

# **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

Hudson Public Library

Council on Aging

Department of Veteran's Services

Hudson Housing Authority

Hudson Cultural Council

## **HUDSON PUBLIC LIBRARY 2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen, the Executive Assistant, and the Citizens of Hudson,  
We hereby submit the 2023 annual report for the Hudson Public Library.

### **Trustees**

A board of three Library Trustees, elected for three-year terms, governs the Library. They share the overall responsibility for the Library and are the policy-making body. Their duties include:

- Appointment of the Library Director.
- Securing library funds.
- Oversight of the Library's trust funds and building.

The current Trustees are Thomas Desmond, Chair; Christopher Capobianco, Vice-Chair (through 06/15/23 and Secretary thereafter); and Maryalice McCormack, Secretary (through 06/15/23 and Vice-Chair thereafter).

### **Staff**

The Library is staffed by Aileen Sanchez-Himes, Library Director; Lisa Aucoin, Assistant Library Director; Sara (Moore) Franciose, Collection Management & Resource Librarian; Thomas Kenyon, Reference/Information Technology Librarian; Nancy DeVecchio, Circulation Librarian; Jillian Bennett, Children's Librarian, Diane Richmond, Circulation Library Assistant; and Mackenzie Gillespie-Slovin, Children's Library Assistant. Melissa Caissie and Tracy Landry are PT Reference Librarians. Rosemary Best, Andrea Bradford, Sophia Francolini, Shannon Gillespie, Andrea Silva-Robbins, Steve Walsh, and Jenn Wheeler are PT Library Assistants. Helen Shaw is a PT Technical Services Assistant. Kali Foster, David Lam, Brandon Proteau, Lindsey Spuria, and Jessica Tripp are PT Library Pages.

### **Statistics**

Approximately 88,581 patrons visited the library last year and borrowed 174,473 books, audiobooks, DVDs, music CDs, and other materials. The Hudson Public Library has 13,932 registered borrowers. The Library collection is comprised of 59,414 items, including 46,837 in print, 9,674 in audiovisual format, 1,725 periodicals, 531 video games, 375 microfilm rolls, and 272 miscellaneous items such as a telescope, label maker, gaming consoles, hotspots, trekking poles, puppets, etc. In 2023, the Library was open for 61 hours each week on average for a total of 3,133 hours during the year. Concerning acquisitions, the Library added the following print materials to its collection: 4,742 books in the following categories: 739 nonfiction, 1,172 fiction, 224 large print, 35 paperbacks, 226 world languages (Portuguese & Spanish), 7 reference, 209 adult & young adult graphic novels, 253 young adult, 1,877 children & tween books. In the category of audiovisual materials, items added to the following categories include 154 Audiobooks, 427 DVDs/Blu-rays, 106 music CDs, 70 video games, and 813 e-books/e-audiobooks (including cost-per-circ copies). Library staff members answered an estimated 3,386 reference questions. The Library fulfilled 30,969 item requests for both Hudson-owned items and items owned by other libraries. Patrons visited the Library's website 74,055 times. Three thousand six hundred and forty (3,640) patrons spent 6,481 hours doing searches on 6 Internet computers. Patrons accessed a total of 2,834 GB of data during 2,625 WI-FI sessions. Twenty (20) museum and recreation memberships, sponsored by the Friends of Hudson Public Library, Town of Hudson Recreation Department, and State Aid, were reserved 1,174 times by library patrons.

The digital collection provides 24/7 access to Ancestry Library Edition, Consumer Reports, CreativeBug (a crafting database), Freegal (a streaming and downloadable music service), Hoopla (an entertainment service offering movies, music, audiobooks, eBooks, comics, and TV shows), Hudson Sun (ranging from 1862 - 1993), Mango Languages, NoveList Plus, OverDrive/Libby (a resource-sharing service offering e-books, e-audiobooks, and magazines), Scholastic BookFlix, Scholastic GO!, Scholastic TrueFlix, TumbleBooks, Universal Class, and various databases contracted via the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

### **Grants and Donations**

The Library received \$44,670.35 in State Aid to Public Libraries for FY23. This grant award itemization included a \$25,524.34 Library Incentive Grant, a \$14,776.05 Municipal Equalization Grant, and a \$4,369.96 Non-Resident

Circulation Offset Grant. The purpose of State Aid to public libraries is to encourage municipalities to support and improve library service to compensate for disparities in municipal funding capacities and to offset the cost of circulating library materials to non-residents.

Other significant donations and grants to the Library included:

- The Friends of the Hudson Public Library contribution of \$17,334.95 for library support services; \$6,878 for museum pass memberships, \$2,238.41 for a new color copier/fax machine, \$182.19 for Wi-Fi hotspots, \$720 for a BookPage subscription, \$4,378 for the Summer Experience, and \$2,638.35 for programs. The Friends also donated \$300 towards an Employee Recognition program.
- The Doane-Perkins Foundation donation of \$1,000 earmarked for children's entertainment and programs.
- The Hudson Cultural Council awarded \$1200 to support a children's and teen video gaming series with One Up Games and \$1,291 for a general audience Learn to Play the Ukulele Program with Julie Stepanek.
- The Murphy Family Foundation donation of \$500 in memory of Dennis Francis Murphy Jr.
- A donation of \$150 in memory of Richard Ebens.
- Three donations totaling \$1,200 were given to sponsor the Library's 2023 Ye Olde Summer Experience: Lemire Insurance \$100, S&F Concrete \$100, and St. Mary's Credit Union \$1,000.

### **Programming & Event Highlights**

We have had a variety of programs throughout the year from author visits to general interest programs, including Medieval-themed Summer Experience programs and activities.

### **Book Clubs**

- Tuesday Morning Book Club (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month)
- Tuesday Evening Book Club (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month)
- Wednesday Evening Book Clubs (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month)
- Thursday Morning Book Club (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at the Senior Center)
- Thursday Evening Book Club (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month)

### **Local Authors/Literary**

- Unveiling of Grace Whittemore's Portrait & Local History Trivia Night
- Before Brooklyn: Author Talk with Ted Reinstein
- Dare the Sea: Stories with Ali Hosseini

### **Music/Art**

- The Softer Side of Celtic with Jeff Snow
- In the Mak'n Step Dance presentation featured at Hudson Fest
- Gallery in the Pines Art Exhibit
- Wine Glass Paint Nite with Mandy from Wicked Good Henna
- Zentangle Program with Diane Richmond (staff member)

### **General Interest Programs**

- The Nightmare Encyclopedia: Your Darkest Dreams Interpreted with Jeff Belanger
- Feature Films in 3D (facilitated by various staff members)
- Solar Eclipse Watch Party & Activities
- The Unimaginable Journey of Peter Ertel Documentary Film (in partnership with the Senior Center)
- Aromatherapy Gifts Workshop with Anastasia
- For the Love of Chocolate & Cheese with Kim Larkin
- Academy Awards: The Good, the Bad, & the Outrageous Trivia with Frank Mandosa
- Legendary Sports Photographer: Steve Babineau
- Planting Seeds on Intention: Crystal Terrariums
- Create Your Own Aromatic Herb Garden with Therapy Gardens
- Learn to Play the Ukulele with Julie Stepanek: Intergenerational Program (HCC grant funded)
- Metalsmith Copper Bookmark Making with Heather Beck
- Ye Olde Cheese 101 with Mullahy's Cheese Shop

- Wingmasters: Falconry & the Medieval World
- Introduction to Tarot with Laura Campagna
- Hispanic Soup, History, and Tasting with Therapy Gardens
- Gingerbread House Workshop with Mandy from Wicked Good Henna
- Introduction to Overdrive/Libby Workshop at the Senior Center

#### **Self-Direct Library Programs & Activities**

- Community Jigsaw Puzzle Swap & Collaborative Puzzle Projects
- Creepy Clowns Scavenger Hunt
- Time to Color: Coloring Sheets
- Time to Play: Community Chess Games

To engage with our highly regarded community, the Library expanded its summer reading program to become a more inclusive experience resulting from how patrons and visitors utilize the Library and access materials. The Library coined this thematic summer reading and experience event as its annual Summer Experience. This year, staff launched its Ye Olde Summer Experience. Many of our program activities were supported by or in conjunction with local businesses, including Gallery in the Pines, Lemire Insurance Agency, Serendipity, S&F Concrete, St. Mary's Credit Union, Davis Farmland, Discovery Museum, Ecotarium, Jump Nation, Plaster Fun Time (Marlborough), Old Sturbridge Village, The Butterfly Place, Ultimate Obstacles, the Worcester Bravehearts, and Zoo New England.

Three hundred and ninety-four (394) Adult Summer Experience participants checked out 1,430 books, 389 audiovisual items and video games, 20 magazines, 161 digital items, and 37 other items, including museum passes and Library of Things. Thirty (30) participants attended Adult Summer Experience programs. Six hundred and forty-six adults (646) participated in programs during the remainder of 2023.

#### **Services for Children and Teens**

Children from birth to seventh grade enjoyed the materials and programs the Children's Room offers. Six thousand four-hundred and fifty-four (6454) patrons attended 168 Children's Room programs. These programs include crafts, hands-on activities, literacy, and entertainment programs, including, but not limited to, Baby, Toddler, and Preschool Storytimes, Portuguese Storytimes, Music and Movement, Crochet Club, Tween Book Club, Take & Make Crafts, StoryWalks®, Earth Day Celebration in partnership with Green Hudson, and notable performers. The Children's Room staff provided readers' advisory and assisted children, parents, and teachers with accessing the Library's databases and print and digital collections.

Children were engaged through various programs, including music, craft activities, Lego programs, STEM Beginning workshops for preschoolers, scavenger hunts, and an annual visit with the Grinch. We were awarded a grant from the Hudson Cultural Council to host a video gaming series for elementary school-aged children and teens. Additionally, the Children's staff assumed responsibility for teen programming throughout 2023. Two hundred and nineteen (219) teens participated in teen programs and activities.

Children's summer reading is a core aspect of the Library's Summer Experience and annual programming calendar. We had 802 youth participants: Birth through 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders (428), 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Graders (248), and Teens (126). Special events and activities included Ed the Wizard's Magic Show, Records and Burpee Petting Zoo, Potter's Wheel with Pied Potter Hamelin, a Renaissance Festival, Pumpernickel Puppets, Merlin's Magical Potion Activity, Metalsmith Copper Bookmark Making for teens and tweens, and Kulina Folk Art: Candle Making for teens. We also offered weekly Medieval-themed crafts and activities for ages three and older, including pipe cleaner dragons, princess crowns and jester hats, fire-breathing dragons, DIY aluminum shields, a mini catapult-making activity, catapult splatter painting, DIY pan flutes, and tissue paper-stained glass crafts. The Friends of the Hudson Public Library sponsored the Library's end-of-summer Summer Experience celebration that was hosted at Roller Kingdom. One hundred and ninety-five (195) children and parents or caregivers were in attendance. Ye Olde Summer Experience's Brave Dragons (Birth through 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders) read 13,370 books, and the Galloping Steeds (3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Graders) read 2,680 books. The Court of Olde Librarian Teens read 321 books.

This summer, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioner Mary Ann Cluggish and Boston Bruins Mascot Blades made a guest appearance at the Library. Nearly 100 attendees experienced an engaging story read by Children's Librarian Jillian Bennett with comical improvisations performed by Blades. Participants played trivia with the Recreation Department's Assistant Director Daniel Hannon, posed for photos with Blades, created Boston Bruins pinback buttons, and received Bruins promotional merchandise and treats.

The Library's Summer Experience supports and emphasizes the language and literacy work children have accomplished in their school classrooms or homeschool settings. This summerlong event provides an authentic reading and edutainment experience for each child. Data shows that active participation and continuity in summer reading through a summer program help reduce the loss of reading skills, known as "the summer slide."

### **Library Outreach**

We focused on our outreach efforts in the community, including participation in ArtsFest, Hudson Fest, Rec Fest, and Downtown Trick or Treat. This community engagement helped connect with approximately 3492 individuals. Our ongoing outreach included four always available StoryWalks® at the Library using reusable frames constructed by Library Page Brandon Proteau and his Boy Scout Troop as part of his Eagle Scout project. We've increased our partnerships and support through wellness initiatives with the Town of Hudson's Board of Health and climate initiatives with Green Hudson.

The Library continues to offer door-to-door services twice a month with the help of a dedicated volunteer. These services are available to Hudson residents who cannot visit the Library's physical location.

The Library partnered with the Commission on Disabilities to improve access to convenient handicapped parking in the Downtown area.

Adult, Reference, and Administrative Departments staff coordinated with the Hudson Maynard Adult Learning Center to share resources and information and assist with library card registrations.

In late fall, the Library partnered with the Senior Center to offer introductory workshops on online resources. Library staff visit the Senior Center every other month to promote awareness and learn how to utilize these resources. The first two sessions focused on accessing and using Overdrive/Libby, a resource-sharing service offering e-books, e-audiobooks, and magazines.

The Children's Librarian and staff continually visit the public schools for special engagements such as the Literacy Fair and the Health and Wellness Fair. They promote our annual Summer Experience and welcome Kindergarteners to the Library to encourage an eventful summer filled with reading and activities.

### **Building & Furnishings**

Through the support of the Library Trustees and the Town of Hudson, the Library has initiated applying for a Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program grant offered through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The Library continues to experience building issues ranging from steam pipe leaks and weight-bearing problems that have led to hiring an engineering firm to conduct structural consulting services, especially that of the Library's 1960s addition. We completed an extensive and strategic weeding project in the adult collection to address the weight-bearing challenges. With the settling of the Library's addition, the structural engineer has identified some shifting in that area of the Library and will further investigate this movement. With an aging heating system, the steam pipes are an ongoing problem. The staff area of the library was closed for most of the year to address significant water damage that occurred at the beginning of the year.

Furthermore, the Library's footprint and layout need significant improvements to provide appropriate facilities and adequate space that welcomes patrons and visitors, maintain browsable collections, establish dedicated spaces for programs, meetings, and studying, offer greater accessibility and accommodations, and enhance areas supporting staff operations. In the interim, through the support of awarded American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, the Library continues to make improvements, such as updating the meeting room chairs and table for the Tavares Room and purchasing new shelving end panels for the main floor stacks. Comfortable seating was also added in the children's, teen, and adult sections of the Library.

### **C/W MARS Network**

While the residents of Hudson enjoy the items in our collection, they also fully take advantage of our membership in the Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing Network (C/W MARS), which consists of over 150 member libraries. Our patrons are enthusiastic users of the online patron services provided by the network and regularly request materials from Hudson and other libraries. In 2023, Hudson Library patrons borrowed 20,205 items from other libraries. As a consortium, C/W MARS circulates nearly 9.5 million items annually to more than one million registered borrowers. We offer a shared online computer system and combined collections of 7.9 million items.

Libraries provide access to technology, producing a greater variety of services than ever before. Patron technology use continues to be essential. In 2023, approximately 6,265 users accessed the Internet via the Library's Wi-Fi and computer desktops. Borrowers can reserve books online any time, day or night, to be picked up or returned to many convenient library locations across the state. Audiobooks are becoming increasingly available in downloadable format in addition to compact discs and Playaways, pre-loaded audiobook devices. Entrepreneurs, teachers, and students can access and research reference resources from home or office computers and mobile devices, vastly expanding the Reference Department's initiatives and outreach. System-wide item requests and holds can be set in motion automatically, supported by fast, state-funded delivery operations.

### **Technology Updates**

This year, the Library progressed toward developing its TEC Lab Makerspace area. The Library had previously received a \$10,000 UPS Grant to develop this Lab in partnership with our Friends of the Hudson Public Library. The grant funds were used to purchase an Apple computer, a Cricut machine, a button maker machine, and other devices used in the makerspace area for programming, crafting, and activities. This year, a 3D printer and furniture were purchased for the makerspace area that the Library coined the TEC (Think. Explore. Create) Lab.

The Library provided a permanent self-checkout station. Self-checkout allows patrons to check out most materials and avoid waiting in line independently. This year, the Library moved to offering self-service hold pick-up. These holds are located near the self-checkout station and the circulation desk, allowing patrons to handle their library transactions independently or bring the materials to the service desk and engage with staff.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grant for Wi-Fi hotspots ended. However, the Friends of the Hudson Public Library agreed to sponsor four (4) hotspots available to patrons through our Library of Things Collection. Each hotspot offers Internet access for up to ten (10) devices. They could borrow for up to two weeks at no cost throughout the year.

The Library renewed its mobile printing subscription. Mobile printing allows patrons to print from mobile devices and computers in the Library or from remote locations. Once the print request is sent, patrons have approximately 24 hours to release and retrieve the print job at the Library. In 2023, the Library also purchased a public color printer, which allows patrons to print quality documents in color.

We currently have the Hudson Sun newspapers on 375 rolls of microfilm dating back to 1883. We are also digitizing the collection to provide greater access to Hudson patrons and the community. We currently offer online access to the Hudson Sun from 1862 to 1993. Our database resource, Newsbank, further provides online access to the Hudson Sun from 2005 to 2021. Hudson Sun articles and information is accessible with a valid library card via our website at <https://www.townofhudson.org/library>, <https://hudson.historyarchives.online/home>, and <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/signin/HudsonPublic/ZBBK>.

### **Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Hudson Public Library (Friends) is an organization dedicated to providing volunteer service and financial support to the Library. Membership is open to anyone interested in helping to further the library's goals and services. Activities include annual participation during Hudson Fest, the YART Sale, the Lobster and Meat Shoot, Summer Book Sales, and the Fall Book Sale. The Friends usually meet monthly in the Library and welcome new members.

These fundraising initiatives and membership dues provide the means for the Friends to sponsor various ongoing programs, activities, and resources, including year-round and Summer Experience programs, museum and recreation passes, Wi-Fi hotspots, a color/black & white photocopier with faxing services, and an annual subscription to BookPage, a literature resource publication. This year, the Friends generously sponsored a membership to the Southwick Zoo. We are grateful for all their support and hard work.

The Friends' officers are Elizabeth Dailey, President; Judie Newton, Vice President; Lili Veruki, Treasurer; and Patti MacMunn, Secretary. The Friends thanked the Hudson Armory for providing free book storage space and the VFW for providing space each year to host its fall book sale. The book sale is accomplished through the commitment and efforts of an estimated 20 Friends members and several volunteers from other local organizations. This three-day book sale is the Friends' key fundraising event of the year.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers and Senior Tax Workers play a valuable role at the Library. This year, our dedicated volunteers contributed 1065 hours to help us process new library materials and shelf-read collections for accuracy and searchability and assist with summer reading preparation and activities. Not included in this number are the incalculable hours the Friends of the Library spent on their many fundraising tasks that directly benefit the Library. The Trustees and staff truly appreciate the dedication and enthusiasm of the volunteers, who contribute so much of their time and expertise.

### **In Conclusion**

The Library, its Trustees, and staff greatly appreciate the support from the Executive Assistant, the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee, and the other municipal departments. Most importantly, however, we want to thank the people of Hudson who continue to support our Library with their tax dollars. As noted above, at our main entrance, may we continue to uphold the meaning of being "Open to All" as we engage minds, enrich lives, and empower our community. We hope our services, collections, and programs continue to add value, support your endeavors, and offer boundless enjoyment to your lives and our community..

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Hudson Public Library and its staff,

Aileen Sanchez-Himes  
Library Director

Lisa M. Aucoin  
Assistant Library Director

## **HUDSON COUNCIL ON AGING - ANNUAL REPORT for 2023**

The Council on Aging and the Senior Center provides advocacy and support systems empowering older adults to maintain their independence, improve their quality of life and prepare for life change. Councils on Aging are human service agencies that provide the following: social services, wellness and fitness programs, information and referral services, case management, health promotion and prevention activities, socialization, volunteer opportunities, advocacy and support systems. The activities, programs and services are designed to empower older adults and maintain independence.

The Council on Aging is a nine-member Board appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Duties of the Board who meet the second Wednesday of the month include supervision of the building, activities and programs planned for the elderly in Hudson. It is the mission of the Council on Aging to evaluate, promote and encourage new and existing activities and services that enhance the quality of life for elders in the Town of Hudson.

### **Staff**

Our Senior Center has a dedicated staff consisting of; a Director, Administrative Secretary, a full time Social Service Advocate (Outreach), and a part time Portuguese bi-lingual Social Service Advocate (30 hours a week), a full and part time bus driver, all funded by the Town of Hudson. Additional part time driver is funded partially by the Town of Hudson, and our State Formula Grant.

### **Nutrition**

The Meals on Wheels Program and their many volunteers continued to delivered 13,391 meals to 127 Hudson seniors from July 1, 2022 through June 31, 2023. In addition, we also provided 550 Grab and Go meals. This figure includes a special grab and go Thanksgiving meal Mr. Danis from Plastic Molding Manufacturing provided to 150 Hudson seniors! We want to thank Assabet Valley Technical High Schools Culinary Arts Program, Buffet Way Catering and Mr. Danis for making the grab and go program a success.

### **DayBreak, our Social Day Program 2023**

To recap the program, Hudson, Marlborough, and Northborough Senior Centers have been collaborating on the DayBreak (Social Day and Respite Program) since 2019. This program originated at the Hudson Senior Center in 2012 and expanded to Marlborough and Northborough as a direct result of our collaboration in helping to make our communities Dementia Friendly. The DayBreak program is tailored to individuals experiencing social isolation, mild cognitive impairment, physical challenges, or unable to attend the traditional activities at the Senior Center due to the need for supervision. DayBreak provides opportunities for seniors to maintain social contact with people while reducing isolation. Socialization and peer support are provided through enjoyable activities and lunch.

The end of FY 23 we had between 41 participants in our DayBreak Social Day program. With the help from the Springwell Elder Services and the Title III Older American's Grant, we look forward to providing the services and support DayBreak offers to both caregiver and loved ones.

### **Social Service**

Our Social Service Department was very busy assisting 1,184 individual elders in our community over 5154 times (duplicate number) with a variety of services. Some examples of those services include: Community Case management issues, Housing issues/applications, people needing SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs for Everyone on Medicare), people requesting Fuel Assistance appointments, SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program), and Farmer's Market Coupons. Additionally, we helped seniors schedule their online vaccinations and Covid- 19 booster shots for pharmacies in Hudson. This has been popular with seniors who do not have the technology to do the on-line registrations themselves.



**Services provided between 07/01/2022 and 06/30/2023**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Duplicated</b>	<b>Unduplicated</b>
BENEVOLENT	43	27
CASE MANAGEMENT	196	83
FUEL ASSISTANCE	654	156
OTHER	7	7
OUTREACH/ADVOCACY	36	19
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	13	12
RETURN CALL	729	402
SHINE	2147	764
SUPPORT SERVICES	1176	368
VACCINE	73	56
WELLNESS	60	38
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5156</b>	<b>1185</b>

**Socialization and Recreation**

Socialization and Recreation numbers increased in FY23. We were able to provide 1503, individual seniors with a variety of activities over 16,700 times (duplicate number of individual people attending multiple classes). These activities include grab and go floral craft projects, special grab and go lunches and dinners, in person fitness classes, 7 fitness classes both in person and zoom. Those classes include Stretch Class once a week, Cardio and Weights twice a week, Flex and Tone Chair Yoga once a week, Chair Pilates once a week, Mat Pilates, once a week and Parkinson's exercise class twice a week. We also offer Line Dancing for beginners and non-beginners, hiking, Mindful Living and Self Empowered living classes, support groups for Caregivers and Bereavement, Community Education and more!

**Transportation**

Our senior transportation program increased 20% in FY23 with 151 individual people utilizing our transportation program with approximately 4784, round trips.

**AARP Tax Preparers**

In FY23 the wonderful TAXAIDE program through AARP had a 43% increase from the year before. Our AARP Tax Volunteers were able to help 189 seniors with their tax returns at the Senior Center. This program provides a valuable service to seniors. We appreciate their expertise and time spent helping so many people and look forward to working with them again!

**Trips**

In Fiscal year 2023 we had 267 people attended a variety of day trips such as Icons and Legends, Encore Casino, Cher, Charles River, and Staying alive Bee Gees Tripbute.

**Summary Statistics from 07/01/2022 to 06/30/2023**

<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Duplicated</b>	<b>Unduplicated</b>
Events	16703	1016
Rides	4784	151
Services	5156	1185
Volunteers	754	47
Trips	294	184
<b>Total People Served</b>	<b>27691</b>	<b>1926</b>

**The COA Board and Friends of Hudson Seniors**

The **dedicated Board Members** of the **Council on Aging (COA)** consistently demonstrate unwavering support for our **Senior Center**. Their commitment is evident through regular **monthly Board meetings** and their willingness to attend **additional meetings as necessary**. Hudson is truly **privileged** to benefit from such an **engaged and proactive COA Board**, providing a valuable resource for our community.

The **“Friends of Hudson Seniors”** is an **independent, non-profit, tax-exempt organization** that wholeheartedly dedicates itself to **raising funds for the improvement of the Hudson Senior Center**. This remarkable group, affectionately known as the **“Friends,”** takes on fundraising projects to provide for essential items that may not be covered by the Town of Hudson or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are fortunate to have a very active Friend’s Group and appreciate everything that they do.

The Council on Aging would like to thank the Select Board, Executive Assistant and Finance Committee for their continued support each year.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Corley, COA Chair  
Diane Durand, Vice Chair  
Nina Smith, Treasurer  
Janet Saluk, Secretary  
Trisha Desmond

John Gill  
Edward Silveira  
Anthony Monteiro  
Melissa Esteves

Janice Long, Director

## *Hudson Veterans' Services* Annual Report 2023

### **Director's Report**

To the Honorable Select Board, the Executive Assistant, the Citizens, and the Veteran Community of Hudson, this report is submitted for the year ending 2023.

### **Veterans Benefits**

Veterans Benefits are governed under Chapter 115 of the Massachusetts General Laws and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations 108. Benefits assist financially qualified veterans and their dependants based on income levels and in accordance with the Budget Standards Chart. The Town of Hudson is reimbursed 75% by the State for veterans' assistance payments issued by this office.

The Director of Veterans' Services is responsible for determining the eligibility of all cases processed through this office. The Director conducts interviews, establishes approvals, and conducts follow-up on veterans receiving assistance. Field investigations within the local community are also performed by this office to determine the recipients' continued eligibility to receive benefits.

Veterans' Services also includes assisting Hudson veterans in filing federal forms for benefits which include service-connected disability claims, non-service-connected claims, VA health care, requests for medals, requests for service records, bonus applications, burial assistance and other federal benefits such as counseling in vocational rehabilitation and employment.

Additionally, the Director acts under Power of Attorney for veterans researching and processing cases to the Rating Review Board (Department of Veteran Services), and prepares appeal cases to the Board of Veterans' Appeals on the veteran's behalf. The Director also acts as liaison between State and U.S. Representatives on behalf of veterans and their dependants.

### **Office**

This department consists of one state certified full-time Director. The office also has 1 Graves Officer. This year the office had no additional assistance.

The Veterans Director wrote a new flag policy for town properties whereas one never previously existed. The director also wrote a more thorough version of Hudson's military leave policy for the town. Both policies were adopted by Hudson Select Board in 2023.

A new committee was formed in 2023 to address potential street banners for our local military veterans. The committee was officially named Hudson Hometown Heroes. The committee consists of the Veterans Director, Veterans, and local residents. Monies were raised from donations, businesses, and applicants. 103 Hometown Heroes Banners are expected to adorn the street poles beginning in May 2024. The program will be ongoing for potentially several years to come.

The Veterans office once again received a generous financial grant in the amount of \$10,000 for the ongoing maintenance of 1 vehicle.

In 2023, the department fielded a multitude of requests for Federal, State, and Local Veteran benefits, some of which included Burial assistance, Service-Connected disability, Aid and Attendance, Pension, VA Healthcare, Transportation, Annuities, and Exemptions in addition to State Chapter 115 assistance.

Memorial Day & Veterans Day Parades / Ceremonies continue to be a long-standing tradition in Hudson. This year both parades and ceremonies were observed. The Veterans Office continues to provide military affiliated guest speakers and displays to educate and inform our citizens and youths regarding the sacrifices



## **HUDSON HOUSING AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

The Hudson Housing Authority is authorized by and operates under the provisions of Chapter 121B of the Massachusetts General Laws. Founded in 1962, the Hudson Housing Authority manages and administers low-rent housing programs, which are funded by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Community Development (EOHLC) and U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The operations of the Authority are supported entirely by rents, grants, or contracts with the state or federal governments. The Authority is governed by a Board of five commissioners. The Board of Commissioners meets on the second Thursday of each month at a location rotating between the Brigham Circle and Norma Oliver Village community centers. The office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays.

### **Rental Assistance**

The Hudson Housing Authority administers seventy-two federal Section 8 Vouchers and approximately thirty Massachusetts Rental Vouchers. These programs provide participant property owners with a direct payment on behalf of the family. Family participants contribute no more than 40% of their gross monthly income toward the rent, with the Housing Authority contributing the difference. The combined budget for the rental assistance programs is over \$700,000.00. The Hudson Housing Authority Section 8 waiting list is open. Applicants may apply through the Section 8 Centralized Waiting List at [www.affordablehousing.com](http://www.affordablehousing.com) or by requesting a paper application from the Authority office. Applicants can expect a wait of several years for assistance. Applicants may apply to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program waitlist through the centralized state public housing waitlist (CHAMP) at the following website: <https://publichousingapplication.ocd.state.ma.us/> or by requesting a paper application from the Authority office.

### **Housing for the Elderly and Handicapped**

The Hudson Housing Authority provides 218 one-bedroom apartments for elderly and handicapped persons at two locations, state-aided Brigham Circle and federally-aided Norma Oliver Village.

Waiting lists exist for both programs, and a local resident and veterans' preference is granted at both Brigham Circle and Norma Oliver Village for those who live and/or work in Hudson. Applications are available for both Brigham Circle and Norma Oliver Village at the Authority office at 8 Brigham Circle. Applicants can also apply to Brigham Circle through the centralized state public housing waitlist (CHAMP) at the following website: <https://publichousingapplication.ocd.state.ma.us/>. There is currently no asset limitation at either development, and at the Brigham Circle development a wage exclusion adjustment may be possible for elderly persons. The eligibility criteria are outlined below.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

#### **State-aided (Brigham Circle)**

Income Limits – One Person	\$82,950.00
Two Persons	\$94,800.00
Age 60, disabled or handicapped	

#### **Federally-aided (Norma Oliver Village)**

Income Limits – One Person	\$82,950.00
Two Persons	\$94,800.00
Age 62, disabled or handicapped	

**Housing for Special Needs**

The Hudson Housing Authority, in cooperation with the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Developmental Services, serves sixteen persons in two group homes. These programs provide educational and employment opportunities in a traditional residential setting.

The Authority continues monitoring the 40B developments Coolidge Greene and Highlands at Hudson.

**Capital Improvements in 2023**

**Brigham Circle**

• Development-wide doorway intercom system upgrade	\$ 73,331	project complete
• Development-wide exterior lighting replacement	\$ 9,000	project complete
• Development-wide signage upgrade	\$ 9,240	project complete
• Window replacement in 667-2 development	\$283,000	project ongoing

**Norma Oliver Village**

• Development-wide appliance replacement	\$164,760	project complete
• Development-wide window replacement	\$229,686	project complete
• Community center key fob access system	\$ 6,772	project complete

**Housing for Special Needs (49 Washington Street)**

**Housing for Special Needs (8 Irving Street)**

• Air conditioning condenser replacement	\$ 9,660	project ongoing
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**Hudson Housing Authority Board of Commissioners**

**Board Members**

**Term Expires**

**Chairman:**

Bryan R. Johannes, 198 Lincoln Street

May 2024

**State Appointee:**

Christine Dimare, 21 Edith Road

May 2026

**Treasurer:**

Stephen Domenicucci, 9 Avon Drive

May 2026

**Commissioner:**

Sarah Cressy, 45 Pleasant Street

May 2028

**Town Tenant Board Member:**

Cynthia Janeiro-Ehlke, 49 Pine Street

May 2026

Jaclyn Beaulieu continues to serve as the Authority's Executive Director. The administrative office remains staffed by our dedicated team of Assistant Director Robert Milne, Program Administrator Madison Davies-Waterman, and Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant Allison Carroll. Maintenance Supervisor Jon Orkiseski along with maintenance employees John Bucciaglia and Lucas Breton provide exemplary maintenance service for the Authority's properties.

The Hudson Housing Authority wishes to acknowledge the continued service of the Hudson Fire Department and Hudson Police Department. We also wish to thank Executive Assistant, Mr. Thomas Gregory, and the Select Board along with the departments of Council on Aging, Board of Health, Public Works, Town Clerk, Community Development and Veteran's Affairs for their continued support and assistance.

Respectfully submitted,  
HUDSON HOUSING AUTHORITY

# Hudson Cultural Council

## 2023

### Annual Report

The Hudson Cultural Council (HCC), appointed by the Board of Selectmen, was formed in 1983 in response to the creation of the arts lottery in Massachusetts. The Hudson Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils (LCC) serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting programs that include everything from artists to nonprofit cultural organizations, field trips, lectures, festivals and dance performances to expand access, improve education, promote diversity, and encourage excellence in the arts, humanities, and sciences. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community. In addition to the state funds, the Town of Hudson also allots funds to the HCC. The HCC's role is to survey Hudson's cultural needs and interests, and to determine how public funds allocated by the Town and by the MCC will be dispensed.

Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of municipally appointed volunteers. The current active members of the Hudson Cultural Council are: Lawrence Fine, Peter Fiske, Lindsay Kelkres, Ellen Kisslinger, Doris Monteiro, Leia Owen, Debbie Papa and Donna Specian.

Each fall the HCC reviews grant applications from individuals and groups proposing a variety of cultural offerings. Award recommendations are based on proposed projects' eligibility, the availability of funds, and Hudson's particular needs and interests. As part of the FY '24 grant allocation process, the Council approved grants for organizations to use both in-person and virtual platforms in accordance with guidelines established in 2020 by MCC due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The amount to be awarded for FY'24 was \$20,079 (\$3500 from the Town of Hudson; remainder from MCC). There were 29 grant application requests totaling \$37,425 to be considered. Grants were awarded to these 15 recipients during the 2023-2024 Grant Cycle:

Assabet Valley Camera Club – A Murmur in the Trees  
Assabet Valley Camera Club – HDR (High Dynamic Range) Imaging - The Natural Look  
Assabet Valley Chamber of Commerce – Market Music 2024  
Assabet Valley Mastersingers – Assabet Valley Mastersingers Concert Season  
Boys and Girls Clubs of MetroWest – Summer Brain Gain - Friday Film Festival  
C. A. Farley Elementary School – Science and Humanities Assemblies  
Discovery Museum – Open Door Connections  
Hudson Cultural Alliance – Hudson Armory Summer Series  
Hudson Division of Recreation – 2024 Summer Concert and Entertainment Series  
Hudson High School Drama Society – Mean Girls The Musical  
Hudson Public Library – Animal Adventures for Kids and Families  
Hudson Public Library – Grooversity Bucket Drumming Workshop for Tweens and Teens!  
Hudson Public Library – Gifts We Can Barely Carry: Songs from JFK's Ireland Trip  
Sounds of Stow – Sounds of Stow 2023-2024 Concert Season  
Virginia Thurston Healing Garden – Fostering Inner Harmony: Integrating Arts of Meditation and Mindfulness for Holistic Healing

The HCC evaluates grant applications based on the following criteria:

1. Maximum impact (largest number of Hudson residents of all ages served, including the ratio of dollars spent to the number served).
2. Preference given to grants serving Hudson residents, and to programming by Hudson-based organizations and institutions. This could include but is not limited to the arts, nature, science and environmental education projects.
3. Community-wide events such as, but not limited to concerts, festivals, art shows, etc.
4. Programs which take place inside the town of Hudson.
5. Programs supporting diversity in the Hudson community.
6. Collaborative projects between local cultural groups and community organizations.
7. New applicants and/or projects.
8. Applicant's track record: whether the applicant's prior HCC-funded project was completed according to the original grant application, and the required paperwork was submitted in a timely manner.

The Hudson Cultural Council will be conducting its annual survey in the spring/summer, and will seek grant applications again in the fall. For local guidelines and complete information on the HCC see [www.hudsonculturalcouncil.org](http://www.hudsonculturalcouncil.org) or contact the council via email at [HUDSONCULTURALCOUNCIL@gmail.com](mailto:HUDSONCULTURALCOUNCIL@gmail.com). Application forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available online at [www.mass-culture.org](http://www.mass-culture.org) Online applications will be available September 1, 2024 and will be due October 15.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Specian, Chair