
NEWS RELEASE



Dec. 3, 2020

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Pierce County Library System's 2021 budget reduces burden on taxpayers *Final public hearing on Wednesday, Dec. 9*

PIERCE COUNTY, Washington – The Pierce County Library System Board of Trustees is holding its second and final public hearing on its 2021 budget, which is planned to reduce further tax burdens on taxpayers. The Board meeting and public hearing is scheduled for **Wednesday, Dec. 9, 3:30 p.m.**

Join the meeting by phone or online:

- Phone: 253-215-8782, webinar identification: 996 4890 6781, passcode: 161376
- Zoom with a Zoom account from a web browser:
<https://zoom.us/j/99648906781?pwd=TEc3U3AxSHVMeEFjMDJiT3FvRCs1UT09>
- Zoom with a Zoom account with an app:
<https://zoom.us/j/99648906781?pwd=TEc3U3AxSHVMeEFjMDJiT3FvRCs1UT09>

The Library Board of Trustees is planning a flat budget to lessen burdens on people who are already stressed from COVID-19 and the resulting economic recession. The trustees are continuing their commitment to be good stewards of the taxpayers' investment as it supports serving communities during the pandemic.

The proposed \$39.4 million operating budget balances the tax impact on the public while maintaining the long-term sustainability of the Library and reinventing services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed budget also reduces expenditures by nearly \$350,000 less than the 2020 budget. The proposed 2021 budget maintains the Library's goal to sustain funding from the 2018 reauthorized levy approved by voters, which the Library System projects will provide stable funding up to 2029.

Taxes on houses and other property is the primary source of funding for the Library System. To support the proposed budget, the Board plans to levy property taxes at a lower amount than legally authorized from homeowners and other property owners. By law, the Library could increase taxes by 1% more than it levied the previous year, while not exceeding its legal levy amount of 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. In 2021 that would have been an increase of \$406,000. By not increasing taxes by 1% in 2021, the Library has an option to levy at a higher rate than 1% in future years.

Also, the proposed 2021 budget shows a loss of about \$400,000 in revenue from fines on overdue books and other materials, because the Library is not charging fines as another action to help people during the economic crisis from the pandemic.

In 2021, the Library plans to continue curbside service with convenient and safe access to books, movies and other materials. Also, it plans to buy more online e-books and audiobooks and reduce the time people wait for popular reads. The Library plans to support people with its Get Hired services to help people develop their technology skills and improve their career marketability for getting jobs, as well as give them resources to start or advance their small business.

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Full packet: <https://www.piercecountylibrary.org/files/library/board-packet-12092020.pdf>

About Pierce County Library System

The nationally acclaimed [Pierce County Library System](#) serves 620,000 people throughout Pierce County with 20 libraries and online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and is funded primarily through property taxes. People may choose from 822,000 books, movies and other materials, as well as nearly half a million online/downloadable materials. Pierce County Library is committed to directing services in three primary areas: learning, enjoyment and community connection. Its services and programs spark success for Pierce County residents. More than 2 million people visit Pierce County Libraries each year. The Library provides services and programs directly to people in adult care facilities, people who are homebound, and to children in childcare centers and schools. [Pierce County Libraries are located](#) at Anderson Island, Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Fife, Gig Harbor, Graham, Key Center, Lakewood, Milton/Edgewood, Orting, Parkland/Spanaway, Pierce County Library Administrative Center, South Hill, Steilacoom, Summit, Sumner, Tillicum and University Place. Pierce County Library is an independent municipal corporation and operates as a junior taxing district.

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