

Library Subcommittee

The Library Subcommittee met on 11/16/09 with Jay Sherma. The committee discussed regionalization w/ Jay and learned that in about 50% of the country libraries are provided by counties, though in the northeast, libraries are primarily provided by local government. Jay felt that the town should pursue a regional or county library system for central operations.

The committee learned that no money flows out of Augusta to support local libraries.

In terms of regionalization, South Portland's library has a union and the workers receive higher pay. South Portland has also rebuffed Cape's request to establish reciprocal borrowing. Portland says they would love to have regionalization. Scarborough is a 501(3)(c) corp. not a municipal library, though most of their funding comes as a grant from the town.

The committee discussed whether there could be a merger of the 3 school libraries in Cape Elizabeth and the municipal [al library. This is little overlap in the collections. Jay told us that the school libraries focus is on curriculum support while the town does culture. The committee felt that a group of councilors and school board members should further explore the potential for local consolidation of our 4 libraries. Security and accreditation would be 2 of the more important issues that need to be addressed.

Cape library is open 51 hrs/wk, well above the standard for a community our size. 45 hours is the recommendation for a community the size of Cape.

35,000 items a year go in and out of the library through Minerva. Jay agreed to provide the list of active patrons.