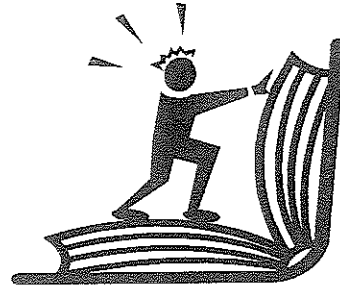


Please Support YOUR Amherst Libraries!

Town Meeting came very close to approving the certification funding level for the Library last month, hence citizens petitioned...



It makes sense to pass the certification funding level budget now:

- One 'no' vote last time said they would vote 'yes' in July because there was likely to be more money available.
- There IS more money available now! The Unrestricted General Government Aid from the state came in higher than expected; other funds came in lower, with a net increase in revenue of approximately \$150,000.¹
- Plus, the new local-option hotel/motel tax law ends the tax exempt status of the UMass Campus Center Hotel which is expected to bring in annual revenue to the Town of \$115,000 to \$175,000 (none of which was factored into the Finance Committee's calculations)

Why does \$34,704 mean so much for the Library?

- Without it:
 - The Library will shut its doors 52 Friday afternoons this year
 - The Jones and North Amherst libraries will eliminate a popular reading readiness program
 - Basic library services will suffer: before FY2009, the Library had already eliminated or reduced staff in the children's section, circulation, adult services, & computer services and library usage continues to increase. (Statewide, it is estimated that library circulations have increased as much as 7%)
 - Computer classes teaching basic technology skills and Internet literacy will be eliminated
- This \$34,704 will allow Amherst to meet minimum state funding standards for Library Services. Meeting this state benchmark for quality is critical to sustaining existing services.
- In the 50+ years of the Massachusetts library certification, Amherst has never fallen below the funding level for state certification.

¹ Many thanks to Town Staff for providing current information on revenue when requested.

ALSO SERVING HADLEY, LEVERETT, PELHAM, SHUTESBURY, DEERFIELD, SUNDERLAND

AMHERST BULLETIN

Dec. 12, 2008

The main attraction

To the Bulletin:

The circulation of books and materials from the Jones Library is the highest of any single library location in western Massachusetts. That's more check-outs, more check-ins, more holds than any other library building in the area. That's 6.4 percent of all circulation transactions in the area to date for 2008. Northampton accounts for 4.9 percent, and Springfield Main Library 3.3 percent, according to CW-MARS computer network.

When budget planners contemplate how to accumulate more tax dollars to meet the needs of the community, economic development has a high priority. We make zoning concessions and devise other strategies to attract enterprises that will help Amherst become a destination. How do we get people in Massachusetts to come to our town?

Well, the town has had a very popular destination for years: the Jones Library. People come to Amherst to visit an outstanding library and while here they shop, eat, drink and go to the movies. The magnet that is the Jones has a powerful range. Special collections, in particular, attracts scholars from around the world who often stay for extended periods.

Our creative and hard-working staff have been asked and asked again to cut their budgets. They cannot continue to operate on reduced funds without a loss of services and access. Amherst very much needs to keep its libraries open and of high quality. Every Monday morning we close, every Sunday we close, the business community loses.

Molly Turner
Jones Library
Board of Trustees president