good space for potential, future HVAC units.

Book Groups/Programming:

Our three adult book groups will re-start in October. They are Nonfiction, Mystery, and Popular. There is a good turn out for all three and the staff are enjoying hosting them.

Ship Repair:

The library has a large model ship (approximately 6' x6' when including masts and rigging) sitting above the right-hand staircase on the 3rd floor. It is old and in disrepair. Someone had gotten a quote to repair it from Piel Craftsmen in Norwood about 10 - 15 years ago. That quote was \$2,400. The director expects that price will have doubled. They require the ship be delivered to them in order to quote for repairs.

There was a robust discussion about what to do about this ship. Is it historically significant? Can it be moved without damaging it? Will it require specialized movers in addition to specialized repair? What is it worth? Why do we have it? Will they come to us for an estimate if we pay for it? Is there a better use for those funds?

Study Rooms in Basement:

Pete's Disposal cleared 30% of the former processing room in the basement. It is essentially between Bookends and the Children's Circulation Desk. The Director had Correale Construction come in to discuss sectioning off the cleared space for study rooms. The idea is to have three rooms: one would be approximately half of the space and hold about six people; two would be a quarter of the space each and hold 2 - 3 people. The building inspector also looked at the space and approved the materials and gave a list of requirements. A quote for the work is attached.

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The Trustees and Director took a field trip to the basement to look at the space. There is interest in the space, once finished. It will be a good addition to the library. Policies will need to be developed to avoid shenanigans as well as adding a camera to the area.

Trustee Skomro wondered about ventilation needs in that area. Director McClay said it should be fine. The building inspector saw it. The walls would be solid and there will be windows in the doors. The idea is to make them nearly soundproof.

Trustee Ferreira wanted to make sure that people could see in. Director McClay said the doors would have windows for that purpose. Patrons would sign out keys (the library would keep a master for when keys are locked inside). Patrons would be allowed to lock the doors when in use.

Trustee Peabody likes the idea.

The plan is to use the other half of the space (once cleaned out) as the Maker Space. The Library of Things would have another location, maybe on the mezzanine.

Agenda Items:

Allocating Funds:

HVAC Units:

Trustee Skomro made a motion to allocate \$3,000.00 in State Aid to remove the non-functioning HVAC units from outside.

Trustee Ferreira seconded.

Discussion: Trustee Teixeira thinks the quote is good. Trustee Ferreira wants to be sure that how to best cool the library is researched before the space is repurposed. The Director said that Correale also does miniplits and will prepare a quote. That is an expense for Town Hall. Trustee Skomro agrees that should be a capital expense and if it is deemed a necessary expense, the Trustees need to lobby for it. Trustee Ferreira thinks that would be a great use for a grant (unless it's not from the State, we are not getting that grant. Winthrop is ineligible for State grants due to our non-compliance with MBTA 3A).

Trustee Teixeira made a motion to close discussion

All present voted yes. \$3,000.00 will be allocated from State Aid to pay for the removal of non-functioning HVAC units.

Director McClay said the electricity should be disconnected next week.

Ship

Trustee Ferreira made a motion to discuss repair of the ship

Trustee Skomro seconded

Discussion: Trustees Peabody and Teixeira suggested asking if those doing the repairs would come look at it if we pay them for their time. Trustee Ferreira wants

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more information on the boat; why is it here? Plaque states the maker was from Chelsea. Trustee Skomro points out that Winthrop was a part of Chelsea at one time (was that before or after the boat?) It may have been here since the library opened - the library may have been built around the boat (there was a discussion of how one would have gotten it into the building and how one would get it out). Director McClay will put together more information for the next meeting.

Discussion closed.

Trustee Teixeira made a motion to approve up to \$500 from State Aid to have someone come to the library and look at the ship and make a determination about moving it and fixing it (or not) and give recommendations on how to move it and who should do so. Trustee Skomro seconded.

All present voted in favor. Motion to allocate \$500 in State Aid to figure out what to do with this ship and how much it will cost.

Study Rooms

Trustee Teixeira made a motion to allocate \$50,000.00 from State Aid to create three study rooms on the lower level of the library. Trustee Ferreira seconded the motion.

Discussion: Trustee Ferreira thinks it will add value to the library and points out that the interior ramp was paid for by the Disability Commission grant instead of library funds; the library still has that money. It's unused space and would be better served open to the public in some way. The quote, for all that work, seems fair. Trustee Skomro wants to see the space. This is where everyone went to the basement for a looksee. It was noted that it could be noisy - but that can be lessened by not using the maker space during especially high-demand times for the rooms and warning those using the rooms when there will be programming in the adjacent space. Trustee Ferreira wants to be sure there will be electrical outlets in all rooms, maybe more than one. Trustee Dewar mentioned that the brand-new Portsmouth NH library has study/co-working spaces with insufficient outlet access. They have put power strips around but it is really easy to forget those things. Trustee Skomro wishes he had a drawing of the plan.

Trustee Teixeira made a motion to close discussion.

All Trustees present voted in favor. Motion to allocate \$50,000.00 from State Aid to renovate half of the processing room into study space.

Late Fee Follow-up:

The Director asked Children's Librarian Liz Tellmosse to write something up about whether or not we should charge late-fees. She did. It's attached. The Director pointed out that sometimes a Library of Things has fees. All agreed that was a different kettle of fish. Trustee Teixeira pointed out that sometimes fee-free only applies to books; media retains fees. There is a difference between something that is late and something that is considered missing. The library does not keep any late fees it collects. The library does, however, retain any monies received to replace lost items.

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That was a change the Town made in the past since the library budget would be used to purchase the new item.

Executive Assistant Locke is expected back next week. It was requested that she research if there is verbiage from libraries about not having fees and, if so, how that is worded. It could be a negative: as in, there are no fees so there is nothing to say.

Library Funds:

The Director provided the Trustees with a hand-out detailing the various funds the library has. There is still some question about which restrictions go with which funds. At least one is interest only. One is for materials for lending. Others may have different restrictions.

Staff:

A trustee asked for a list of Library employees and the hours they work. They are as follows:

Liz Telmosse - Head of the Children's Library (30)

Diane Stangle - Children's Librarian(35)

Jamie Farrell - Library Assistant (18)

Dom DeMasi - Ciculation Supervisor (35)

Christien Cattaneo - Circulation Assistant (35)

Joanne Hillman, Library Assistan (21)

Joe Heafitz - Library Assistant (18)

Tammy Cody - Library Assistant (18)

Frank Ferrara - IT/Local History (35)

Greg McClay - Director (35)

Alana Locke - Executive Assistant (35)

Meeting Schedule:

Trustee Ferreira suggested meetings be scheduled through the end of the (calendar) year. All agreed. Next meetings are:

- o October 7, 2025 at 6:00pm
- o November 6, 2025 at 6:00pm
- o December 4, 2025 at 6:00pm

Other Items for Discussion

Trustee Ferreira asked if the Director could add hours, where would he? The Director replied that he doesn't need more people. He needs more money to hire for more specialized work and he would also like to hire old-school paiges to re-shelve

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books. Volunteers cannot do the work because of union issues, which completely make sense and are understandable. If Liz had her master's degree she would make at least 30% more somewhere else and maybe double at a larger library.

Trustee Ferreira asked about union negotiations. The Director replied that those are not under his purview - the town manager and the union handle it. The Director believes that the employees got a raise that was slightly higher than typical because of the payscale report that the town commissioned.

Public Comment:

- No public comment

Adjournment:

- Motion to adjourn by Gary Skomro
- Seconded by Gillian Teixeira
- All voted in favor
- Meeting adjourned at 7:30

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TOWN OF WINTHROP

Town Hall, 1 Metcalf Square, Winthrop, MA 02152 Telephone: 617-846-1341

Richard A. Cifuni
Public Facilities Manager

September 4, 2025

RE: Winthrop Public Library – Build out three new study rooms – Lower Level

Vendor 1: Correale Construction:

Frame new study rooms (metal studs) including doorways and pipe soffits. Two smaller rooms and one larger room as discussed.
Soundproof insulation between partitions
Install 5/8 Drywall and tape seam
Install new doors
Install door trims, baseboard and door hardware
Install carpet tiles and thresholds
Prep, prime & paint walls and trim

Includes all labor & material *except* the three doors: \$19,300.00

Vendor 2: Plumbing – Combustion Services:

Cut & cap existing wall hung heat loop
Install three new forced hot water baseboard units (one per room)
Bleed radiators and restore service

Includes all labor and material: \$6,800.00

Vendor 3: Electrical – Inello Electric:

Rough wiring for the three offices: Lights, switching, outlets and data ports
Finish: Install all finishes - light fixtures, outlets, switches and data
Install / Update emergency exit signs

Includes all labor and material: \$7,500.00

Vendor 4: Alarms – ATS Alarms:

Install alarm notifications / strobes as needed

Budget Number - includes all labor and material: \$3,500.00

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Material Allowance Outside of Vendor Contracts:

<i>Study room doors – Fire rated w/ glass – 3x \$2,500.00</i>	<i>\$7,500.00</i>
<i>Study room doors – non fire rated w/glass – 3x \$1,200.00</i>	<i>\$3,600.00</i>
<i>Desks / Computers:</i>	<i>\$TBD</i>

Total Estimate with Fire Rated Doors:	\$44,600.00
Total Estimate with non-Fire Rated Doors:	\$40,700.00

**Adding a 10% contingency for unknown issues would put the estimate range at \$44,770.00 to \$49,060.00*

Sincerely,

Richard A Cifuni
Richard A Cifuni
Facilities Manager
Town of Winthrop
100 Kennedy Drive
Winthrop MA 02152
(617)-846-1341

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When recently asked by Greg my opinion on discontinuing the policy of late fees, I was frankly torn on my reply. After further consideration, I determined the two most important factors to consider when crafting my response are: (1) is the removal of late fees inline with the library's mission statement and (2) will the removal of fees benefit the library's patrons.

The answer to both of these questions is yes.

As per the Collection Development policy updated June 2023, the library's mission statement reads:

The Mission of the Winthrop Public Library & Museum is to provide free public library service to all citizens of Winthrop. The Library will provide a wide range of print and non-print media for recreational and personal development. The Library will also preserve and provide access to a Museum collection covering both history and art in the community.¹

The removal of fees is clearly inline with the "free" aspect of the library's mission statement. Further research into the topic revealed that the fees charged by libraries for late materials often prove to be an economic barrier to lower income households. The inability to pay late fees results in the patron losing library privileges including checking out physical books and utilizing online library resources. The American Library Association issued a resolution in 2019 further underscoring this point by stating "Whereas monetary fines ultimately do not serve the core mission of the modern library"² Similarly, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners issued the following statement in 2023 while heralding the 85% of libraries in the state that are fine free "Fines may discourage people from using libraries and can disproportionately affect those who are economically challenged."³ The current library policy restricts card usage once library fees reach \$10⁴ in effect making the library not free to all citizens of Winthrop.

The primary question of benefiting patrons seems to be a simple answer of yes. However, the biggest counter argument deals with the question that without the punitive punishment of a late fee, are patrons still likely to return the borrowed materials? The data to answer this question is admittedly limited, although overwhelmingly reported materials are still returned even without a late fee. The surprising find was that although in the short term the number of long overdue books increased, over the long term the

¹ <https://winthroppubliclibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Collection-Development-Policy.pdf>

² https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/aboutala/content/governance/council/council_documents/2019_ms_council_docs/ALA%20CD%2038%20RESOLUTION%20ON%20MONETARY%20LIBRARY%20FINES%20AS%20A%20FORM%20OF%20SOCIAL%20JUSTICE%20Revised%201_27_0.pdf

³ <https://mblic.state.ma.us/news/news-releases/2023/nr231213.php>

⁴ <https://winthroppubliclibrary.org/about-the-library/library-policies/overdue-fines-policy/>

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amount decreased. Meaning patrons kept books out longer but instead of never returning them, patrons eventually returned the materials.⁵

Additionally, from a children's room perspective, the removal of fees would certainly benefit our patrons. Our main focus is to nurture our youngest patrons' love of reading and the library. Restricting access for young readers due to fines creates an uncomfortable and unwelcoming atmosphere that can discourage regular library use, undermining our purpose.

In conclusion, I think the removal of late fees would be inline with the library's mission statement and benefit our patrons. As such, I am in favor of removing the late fee policy from the library.

Thank you,
Liz Telmosse
Head of Youth Services
Winthrop Public Library & Museum

⁵ https://action.everylibrary.org/why_are_libraries_eliminating_late_fees
<https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/new-york-public-library-says-tens-of-thousands-of-books-have-been-returned-since-policy-of-no-late-fees-was-adopted/>
<https://www.npr.org/2019/11/30/781374759/we-wanted-our-patrons-back-public-libraries-scrap-late-fines-to-alleviate-inequity#:~:text=Lifting%20fines%20has%20had%20a%20surprising%20dual,renewals%20compared%20with%20that%20time%20last%20year.>
<https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/Fine-Farewells-LJs-2022-Fines-and-Fees-Survey>
<https://school.syracuse.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Overdue-Fines-Advantages-Disadvantages-and-How-Eliminating-Them-Can-Benefit-Public-Libraries.pdf>

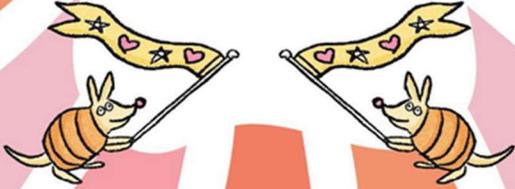
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Winthrop Public Library & Museum's
FIRST EVER Adult Summer Reading Program had:

201
Adult sign-ups!

727
Raffle entries!

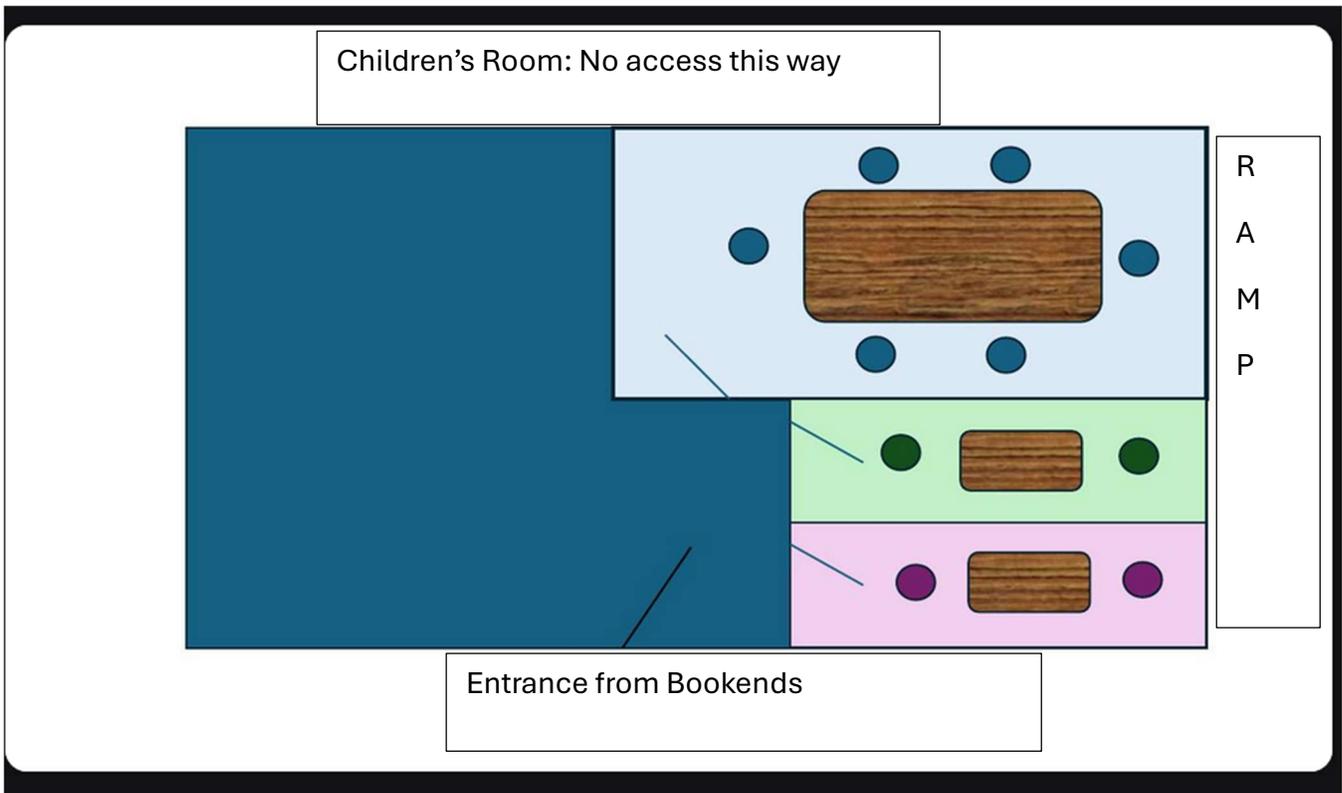
Thanks to all who participated,
and we hope to see you again next summer!



Winthrop Public Library & Museum
Published by Elizabeth Telmosse · August 13 ·

Children's Summer Reading by the numbers!

644 Kids signed up for Summer Reading ★ ★ ★	537 Raffle Entries read for 6 hours to enter ★ ★ ★
3222 Hours Read (just from the raffle!) ★ ★ ★	1768 People attended programs ★ ★ ★



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