

To: Mayor and Town Council

From: Library Board of Trustees  
Ken Broun  
Evelyn Daniel, Vice Chair  
Martha Diefendorf  
Floyd Fried  
Bill Holton  
Lee Mayfield, Liaison, Friends of the Library  
Jim Ward, Liaison, Town Council

Subject: The Library Board's recommendations for the 2007-08 Town Budget

Date: February 28, 2007

*R Schreiner*

Paul Jones  
Barbara Moran  
Brandon Rector, Secretary  
Bob Schreiner, Chair

We thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Town's 2007-08 budget.

The Library Board of Trustees recommends the following new items for the Chapel Hill Public Library's continuing budget.

1. Additional page hours. Circulation has increased by 18% since 2000, with no increase in the number of page hours. We recommend increasing these hours by 20 per week to reshelf materials, organize the collection and facilitate patron access to library materials.
2. Part-time grants position. The position would seek grants only available to libraries and that must be sought by libraries. Tasks would include identifying grant sources that could assist the Town in meeting service goals identified in the Library Master Plan; preparing and monitoring the progress of grant applications; and working with the Director to identify and communicate with local partners for matching funds. This work would complement private fund raising by the CHPL Foundation and the CHPL Friends.

The Library's space needs and the building expansion are the primary capital needs. The long-identified problem with Library services continues to be space-related, issues of capacity, not quality: Not enough space for a collection of adequate size for our population and inadequate space for people to use the Library's materials. In addition, there is increasing patron interest in foreign language books, audio and video items, and other non-traditional materials not well-represented in the collection.

The big unknown still is the impact of inflation on the 2003 bond funds for Library expansion. We are hearing many suggestions for priorities for these funds. We believe that the service priorities in the Library Master Plan continue to be the best guide for utilization of additional space. Those priorities are:

1. Current recreational reading, listening and viewing materials and information about contemporary culture and trends.
2. General information through answering reference questions and provision of specialized subscription reference services.
3. Information and programs to support life-long learning.
4. Instruction in finding, evaluating and using electronic information resources.

The threat is that we will repeat the 1994 expansion experience: A Library too small on opening day, and with no headroom for growth. But a space shortfall could be made even worse by deviating from the Library Master Plan.

The Board's first priority for expansion continues to be space for books and for people to enjoy books and learning in accord with the Library Master Plan service priorities. If space cuts must be made, this space should be cut least and last.

Thank you for your consideration and your continuing support for the Library

cc:     Roger L. Stancil, Town Manager  
          Kathleen Thompson, Library Director  
          Sabrina Oliver, Town Clerk