



Trustee Update

Library News You Can Use

Study outlines economic impact of Wisconsin public libraries

Did you know that Wisconsin public libraries contribute more than \$4 for every tax dollar invested, according to a recent economic impact research report?

The Department of Public Instruction contracted with NorthStar Economics Inc. of Madison to conduct a study

to determine the economic impact of public libraries and library systems in Wisconsin and the taxpayer return on investment. Their research showed that:

✓ the total economic contribution of Wisconsin public libraries is more than \$750 million every year.

- ✓ the return on investment in library services is \$4.06 for each dollar of taxpayer investment.
- ✓ Wisconsin public libraries create more than 3,200 jobs directly and more than 3,000 indirectly through economic activity.
- ✓ Wisconsin public libraries provide \$427.9 million in total economic value through services provided to residents. This includes the value of materials borrowed by library customers, as well as services and programs provided to the public.
- ✓ Wisconsin public libraries make a direct economic contribution of over \$326 million to the state's economy through activities that include spending for library operations, payroll spending by library employees, and local spending by library visitors.

Budget development

Your library board and director are probably hard at work putting the finishing touches on the budget request you will present to your municipality. Try to be as thorough as possible when estimating your financial needs and income for 2009, and support your municipal funding request with facts and figures.

You may want to review a typical budget calendar, even though your calendar may vary slightly.

February-March

- ⊕ Review your annual report for trends, needed changes, etc.

Spring

- ⊕ Review strategic plan and progress toward goals

Mid-Year

- ⊕ Review current year revenue and expenditures
- ⊕ Municipality sets budget calendar and process

Summer

- ⊕ After discussion with board, director drafts preliminary budget

Late Summer/ Early Fall

- ⊕ Board approves or revises budget
- ⊕ Director submits board-approved budget request to municipality and prepares documentation for budget hearing

Fall

- ⊕ Budget reviewed by mayor, administrator, or finance committee (may request additional information)
- ⊕ Budget hearing & final budget approval

Late Fall

- ⊕ Thank you notes
- ⊕ Reallocate budget lines if necessary
- ⊕ Evaluate what did and didn't work well in this year's budget process

Ongoing

- ⊕ Monitor expenditures

Tips and resources to help in the budgeting process are available at www.scls.info/management/general/budget/. ❖



The study was funded through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. It analyzed quantitative data, including library spending, library services, lending activities, and facility, equipment and technology use at Wisconsin's 388 public libraries and 17 public library systems. The research team also collected information through an online survey about library use and perceived value from over 2,400 respondents, and in 29 focus groups held throughout the state.

The study, which can be used to help build library support at budget time, is available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/econimpact.html>. ❖

Genealogy research made easy at the library

Genealogical research continues to grow in popularity, as more and more individuals search for information about their family's past. Among the helpful genealogical resources at SCLS public libraries are two databases: *Ancestry Library*, and *HeritageQuest Online*.

Ancestry Library provides access to a variety of genealogical research tools including images of original documents like draft registration cards or census forms, color maps, passenger lists, and bio-



graphical sketches. *HeritageQuest Online* offers census material, public records and narrative materials. Both are available in the libraries, and *HeritageQuest Online* is also available to library users, with a valid library card, from outside the library, making it easier to do your research from home or office. ❖

Exempting from the county library tax

If your library is not a consolidated county library, your municipality must appropriate at least enough to exempt from the library portion of the county tax, or your residents will be “double taxed” (by both the municipality and the county) for library services. (Wis. Stat. 43.64) Your municipality must apply for this exemption each year, and the amount required is calculated based on the equalized values of municipalities in your county.

The most current equalized value report becomes available on Aug. 15 each year, and while most SCLS member library municipalities appropriate far more than required to exempt, others of you may need to make sure that your municipal appropriation is large enough to exempt. ❖

SCLS staff contacts:

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