AGENDA
SIMSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY – BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Town of Simsbury, Connecticut
Regular Meeting
Monday, October 19, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.
Simsbury Public Library – Weatogue Room

Public Audience

a. Participants may address the Library Board in person or virtually and have five (5) minutes to speak.
b. Email cdisanto.spl@simsburylibrary.info by noon on Monday, October 19, to register to address the Library Board live through Zoom.
c. Written comments can be emailed to cdisanto.spl@simsburylibrary.info. Comments will not be read into the record, but forwarded to the Library Board via email.

1. Call to Order – Establish Quorum
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting – September 14, 2026
4. Public Audience
5. Communications
6. Friends' Report
7. Board of Selectmen Liaison Report
8. Chair's Report
9. Director's Report
10. September Finance Report
11. Legislative Directed Funds Update
12. Acceptance of Friends of the Simsbury Public Library 2025-2026 Gift - $101,566
13. Public, Educational and Governmental Programming and Education Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) Grant Projects
14. Library Card Design Contest
15. Staff Development Morning – November 12, 2026
16. Strategic Planning Committee
17. Tour of the Teen Space
18. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Cameron DiSanto
Administrative Secretary

Library Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting
September 14, 2026 – 7:00 P.M
Simsbury Public Library – Weatogue Room
725 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER- Madam Chair McGrath called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Present: Chair, Holly McGrath; Vice Chair, Polly Rice; Secretary, Mary Glassman; Co-Chair of Strategic Plan Committee, Don Heymann; Board of Trustees: Heather Czuchta, Anne Erickson, Marianne O'Neil (virtual), Susan Ray, and Laurie Shinaman; Simsbury Public Library Director, Lisa Miceli; President of the Friends of the Library, Greg Golinski.

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 20, 2026, Regular Meeting
Madam Chair McGrath amended line 13 to correct the spelling of "Golinkski" to "Golinski" and remove the second listing of Greg Golinski's name in line 15.

MOTION: Vice Chair Rice made a motion, seconded by Trustee Shinaman, to approve the Minutes of the July 20, 2026 Regular Meeting as amended. The motion carried with one abstention. (10-0-1)

III. PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, Simsbury expressed concern regarding the documentation and accounting of the Friends of the Simsbury Public Library funds.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Valley Life Article
Madam Chair McGrath reported on a Valley Life article highlighting JJ Hanrahan and the Little Free Pantry project at the Library.

V. FRIENDS' REPORT

President Golinski reported on the annual big book sale held over Labor Day Weekend. Damage occurred to the floor of the high school gymnasium from the weight of the tables used during the book sale. A contractor is scheduled to inspect the damage and provide an estimate for repairs. The Friends will provide an update regarding the repair estimate and the ability to use the high school for future book sales.

Preliminary proceeds were reported at approximately $58,000-$59,000, with the total expected to be approximately $60,000 after the book store sales are included. The amount was reported to be comparable to previous years.

President Golinski explained that Library Director Miceli develops a proposed annual support budget, which is reviewed by the Friends Finance Committee, then reviewed by the full Friends Executive Board. The Friends subsequently pay approved invoiced throughout the fiscal year rather than providing the Library with a single unrestricted payment. The Board discussed the value in sharing the Library Support Budget and a breakdown of the other financial support. Chair McGrath expressed appreciation for the Friends' fundraising and ongoing support of the Library.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair McGrath reported that the Town has requested a year-end report concerning the Chair's activities. The Chair is preparing the report and will provide a copy to the Board when completed.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Library Director Miceli reported:

- The Library's elevator has been repaired.
- The Library's intergenerational summer reading program was reported to be the most successful to date, with more than 3,300 participants and 26 local business sponsors, in addition to support from the Friends.
- The Library hosted a job fair and are preparing for the second Age in Place Expo, being held in partnership with the Aging and Disability Commission and Senior Center.

The Board discussed the Library's website launch and the need to ensure that meeting dates and schedules displayed on the website are current.

Chair McGrath commended the Library's community outreach and partnerships and expressed appreciation for staff engagement throughout the community.

VIII. JUNE, JULY & AUGUST FINANCE REPORTS

June

Library Director Miceli reported that the outstanding invoices had been paid by the end of August. Building and grounds expenses were separated beginning July 1, and therefore were not reflected in the same manner as the prior fiscal year.

July

The July report included the Library's annual assessment from Library Connection under Library Administration.

August

The August report reflected an increased spending on children's reference materials. Library Director Miceli explained that funds were used to update the nonfiction collection and replace or update materials that were outdated. There was some damage to large-print materials from a leak associated with an air-conditioning compressor. Staff responded promptly to the leak and protected affected materials.

IX. LEGISLATIVE DIRECTED FUNDS

Library Director Miceli explained that the Legislative Directed Funds are funds committed to the town by Senator Honig. They have since learned that it is a grant process. The Library is working with the Deputy Town Manager and Town staff to determine the process for accessing the funds. The process has been complicated by changes to state software systems and communication with the State Library. The Board will receive additional information as the Town's grant process develops.

X. SIMSBURY COMMUNITY FUND GRANT PROJECT

Library Director Miceli reported on an application submitted to the Simsbury Community Fund for a project titled "Connection and Conversation" in partnership with the Aging and Disability Commission, Senior Center, and Skybrooke at Simsbury. The proposed project would provide programming and materials for seniors, particularly individuals with cognitive impairments and their caregivers.

Proposed purchases include:

- Reading2Connect books designed for seniors and individuals with cognitive impairment

- Senior Sewing Cards
- Special Conversation Packs

XI. LAPTOP CONNECT PROGRAM

Library Director Miceli reported that the Laptop ConneCT Program is administered through the Connecticut State Library and Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

The program provides laptops to participating public libraries for long-term loans to eligible community members.

The Library currently has 10 laptops available. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and eligible for state or federal assistance. The Library is working with the Senior Center and Social Services to verify eligibility.

Applications are being accepted through the end of September. If more than 10 eligible applicants are received, a lottery will be conducted.

The laptops may be loaned for up to five years. Technical support is provided through an 800-number, and the Library's responsibility for the device is limited once it has been lent to a borrower.

The program is intended to increase digital access in the community.

XII. ACCEPTANCE OF FRIENDS OF THE SIMSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY 2025-2026 GIFT - $101,566

The Director reported that she had reviewed and reconciled the Friends' invoices with the Friends' Treasurer and that the figures matched.

Board members requested additional detail regarding the composition of the $101,566 total, including a comparison of the Friends' approved budget with actual expenditures. The Board discussed the importance of maintaining a clear paper trail and conducting a reconciliation at the end of each fiscal year.

The Board also discussed the distinction between the Friends' regular support budget and additional expenditures for special projects and other Library enhancements.

MOTION: Trustee Shinaman made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Rice, to postpone acceptance of the $101,566 gift until next meeting, pending receipt and review of supporting details. The motion carried unanimously. (11-0-0)

XIII. STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Co-Chair of Strategic Planning Committee Heymann reported that all survey results were compiled and analyzed. The Committee decided on the four proposed goals:

1. Simsbury Library welcomes everyone and fosters social connections and understanding in a safe, vibrant learning community.
2. Simsbury Library provides a safe and accessible space to explore and access physical and digital resources and technology support.
3. Simsbury Library supports a community that values and welcomes people of all abilities, cultures, and experiences.
4. Simsbury Library provides learning opportunities through it's Business and Career Center while promoting local economic development.

The Board discussed wording within the goals and supporting objectives, including language concerning designated spaces and resources for children and teens. The discussion reflected feedback received through the community survey regarding the needs of children, teens, and individuals with special needs.

Board members were invited to submit additional comments to members of the Strategic Planning Committee for consideration at the Committee's upcoming meeting.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Trustee Erickson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Ray, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. (11-0-0)

Madam Chair McGrath adjourned the meeting at 7:56 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cameron DiSanto
Administrative Secretary

Simsbury Public Library
Director's Report
October 2026

Simsbury Library is the center of an inclusive community that values and welcomes peoples of all abilities, cultures and lived experiences.

Adult

- Adult Services offered the virtual program The Democracy We Must Keep (23).
- The Domestic Affairs Discussion Group led by Dan Sommer began in September (16). This group will meet monthly.
- The Department partnered with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council on their first Civic Forum, As Citizens, Do We Have a Civic Duty? (36).

Borrowing & Technical Services

- The Library welcomed over 27,500 visitors in September, up 3% over September 2026.
- 138 new cards were issued.
- Volunteers contributed 34 hours of service last month, a savings to the Library and Town of $1,160.

Business and Career Center

- Business Development Coordinator Cyn facilitated the monthly What Should I Read Next newsletter, as well as the Whacha Got Cookin? (22) and Monthly Investment Group (12) programs

Children's

- Displays included Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, and Hispanic Heritage Month. We also celebrated Grandparents Day and encouraged kids to "Start a New Series" in September.
- New passive programs including a community puzzle and tick-tack-toe game (both of which we picked up for free from the Friends Book Sale) and coloring sheets for Spanish American Heritage Month (320 sheets colored) were offered last month.
- Head of Children's Services/Deputy Director Stephanie began offering a new monthly Sensory Friendly Storytime. This inclusive, interactive storytime was designed for children with sensory sensitivities, autism, or developmental differences. This opportunity is an intentionally small class size, intended for children who are overwhelmed by the large class size of our regular storytime programs and will feature similar elements (books, songs, movement and bubbles). 10 people attended our first one.

Teen

- Book displays included Fall Vibes and Hispanic Heritage Month.

The Library is a safe place for exploration that offers free and equal access to digital and physical resources

Adult

- Department staff coordinated 57 programs which 1,010 people attended.
- 30 programs were facilitated by volunteers, saving the Library 3,300 in programming costs.
- As of the end of September, there were 9 requests for the Laptop ConneCT laptops. Staff is working with Social Services to verify applicants' qualification for state/federal assistance.

Borrowing & Technical Services

- Over 26,400 physical items were borrowed in September, down 2,600 items from last September. This is likely a result of the reduced material budget as fewer new materials can be added each month.
- Borrowing of digital material was up 13.5% over September 2025.
- Sheri Tyler began work in the Department at the end of September. Sheri replaced Jennifer Kolb, a Page in the Borrowing & Circulation Department. Jennifer left to take a full-time position in the West Hartford Schools as a Library Media Assistant.

Children's

- 3 new PT Library Services Assistants were hired to help staff the Children's Room desk. We welcomed Elliot, Briana, and Caitlin to the team and began training them in September. They replace staff who moved on to other library positions to gain a wider range of library experience and schooling.

Teen

- Teen Services Librarian Mary gave a presentation to one of the local Scout groups about Library resources and how to use the catalog for their Reading Merit Badge. The group also took a tour of the building.

Through in-person and virtual engagement with information and people, the Library inspires people to learn about themselves, their community and the world.

Adult

- Department staff
    - Notarized 37 documents.
    - Processed 6 passport applications generating $210 in income for the Town.
    - Reserved 298 individual conference/study rooms and coordinated 73 lower level room reservations.
- The Library partnered with the Aging & Disability Commission to offer the Second Aging-in-Place Expo (105).
- Adult Services coordinated hands-on activities including
    - Writers' Meetup (16).
    - Flavor of the Month (40).
    - Morning Knitting (52).
    - Uke Hoot (32).
    - Inspired Hands Embroidery (8).
    - The Power of Color: Creating Beautiful Spaces (18).

Borrowing & Technical Services

- Head of Borrowing Nick, Head of Adult Services Chris and I attended training for the Laptop ConneCT program. 9 individuals registered to receive one of the free long loan laptops. The Library is working with Social Services to verify eligibility for federal and state assistance programs. Laptops will be distributed in October.

Business and Career Center

- Cyn offered a number of programs in September including:
    - 6 Cricut classes (22).
    - Intro to Knitting and Intermediate Knitting with Jeanne Silag from Simsbury Yarns (28).
    - Meet the Maker with Artist Robin Towle-Fesco (6).
    - 2 Canva for Business Classes (7).
    - Learn the Sewing Machine & Learn the Embroidery Machine (10).

Children's

- New seasonal programs such as Mini Makers (32), Whimsy Workshop (28), Build & Explore (14), a new Kids Book Club (3) and Mini Zen Gardens (20) were offered last month.
- Following feedback from the strategic planning process, the Department began presenting programs at different times including evenings and weekends. Starting in September, they are offering at least one evening (6PM) program per month. We offered an evening time for LEGO Club and 12 people attended. We also resumed our monthly Saturday Storytimes and 12 people attended in September.
- Staff hosted the Little Lambs preschool class for a special library outreach visit and storytime (6 children + teachers).

Teen

- September teen programming included
    - Dungeons and Dragons (7).
    - Craft & Chill – Constellation Art (10).
    - Game Club (10).
    - School Half Day Smash Brothers Ultimate Tournament (43).
    - Sketch Club (2).
- Teen volunteers completed 11.5 hours of service in September, a savings of $400 to the Library and Town.

Simsbury Library supports a thriving economy with information, tools and connections to promote businesses, non-profits and careers

- I am now serving on the Governance Committee of the Historical Society Board, as well as continuing on the Collections Committee.

Adult

- Department staff partnered with Real Artways, Simsbury Grange, the Avon, Canton and Granby and Simsbury and Traprock Ridge Land Trusts to offer the first of a four film series, America 250 Forest Series: the Lost Forests of New England (75). Real Artways and the various Land Trusts are new partners to Simsbury Public Library.
- The first inn a multi-part series about the Constitution, Conversations: The Constitution and Our Rights Part 1 was presented in collaboration with the Redding League of Women Voters and the Mark Twain Library - Virtual (95).
- Adult Services partnered with the Simsbury Senior Center to present A Matter of Balance (45).

Borrowing & Technical Services

- Staff worked with local non-profit Angel Horses staff to etch wine glasses for some of their donors. Angel Horses provided the glasses. Angel Horses is a horse retirement community.

Business and Career Center

- Cyn had 30 various interactions by email, phone, and in-person in September.
- Cyn is training Head of Adult Services Chris best practices for working with job seekers.
- Meet the Merchant featured The Lucky Gut Collective.

Children's

- Community members Holly McGrath offers Spanish language storytime: Hola Bebe (18) and Anna Dow offers French language storytime: Bonjour les momes (19). Both Holly and Anna volunteer their time to the library representing a cost savings to the Town of at least $150 per program.
- The Department supported individual career development and employment by hiring local entrepreneur and dance teacher Julianne Guarnier who offers our popular Little Leaps toddler dance class (67 children attended).
- Staff supported outreach and the Junior Woman's Club through participation in the Junior Woman's Arts and Crafts festival. Staff from the Children's Dept. attended this event on Saturday (it was cancelled for Sunday, due to rain).

Teen

- Kirsten from Gather on Hopmeadow led the teens in decorating tote bags for a Craft & Chill event. (10)

Town of Simsbury

YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGET REPORT

FOR 2027 03

		ORIGINAL ESTIM REV	REVISED EST REV	ACTUAL YTD REVENUE	ACTUAL MTD REVENUE	REMAINING REVENUE	PCT COLL
10047100 GF-Library Administration							
10047100 51010	LbAm*Full-Time	518,502	518,502	112,521.85	36,266.24	405,980.15	21.7%
10047100 51020	LbAm*Part Time	177,057	177,057	35,366.27	12,441.94	141,690.73	20.0%
10047100 51030	LbAm*Overtime	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047100 52200	LbAm*Contractual Se	59,500	59,500	48,362.46	316.40	11,137.54	81.3%
10047100 52510	LbAm*Copy & Printin	2,900	2,900	1,973.00	.00	927.00	68.0%
10047100 52520	LbAm*Bank Fees	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047100 52550	LbAm*Postage	0	0	90.30	12.90	-90.30	100.0%
10047100 53100	LbAm*Office Supplie	4,500	4,500	555.69	261.50	3,944.31	12.3%
10047100 53105	LbAm*Tech & Program	8,885	8,885	2,095.16	583.43	6,789.84	23.6%
10047100 53106	LbAm*Innovator's Wo	2,740	2,740	11.53	11.53	2,728.47	.4%
10047100 54310	LbAm*Equipment Main	31,500	31,500	5,797.22	1,018.78	25,702.78	18.4%
10047100 57400	LbAm*Conferences &	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047100 57800	Travel	0	0	40.66	15.20	-40.66	100.0%
10047100 57910	LbAm*Dues & Subscri	2,567	2,567	1,160.00	1,015.00	1,407.00	45.2%
10047100 57950	LbAm*COVID 19	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047100 58560	LbAm*Tech & Program	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047100 58810	LbAm*Computer Softw	4,600	4,600	.00	.00	4,600.00	.0%
10047100 58960	CNR-Computer Replac	14,315	14,315	14,315.00	.00	.00	100.0%
TOTAL GF-Library Administration		827,066	827,066	222,289.14	51,942.92	604,776.86	26.9%
TOTAL EXPENSES		827,066	827,066	222,289.14	51,942.92	604,776.86	
10047200 GF-Library Adult & Young Adult							
10047200 51010	LbAd*Full-Time	353,101	353,101	82,038.01	29,575.68	271,062.99	23.2%
10047200 51020	LbAd*Part Time	62,488	62,488	13,649.91	5,118.82	48,838.09	21.8%
10047200 51030	LbAd*Overtime	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047200 52200	LbAd*Contractual Se	8,780	8,780	171.88	.00	8,608.12	2.0%
10047200 52201	Contractual Svs - T	0	0	900.00	.00	-900.00	100.0%
10047200 52202	Contractual Svs - B	0	0	900.36	.00	-900.36	100.0%
10047200 53105	LbAd*Tech & Program	7,642	7,642	429.26	.00	7,212.74	5.6%
10047200 53150	LbAd*Reference Mate	155,095	155,095	10,966.91	4,806.48	109,359.41	29.5%
10047200 53151	LbAd*Reference Mate	0	0	2,003.67	1,059.85	-3,800.00	100.0%
10047200 53152	LbAd*Reference Mate	0	0	3,136.19	1,217.19	-7,175.00	100.0%
10047200 53153	LbAd*Reference Mate	0	0	2,222.54	53.31	-2,252.00	100.0%
10047200 53154	LbAd*Reference Mate	0	0	1,802.79	1,290.40	-2,433.40	100.0%
10047200 53155	LbAd*Management Ser	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%
10047200 53156	LbAd*Downloadables	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.0%

YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGET REPORT

FOR 2027 03

	ORIGINAL ESTIM REV	REVISED EST REV	ACTUAL YTD REVENUE	ACTUAL MTD REVENUE	REMAINING REVENUE	PCT COLL
TOTAL GF-Library Adult & Young Ad	587,106	587,106	118,221.52	43,121.73	427,620.59	20.1%
TOTAL EXPENSES	587,106	587,106	118,221.52	43,121.73	427,620.59	
10047300 GF-Library Children's						
10047300 51010 LbCh*Full-Time	255,772	255,772	57,780.99	21,068.16	197,991.01	22.6%
10047300 51020 LbCh*Part Time	151,711	151,711	31,905.65	10,655.85	119,805.35	21.0%
10047300 51030 LbCh*Overtime	0	0	7.20	7.20	-7.20	100.0%
10047300 52200 LbCh*Contractual Se	4,250	4,250	2,675.00	.00	1,575.00	62.9%
10047300 52510 LbCh*Copy & Printin	100	100	529.41	.00	-429.41	529.4%
10047300 53105 LbCh*Tech & Program	4,000	4,000	174.94	.00	3,825.06	4.4%
10047300 53150 LbCh*Reference Mate	44,240	44,240	4,964.97	1,344.40	18,537.70	58.1%
TOTAL GF-Library Children's	460,073	460,073	98,038.16	33,075.61	341,297.51	21.3%
TOTAL EXPENSES	460,073	460,073	98,038.16	33,075.61	341,297.51	
GRAND TOTAL	1,874,245	1,874,245	438,548.82	128,140.26	1,373,694.96	23.4%

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Karim Lisa **

FSPL LIBRARY SUPPORT BUDGET
FY 2025 - 2026
As of June 30, 2026

Line		From Friends Operating Budget	Paid From Gifts Grey	Requested Total FY25-26	YTD Expenses (6.30.26)	Remaining Budget (6.30.26)
1	Adult DVD, eBooks, Downloadable Audio	12,000		12,000	(12,000.00)	-
3	Large Print Books	4,000		4,000	(4,016.00)	(16)
4	Children's Materials	12,000		12,000	(12,673.00)	(673)
5	Children's Programs & Discussions	7,000		7,000	(7,093.00)	(93)
6	Adult Programs, Discussions & Film	17,000		17,000	(17,178.00)	(178)
8	Equipment/New Technologies/Innovators' Workshop	5,000		5,000	(5,000.00)	-
9	Children's Summer Reading	8,000		8,000	(9,979.00)	(1,979)
10	Teen Programs & Events	5,000	500.00	5,500	(2,304.00)	3,196
14	Mango Languages	2,200		2,200	(2,320.00)	(120)
15	Teen Materials	5,000		5,000	(4,981.00)	19
16	Library Speakers Consortium - Virtual Author Talks	3,500		3,500	(3,500.00)	-
17	Creative Programming - Charlie Cart/Meet the Make	7,500		7,500	(7,491.00)	9
		88,200	500.00	88,700	(88,535.00)	165

Friends of the Simsbury Public Library
Total Library Support Provided
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

Library Support	88,535
Family Passes	3,175
Fish Tank Maintenance	4,048
Friends Coffee Station (net)	896
Website Upgrade	4,912
	101,566

Public, Educational and Governmental Programming & Education Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) Grant Projects 2027

- Replace microphones/microphone systems in both the FSPL and Tariffville Rooms. Currently, microphones in both rooms are not functioning properly.

- Install AV equipment in the Tariffville Room so the space may be use in an alternate configuration. This was planned as part of the original project and cut to save costs.

- Replace the TV in the Teen Space.

- Fund the cost of the regularly scheduled PC replacements which are generally a Capital Non-Recurring Budget request.

Letter from the Chair of the Library Board of Trustees

Dear Fellow Simsbury Residents,

I am pleased to share with you the Simsbury Public Library Strategic Plan for 2027 through 2031. Since its establishment, Simsbury Public Library has played an integral and evolving role in the vibrant life and well-being of Simsbury. By updating the Strategic Plan every five years, the Library surveys the needs and desires of residents and reflects these priorities in the goals that guide library services and community engagement.

During the implementation of the previous Strategic Plan, from 2022 to 2026, the Library grew in many key areas with an emphasis on strong community partnerships and responsive outreach. These collaborations have led to many community gatherings, a range of dynamic programming, and intergenerational events. (see Highlights, page X.)

As we celebrate these achievements, the process to develop the current Strategic Plan has created opportunities for reflection on how to continue moving the Library forward during rapidly changing times. This Plan was developed based on input from you, the residents, the Friends of the Simsbury Public Library, the Library staff, civic organizations, and Town departments and officials.

At the Plan's core were questionnaires available to all Simsbury

residents and Library patrons. During several listening sessions at the Library and at other venues in town, residents were invited to engage in conversations and share their aspirations, concerns and ideas about strengthening the community. The feedback we solicited was purposely not focused solely on the Library as a standalone entity but on how the Library can help meet the changing needs of the broader Simsbury community.

The Library, of course, continues to face new challenges. These include changing Town demographics (more older residents and fewer children) and the increasing use of social media and technology by all age groups, sometimes resulting in mental health challenges and loneliness. Simsbury, like most communities in the United States, is also dealing with financial constraints, which impact all Town services, as well as concerns about social cohesion, the lack of civil discourse, and the impact of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence.

Given these challenges, the data we collected from more than 450 respondents reflected a strong desire for the Simsbury Public Library to continue growing and evolving as an inclusive and welcoming community hub of exploration, learning and connection. Many respondents also wanted the Library to serve as a place where different voices can be heard to promote civic dialogue and mutual understanding. This Plan aims to reflect these priorities by combining traditional Library services with innovative systems, events and programming, starting with books and digital reading materials and extending to new, accessible ways to learn and share knowledge and ideas.

The Board of Trustees of the Simsbury Public Library is confident that this Strategic Plan will help Simsbury residents understand where the Library is heading and how it expects to meet its objectives. We remain firmly committed to providing excellent service to our patrons, as well as being a safe, welcoming and inclusive gathering place for community engagement and lifelong learning.

Holly McGrath
Chair, Simsbury Public Library Board of Trustees

About Our Town

A Brief History
First inhabited by the Massacoe Tribe, the land along the banks of the Farmington River Valley provided rich soil and abundant fish and game for the indigenous people, as well an opportunity for early settlers who migrated to the area's fertile grounds in the mid-seventeenth century.

Founded in 1670, Simsbury's early citizens farmed the land, manufactured explosives, quarried rock, and transported goods along the canal system that ran through the center of town. Their legacy of hard work and neighborly care laid the foundation of our thriving community, strengthened over the years by active self-government, town meetings and civic dialogue.

Welcome to Simsbury!
Simsbury is a suburb of Hartford located in Connecticut's scenic

Farmington Valley. With a population of approximately 26,000 people, the town is nestled among woodlands, parks, and agricultural land.

In addition to single-family homes, Simsbury's new apartment complexes have provided housing alternatives, welcoming many new neighbors. Yet, Simsbury retains its small-town feel with robust civic engagement through dozens of clubs, service organizations, sports leagues, and houses of worship. The local economy is supported by a dynamic combination of small businesses, retailers, restaurants, and corporations.

A well-educated community that values educational excellence and lifelong learning opportunities, Simsbury residents are proud of their school system. The high school's graduation rate is 97%, and Town schools have consistently ranked in the top ten in the state. Simsbury is also home to several private schools, as well as an active home-school population.

Community members and visitors enjoy the outdoors along the town's hiking and biking trails and the scenic Farmington River. The Town also offers excellent outdoor facilities, including the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center, Simsbury Farms Golf Course and Recreation Complex, many parks, and hiking trails.

Simsbury Public Library has broadened its service to the town since it was founded as the Simsbury Free Library in 1872. With thoughtful growth, the Library has been able to expand its footprint and diversify its resources for patrons, becoming essential to the community as a connector, convener, and center for learning.

After several renovations and expansions, Simsbury Public Library is now a 42,600 square-foot building that serves the public with eight meeting rooms, streaming broadcast capabilities, a

thriving Children's Department, a dedicated space for teens, the Business and Career Center, and the Innovators Workshop.

Most of the Library's funding comes from the Town of Simsbury in the form of tax appropriation. Simsbury Public Library also seeks grants, receives bequests and memorial gifts, as well as substantial financial and programming support from the Friends of the Simsbury Public Library.

The Town has invested $1.40 per week per capita for the past three years. The return on that investment is currently $4.68 for every $1.00 spent in the Library (based on the Maine and Massachusetts Library Return on Investment formula).

Guided by the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, Simsbury Public Library made significant strides in both in-person and digital access for patrons. Library staff have connected with residents regularly at off-site programs while encouraging patrons to visit the Library for a wide variety of programs, classes and events.

In recent years, digital resources were updated and expanded, so the public could access programs from home. Through these digital capabilities, patrons could remain connected to the world and each other through the Library's services and resources. Both residents and businesses looked to Simsbury Public Library as a trusted source of information.

With excellent public schools, an award-winning Library, outstanding recreation facilities, beautiful open spaces, and a robust business community, the citizens of Simsbury take pride in our history with hope and aspirations for an even brighter future.

Highlights

- Nationally ranked by *Library Journal* as one of only two Connecticut "star" libraries.

- As teenager engagement has increased, Teen Services Librarian Mary Richardson received the Connecticut Library Association Excellence in Young Adult Service Award in recognition of her work creating a safe and welcoming space for teens.

- Pollinator pathway gardens were established on the Library grounds.

- As demand for technology has increased, technology throughout the Library has been upgraded using funds from annual Public, Educational, and Governmental Programming & Education Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) grants.

- Simsbury Public Library serves as a hub library for the Connecticut Library for Accessible Books.

- The Library hosts a Little Free Food Pantry thanks to the work of 7th grade community member JJ Hanrahan.

- Circulation of digital materials, ebooks, and e-audiobooks has increased by about 18% from 2025 to 2026.

- The Library's Head of Children's Services, Stephanie Prato, has also been named Deputy Library Director, which gives the library additional management support and staff cohesion.

- In partnership with the Simsbury Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council and Social Services, the Library has hosted three annual Community Pride Picnics.

- In partnership with the Simsbury Sustainability Committee, the Library has hosted three Annual Community Sustainability Fairs.

- The Makerspace has expanded and regularly hosts guest instructors.

Our Vision

The Simsbury Public Library inspires an inclusive community that values exploration and connection through learning.

Our Mission

The Simsbury Public Library provides free and equal access to information, experiences, and educational resources that build community and inspire a lifetime of learning.

Where Everyone is Welcome

Simsbury Public Library welcomes patrons, staff, and volunteers of all ages, abilities, races, genders, ethnicities, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, socio-economic statuses, political affiliations, and viewpoints.

We invite you to visit the Library, which is committed to providing a comfortable space where your individual needs are met with respect and without judgment. As a vital Town asset, we provide equal access to information and resources, so each individual can

thrive and learn in an ever-changing society – supporting the community's desire for tolerance, openness, acceptance, and inclusion.

To promote these values, Simsbury Public Library will:

- Create and sustain a culture of respect, in which individuals are heard, valued, and included.
- Remain engaged with the community in a process of continual improvement and responsiveness.
- Develop and implement programs, services, collections, and spaces for all ages and backgrounds.
- Expand strategic partnerships and collaborations with local organizations to overcome social injustice and advance equity in the community.

Programs and platforms may change over time, but one thing that remains the same: the Library's unwavering commitment to provide superior traditional library services and evolving digital resources that the world has come to rely on.

Move to Thank you page

This document is the result of community surveys, listening sessions, library staff input, and the work of a dedicated Strategic Planning Committee. The committee was comprised of members of the Library Board of Trustees, Library staff, and representatives from the greater Simsbury community. We thank them all for their time and dedicated service.

Goal 1
Simsbury Public Library welcomes everyone and fosters social connections and understanding in a safe, vibrant learning community.

- Increase opportunities for civic engagement and understanding through public forums, programming, and opportunities for community dialogue.
- Promote the depth and variety of Library services and resources to encourage deeper and broader patron engagement.
- Create opportunities for residents to share their ideas and talents and to learn from collective experiences.
- Increase collaboration and strategic partnerships with civic organizations, businesses, and other libraries to expand the scope and reach of the Library's services and programs.
- Communicate broadly, through multiple outlets, to maximize public awareness of Library resources.
- Meet people where they are – including robust family programming, a variety of outreach efforts, and services for homebound residents.

Goal 2
Simsbury Library provides a safe and accessible space to explore and access physical and digital resources and technology support.

- Ensure the Library facility, programs, and materials are accessible to everyone of all ages and abilities, ensuring children and teens have specially designated areas to help them feel welcome.

- Optimize accessibility by presenting programs at the Library, in the community, and online.

- Expand access to digital collections, including ebooks, audio books, and streaming content.

- Continually evaluate current and emerging technologies to meet the needs of the community.

- Offer accessible, welcoming, and well-maintained grounds and facilities that align with the town's evolving needs.

- Enhance the community's knowledge of and appreciation for the natural environment to strengthen healthy connections and community well-being.

Goal 3
Simsbury Library supports a community that values and welcomes people of all abilities, cultures and experiences.

- Engage the broad community in a learning process that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Expand strategic partnerships and collaborations with local organizations that strive to overcome social injustice in the community.
- Strengthen programming that fosters both individual and community understanding of social, cross-cultural, intellectual, and political affairs.
- Provide opportunities for patrons to engage with the visual arts, music, literature, etc. to elevate human kinship and artistic appreciation.
- Enhance and publicize services that welcome and engage new residents.

Goal 4: Simsbury Library provides learning opportunities through its business and career center while promoting local economic development.

- Support individual career development and employment by providing informational and skill-building programs.
- Continually disseminate timely relevant information, resources and guidelines to the business community.
- Align with town goals and collaborate with town departments and commissions to support economic development.
- Host programs with local businesses and nonprofits to raise awareness of community resources and expertise to spark

new initiatives.

- Provide resources for entrepreneurs to encourage business incubation.

- Maintain the Innovators' Workshop to include relevant technologies.