



Referendum FAQ's

The Problem: The library does not receive enough money from the state, county, municipalities and boroughs to meet its yearly budget.

The Greensburg Hempfield Area Library board has placed a one mill levy referendum on the November 7, 2017 local election ballot to fund library programs, services, staffing, and facilities upkeep.

All funding from this referendum will be used locally.

If the referendum passes, the library will use the funds to restore, maintain and extend needed programs across our service area. If the referendum fails, certain key programs will continue to face shortfalls and the GHAL will close its doors within six years.

Two plans to illustrate what happens if the levy passes (Plan A) or if it fails (Plan B).

PLAN A	PLAN B
Expand early learning programs and resources for children	Reduce early learning programs and resources for children
Restore purchases of all materials including e-books	Meet only legal requirements for material purchases thru deficit spending
Provide technology support and career development assistance and opportunities	Reduce or eliminate technology support and career development assistance
Improve online library services	Maintain a shell presence of online services
Provide business services to assist local businesses	Reduce or eliminate business services
Expand community based activities	Reduce or eliminate community based activities
Provide clean, safe and maintained facilities	Make only urgent repairs through deficit spending
Make all restrooms handicapped accessible	No handicapped access to a bathroom on the main floor
Restore Friday and add Sunday hours	Reduce library hours at the risk of losing state funding
End deficit spending	Close the library within 6 years or less



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How much is the library used?

In 2016, there were 18,484 registered users and 144,769 library visits during 2,350 open hours. The average weekly open hours were 47. Computer access in the library accounted for 14,351 sessions of computer use. The library's wireless network was accessed 4,379 times. There were 48,797 logins to the online catalog. The number of visits without logins cannot be ascertained.

During the 2016 Summer Reading programs, GHAL did a total of 223 programs and reached 2,879 children and 1,182 parents/caregivers. 464 children ages birth to teen joined one of our 3 summer reading clubs and reported hours read. Total hours read were 1,988.5 hours. We offered programs in the library, at our Youngwood branch, St. Clair Park, Hempfield Parks and Recreation, and in Hempfield Elementary Schools. While all of our programs focus on fun, they incorporate Common Core and include STEM/Literacy opportunities. We serve 2 school districts, Greensburg Salem and Hempfield Area School District, both kindergarten through 12th grade.

Also in 2016, 1,840 adults attended 68 programs including book discussions, eBook workshops, technology and computer workshops, art receptions, and interacted with the Library at community outreach events like Hempfield Days and Greensburg Community Days.

Why does the library need this tax?

The library's 2017 budget is a little over \$740,000. Of this, only about \$290,441 comes from governmental funding. After receiving its state, county and municipal funding, the Library Board must raise about 60% of the yearly budget to continue operating. Since the library is prohibited by law for charging for its services, the remaining budget must come from solicited donations, grants, miscellaneous income, and investment income. The library serves an important role as a transformational force in the community providing valuable resources and programs; but in the foreseeable future the library will simply cease to exist if we don't work now to save it.

Why doesn't the library charge for services?

The Pennsylvania statute that authorizes using Pennsylvania tax dollars for public libraries contains a specific prohibition against charging for "routine" library services.

What is the yearly operating budget of the library?

The operating cost for 2016 was \$751,111 and the budget for 2017 is \$740,000.



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What is the income from state, county and local sources?

A list of income sources and amounts received in 2016:

State	\$157,000
County	\$ 13,000
Hempfield Township	\$ 30,000
City of Greensburg	\$ 20,280
Hempfield Area School District	\$ 10,000
Borough of South Greensburg	\$ 1,000
Borough of Southwest Greensburg	\$ 500
Borough of Youngwood	\$ 6,161*
Rentals	\$ 52,500
Total	\$290,441

*Value of in kind contributions of utilities and building use.

Do other libraries have dedicated tax support?

Yes. In our area, Jeannette receives 1.24 mills. Norwin receives 1.2 mills.

What will the measure cost property owners?

Based on the property's appraised value, 1 mill would cost the average homeowner an estimated \$20 to \$30 annually or \$1.67 to \$2.50 per month.

How can an owner estimate the cost of 1 mill to a property owner?

First, determine the assessed value of the property.

Second, multiply the assessed value by 1. Divide that number by 1,000. The result is the cost of 1 mill to the property owner.

On which ballots will the referendum be placed and how much income is 1 mill expected to generate? (approximations)

City of Greensburg	\$120,000
Hempfield Township	\$500,000
Borough of South Greensburg	\$ 22,000
Borough of Southwest Greensburg	\$ 15,600
Borough of Youngwood	\$ 26,500
Borough of New Stanton	\$ 32,000
Total	\$716,100



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If the measure passes, how will the funding be used?

- Maintaining or increasing the number of early learning programs for children
- Restoring and increasing purchases of materials including e-books, to levels above the minimum required by the State Library of Pennsylvania
- Providing additional technology and career workshops
- Adding additional educational workshops for patrons
- Restoring services to local businesses
- Renovating the restrooms on the first floor to be handicapped accessible
- Maintaining a clean, safe facility for use by all
- Restoring Friday and add Sunday open hours
- Stopping the downward spiral of deficit spending

What will the library do if the measure does not pass?

The library will be forced to further reduce staffing, reduce hours, and reduce purchases of new materials and technology. However, since the library is already operating at the minimum levels permitted by state law, if the library falls below those levels, state funding will be cut off, which could result in permanently closing the library even sooner than the six years that may be available through deficit spending.

What is the status of the Youngwood Library?

Youngwood Library is a branch of the Greensburg Hempfield Area Library. If the referendum passes, Youngwood Library will continue to thrive. If the referendum fails, the branch will close along with the main library.

For More information: Visit the Library's website www.ghal.org for a copy of this FAQ or call the Library at 724.837.5620.