



Forest Lodge Library's (FLL) Vision Regarding Future Use of the Log Cabin

Forest Lodge Library Vision Statement: The Forest Lodge Library is the learning center of our community, and the place people turn to for the discovery of ideas, the joy of reading, and the power of information.

The Forest Lodge Library Mission Statement: The mission of the Forest Lodge Library is to enhance the quality of life of our community by providing open access to cultural, intellectual and informational resources and services that are delivered in a welcoming, convenient and responsive manner.

DOCUMENT PURPOSE

This document is written in response to both:

- (1) The document "CNHM (Cable Natural History Museum) VISION REGARDING FUTURE USE OF THE LOG BUILDING" (November 8, 2024) sent by CNHM Director to FLL Library Director and President of the FLL Board of Trustees.
- (2) The November 19, 2024, PUBLIC joint meeting of committees of the CNHM and FLL Board of Trustees.

HISTORY

The log cabin has a rich history as a beloved, iconic community resource and gathering place.

- The Cable/Namakagon Historical Museum archives include documents describing the log cabin history dating back to minutes from a March 11, 1925, meeting of the Cable Women's Club:
"It has been the ambition of the club members for some time to start a library and restroom in Cable. Mrs. T.W. Griggs, hearing of our efforts, became interested to the extent of asking us to make a start in some temporary building and she would have a new building erected later. With this new prospect in view, club members became more determined than ever. After much persuasion, Mr. Frank Drummond made use of the old library building on Main Street. April 29 a special meeting was held to make plans to get started. Donations of books, magazines, and furniture by club members and community enabled us to open door to the public on May 9th. From May 9th until Dec. 11th, we accumulated 619 books, loaned 2,300 books, and had 2,405 visitors."
- The Forest Lodge Library was built in 1925 by Mary Livingston Griggs in memory of her mother, Mary Steele Livingston. First called The Community House, Mrs. Griggs envisioned and executed a downtown Cable facility that would combine the functions of library, community meeting center and public rest room. Later named the Forest Lodge Library, the building is one of two log cabin libraries in the State of Wisconsin. The building was named to the National and State Register of Historic Places in 2000.
- In 1968, when the Cable Natural History Museum was established, the library and the museum merged and operated under a single board funded by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation. CNHM held ownership of the property and buildings of both campuses, which were joined together via a corridor and shared restroom facilities.
- The Forest Lodge Library became a fully functioning public library under the direction of its own library board of trustees in 1992. The state of Wisconsin required that for the Forest Lodge Library to continue to receive books, materials, and state funding, it needed to become a public library. In 1992, the library established its own Board of Trustees and then in January of 2007 the Forest Lodge Library became a Joint Library of the Towns of Cable and Namakagon.
- Planning for the expansion of the Forest Lodge Library has been ongoing since prior to December of 2016 when the Library Board effected the purchase of property adjacent to the north of the Forest Lodge Library with plans to eventually create a library addition to augment the programs, services, and collections available to its patrons. That property is jointly owned by the Towns of Cable and Namakagon. Throughout the lengthy Library Expansion Project planning, the CNHM personnel have been involved since its inception. During this planning process, it has been emphasized that the log cabin would continue to function as an essential part of the library. This has been addressed in public meetings, building plan development, public mailings, and informational events. In early 2024, the Forest Lodge Library conducted a Community Input Survey of Cable and Namakagon. Data from this survey overwhelmingly indicated that the respondents felt strongly about making sure the log cabin remains an essential part of the library. The continued use of the log cabin library function was included in the 2024 Flexible Facilities Grant application.

VISION

A collaborative agreement between FLL and CNHM to develop a joint use plan that allows the log cabin to remain an integral part of the library while allowing agreed upon usage by the museum and community members.

TOPICS REQUIRING DISCUSSION, CLARIFICATION AND COLLABORATION

Based on the above history and community input and needs, the Forest Lodge Library believes that in order for the log cabin to meet the community needs and the state of Wisconsin library requirements, the following are necessary:

- (1) A Joint Learning Campus atmosphere can be achieved in the log cabin. Shared usage of the log cabin has always been available to CNHM and other community groups. In recognizing that the library needs of the community must be met, shared usage must follow Forest Lodge Library Policies and Procedure. As a public entity, it is the responsibility of the Forest Lodge Library to serve the public and its growing needs. Discussions between FLL and CNHM should emphasize a spirit of collaborative partnership in support of both the public FLL and private CNHM entities fulfilling their missions and meeting community needs.
- (2) The CNHM need for space is recognized. Whenever possible, CNHM is encouraged to prioritize use of the additional spaces that will be available in the Library Expansion building. These spaces include reservable small group study rooms and the large community room. The Expansion design allows for the large community room, which includes a kitchenette, and a smaller group study room to be accessible for programs outside of FLL business hours. Accessible restrooms are also located adjacent to the community room. Further discussion is needed in regard to museum specimen placement in both the log cabin and expansion facility to ensure adequate space needs.
- (3) As part of the FLL Library Expansion capital campaign FLL has secured a naming donation for the Wisconsin Collection Reading Area. This donation was made with the expectation that this collection would be housed in the log cabin.
- (4) The log cabin will continue to house: a portion of the library collection utilizing the existing log shelving built into the building side walls and possible additional shelving where needed to allow for appropriate library stack accessibility and space needs; adequate computer stations space; used book/materials sales space in the location that currently hosts the Library Director cubicle; and a small circulation desk to accommodate for the service of patron needs. In maintaining an up-to-date and adequate collection of books and materials, there are times when libraries, including FLL, need to engage in deaccession (removal) of some of its materials. Space in the log cabin will be necessary in order for deaccession of these materials.
- (5) Consensus must be reached regarding scheduling/reserving facility times for use of either the existing log cabin or planned Library Expansion community or small group rooms. Discussion should address: hours and dates during which the spaces may be reserved; the process for coordinating reservations; factors determining priorities for use, particularly in the event of multiple requests for the same time period (i.e. library patrons/programs, CNHM functions, other community users); planning for predictable prescheduled versus unique needs (i.e. recurring meetings or established seasonal programs versus novel or one-time events); and access to collections. There will need to be recognition of the need to allow consistent public access to library resources/programs vs. private usage time.
- (6) Long-term lease terms should be established to the satisfaction of both CNHM and FLL in order to support community needs in a mutually agreeable, stable, and reliable manner.
- (7) A corridor connecting the log cabin and the Library Expansion is necessary and in keeping with original plans discussed between FLL and CNHM over several years. This is not only necessary to allow patrons adequate access to books and materials housed in the log cabin library, but also to maintain the status of the new construction as a "library expansion" which was described on the Flexible Facilities Grant application. In recent discussions with CNHM, conversations have taken place regarding FLL taking ownership of the corridor that CNHM has agreed to pay for the cost of construction and building materials up to the agreed amount. Further discussion will need to continue regarding legal agreements that will need to be put in place for this purpose.
- (8) FLL pays rent for the lease of the building, which currently covers the cost of some maintenance. This, along with the fact that the CNHM holds an endowment from the Mary Griggs Burke Foundation, necessitates further discussion and clarification regarding any shared fees. We would need to develop an official FLL and CNHM learning campus log cabin joint use agreement.

The Forest Lodge Library and its Board of Trustees serve the public and needs to maintain public awareness and input in library business. Moving forward, the Forest Lodge Library Board of Trustees suggests continued meetings with the Museum committee and Library committee, so the needs of both entities can be adequately discussed and met to maximize benefits to the communities we serve.

This letter was approved by the Forest Lodge Library Board of Trustees at the December 11, 2024, FLL board meeting.

Sincerely,

Forest Lodge Library Board of Trustees

Carl Lippert, board president; JoAnn Schultz, board vice president; Mary Jean Fenske, board secretary;

board members: Janis Pribyl, Janet Ziegler, Jan Berlin, Tara VonThoma