

Wiggin
Memorial Library
Stratham, NH

SMART VOTER ACTIVE VOTER

GRANT PROJECT APRIL 2022

Public Report

PREPARED BY
Lesley Kimball



A SPECIAL GRANT
OPPORTUNITY
FOR SMALL AND
RURAL LIBRARIES

ala.org/LTCFocus

Community Conversations on Voter Information Access

WHAT IS THIS PROJECT?

In 2022, the Wiggin Memorial Library was awarded a \$3,000 "Libraries Transforming Communities" grant from the American Library Association to support voter conversations about the availability of local civic information.

WHAT IS CIVIC INFORMATION?



Voter Conversation 4/12/2022

Civic information includes topics like how to register and when and where to vote, profiles of candidates, who is part of Town government, how local decisions get made, and access to current meeting schedules and minutes. Basically civic information includes whatever local voters want and need in order to feel like they can participate fully and have an impact on local decisions.

WHAT HAPPENED?

The Library hosted three 90-minute conversations with Stratham voters in April 2022. Attendees ranged from young parents to local business owners, from Town officials to brand new residents. Our aim was to hear from voters on how they get information about local elections and issues, what information they wish they had, and how access and participation could be made easier.

Community Conversations on Voter Information Access

Conversation Prompts

- What brings you here today?
- What information do you want and need?
- What is working? Missing? Hard to find?
- How do we get local information in general?
- Do any of these include civic information?
- What might improve what's working?
- How could we make progress on what isn't?
- Who is missing from this room?

*This issue impacts all of us;
we need all Stratham voices.*

Top Conversation Observations:

- **lack of easy access to State civic information.**
- **value of the Library's hybrid Voter Information Night.**
- **need for some "basics," ie: Voter 101.**
- **a desire to be "in the know" and participate more actively.**
- **difficulty getting neutral, unbiased information.**

Community Conversations on Voter Information Access

Top Areas of Interest and Proposed Projects

Library Voter Information Night: This is very valuable, especially with the remote option; In 2022, 150 people attended. This is the one event in Town that focuses on civic information for local elections, School Boards, and Town Meeting.

Projects for 2022–2023: ▶ Create web location for civic information including online candidate profiles; ▶ Offer remote option whenever feasible; ▶ Investigate future broadcasting/recording of other public meetings.

Statewide Voting Information: Attendees would like to easily find candidate information, positions of Stratham representatives in the NH House and Senate, what bills are coming up for a vote/public comment.

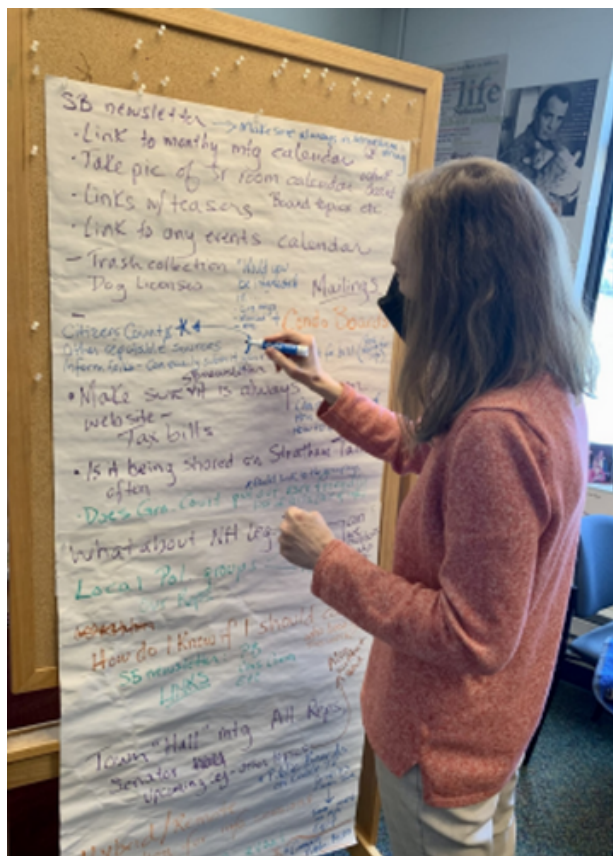
Projects for 2022–2023: ▶ Create central hub for links to this kind of information including contact information for officials; ▶ Reinstate the Library's State Candidate Night; ▶ Contact Stratham Reps to host "office hours" at the Library.

Voting Information: New voters and residents would like a resource for some "basics" including how to register to vote, file to run for a position, where/when voting takes place, how to get involved, and contacts for local election officials.

Projects for 2022–2023: ▶ Use wide communication channels (like mail or tax bills) to reach more people to increase participation; ▶ Regularly deploy electronic signs for civic notifications; ▶ Investigate Voter 101 programs, including video/podcast series of "interviews" with local decision-makers.

(see appendix a for a complete list of proposed projects)

Community Conversations on Voter Information Access



**Stratham Voters are
Involved,
Interested,
Engaged,
Enthusiastic.**

The voters who participated in these conversations were very interested in making civic information more accessible to everyone. Based on these discussions, we have created a collection of short-, medium-, and long-term project goals to enhance what is already successful and identify practical projects inspired by voter needs.

Many thanks to all of our participants!

It was energizing and fun to talk to Stratham residents about how voter information could be more accessible and could encourage more people to be involved.

We invite you to continue this conversation! Let us know when you have a question or an idea about getting or distributing information for voters. ***Civic conversations aren't just for election time!***

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Report and appendices at
library.strathamnh.gov



Smart Voter



Active Voter

Smart, active voters need information

*What information do we need? When do we need it?
Where can we find it?*

Join a community conversation about designing
easier ways to get voter information!

Choose your time & place:

April 12, 6 pm – food and drink!

April 14, 3 pm – coffee break!

April 16, 11 am – snacks & spring seeds!

Let us know you're coming-
register on our calendar:
library.strathamnh.gov

Questions? Ask Lesley:

603.772.4346 librarydirector@wigginml.org

WIGGIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY



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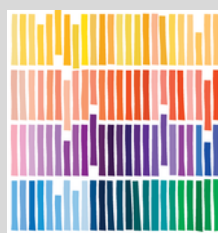
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Wiggin Memorial Library

10 Bunker Hill Ave., Stratham NH

603.772.4346 | library@wigginml.org