

Abigail Adams
Director, Platt Memorial Library, Shoreham

May 8, 2023

Dear Working Group:

One of the structures in place in our community is a reciprocal borrowing agreement between Platt Memorial and Orwell Free Libraries. This allows residents of Orwell to sign up for cards at the Platt Library and vice versa. It has been signed by both boards and is a nice model of resource-sharing that does not require shared funding.

I have included a write up of the various partnerships we have undertaken prior to COVID. Post-COVID, some of these projects have not yet started up again.

Current and Past Collaborations

1. Reciprocal borrower agreement
2. Alternating days open
3. Marika McCoola
4. Speaker's Bureau
5. Book Discussion set sharing
6. Professional Mentoring (which has evolved into a collaborative professional relationship)

Opens the door for lots of other collaborations-- Joint programs, collections sharing, collaborative and complementary planning.

Promotes cooperative spirit blah blah blah and extends collaborative opportunities by increasing awareness of what is available

Goal: allows two libraries to provide more full-time services for two communities, while maintaining current staffing and funding level

Our communities' long history of sharing the 'burden' of bettering our local quality of life...

Over the past 2 years the Orwell Free Library and Platt Memorial Library in Shoreham have worked to broaden and deepen the relationship between the two institutions. Our communities have historically been very close-- many families go back and forth between our towns, for business and pleasure. This work has been spearheaded by Kate Hunter and Abby

Adams, the librarians in charge of the respective libraries. During Kate's work towards certification, Abby acted as a professional mentor. As Kate has moved towards building the program at Orwell Free Library, the relationship between the librarians evolved into collaborations of equal counterparts.

Where the relationship between the two organizations will go in the future is yet to be seen, but we have had many successes in the past two years to highlight.

Residents of Orwell and Shoreham can get library cards at both institutions, almost doubling the number of titles available locally. Though this has been an unofficial policy for many years, it is now an official agreement between the two library boards.

By working together, we are able to share the cost of bringing best-selling authors and illustrators to our region like young adult author Marika McCoola who spoke at the Platt Memorial Library in between her workshop at the Orwell Free Library and her talk at the Bixby Library in Vergennes. Our Keynote Speaker's Series for 2017 is also a great example of high-quality speakers and authors coming to the 22A corridor, with the help of Vermont Humanities Council.

Sharing advertising locations like bulletin boards, social media outlets and print materials extend event reach and potential audience.

Book discussion sets and events shared between our communities allow us to submit strong applications to the Vermont Humanities Council and receive more copies of the Vermont Reads book(s) than possible as a stand-alone institution. Taking turns applying for the yearly grant allows more staff time to be dedicated elsewhere.

These and other less formal collaborations happen often between OFL and PML. Providing full-time services for our rural communities, while maintaining current staffing and funding is the goal. We look forward to many more community-oriented collaborations in the future.

Thank you,

Abigail Adams
Library Director, Platt Memorial Library
Shoreham