

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY / BUDGET MESSAGE

As the Library Board of Trustees unveils its 2021-22 budget, it is with a keen awareness that the past year has been one of extraordinary challenges for our community and its residents. Businesses are trying to return to normal, schools are tentatively opening doors, and families are still struggling to get back on their feet, in some cases without loved ones who were lost in the pandemic. The Islip Public Library was not immune to disruption over the last year, but the Board of Trustees and staff are focused on looking ahead and resuming a full roster of services and even on maintaining a couple of those new services that patrons found so helpful during times of mandated social distancing – Grab-n-Go and hybrid programming that allows for patrons to stream events.

The proposed 2021-22 budget presented by the Library Board of Trustees once again falls under the New York State tax cap and reflects an increase of only 1.9%, which amounts to an estimated added cost of only \$8.47 for the year for the average homeowner.

The largest percentage increase (11.3%) in the budget has been allotted to patron materials and programming. Large-print books and also audio books have been in high-demand for years, and we will be ordering heavily for these collections next year. Teens are seeking more print materials, and we've devoted additional funding to the teen book line as well. Not surprisingly, demand for downloadable materials skyrocketed over the last year while people hunkered down at home. The Library will continue to fund a robust collection of materials that can be checked out the old-fashioned way, but we believe this move toward downloadable materials will continue to grow. Accordingly, a significant increase is directed to the Library's Overdrive service, which provides patrons with access to downloadable ebooks and audiobooks. More funding is also devoted to downloadable magazines, music, movies and even comic books through our Hoopla service. In terms of programming, we believe some patrons have come to rely on the streamed version of Library events, either for health or convenience reasons, so we plan to ensure that many programs offer both format options. We also discovered that families love our large outdoor events, and we've budgeted for another unforgettable children's summer reading program.

You'll note that a transfer to the Capital fund was budgeted, which will enable the Library to deal with needed upgrades to the heating, cooling and ventilation systems of the Library. The transfer will also enable critical replacement of patron computers, many of which have aged beyond their useful lifetimes.

For obvious reasons, the Library incurred unforeseeable costs in cleaning products, sanitation supplies and PPE equipment over the last year, and we predict many of those expenses will be ongoing. The Library Board takes pride in ensuring a safe, healthy and inviting environment

for patrons, and the proposed budget will ensure that the commitment to a clean, comfortable facility can be fulfilled.

Overall, the Library Trustees present a budget that supports educational objectives, enrichment of leisure time, and lifelong learning – at a reasonable increase of less than \$9 for the year for the average homeowner. With this in mind, the Board respectfully requests your support of the Library budget on Tuesday, April 6th. If you have any questions about the budget or any other Library matter, please feel free to contact the Library Director at 631-581-5933.