



CLINTON COMMUNITY LIBRARY

November 2017 General Election

414 Ballot Item

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is a 414 vote?

It is an item on the election ballot in November that allows taxpayers to earmark a specific amount of their tax dollars for the Library.

2. Why is our Clinton Community Library recommending that we take this action?

The current funding for the Library is derived from a patchwork quilt of sources. This structure is unreliable, and puts the Library at risk. We are recommending this action so that the Library can consistently meet the needs of the community.

3. How is our Library currently funded?

Every year the Town Board decides how much money to give to the Library. In recent years, that amount has only covered about half of the Library's operating costs. Our Library Director and Trustees must scramble every year to find additional funding through grant applications, fund raisers, and personal appeals for support.

4. What is the relationship between the Town and the Library?

The Library currently asks the Town Board for funding each year. The Town Board then decides how much to give to the Library. Our current level of services and programs, reflecting the demands of the community, require more funding than the Town Board has provided. We are recommending that town voters earmark a specific amount of their tax dollars for the Library, so that basic operating costs are covered and we can reliably maintain the current level of service to the community.

5. When and where is the vote? Who can vote?

All residents of the Town of Clinton that are registered to vote in the Town of Clinton can cast their ballot on Tuesday, November 7, 2017, General Election Day. Vote at your regular voting location: the Clinton Town Hall, the East Clinton Fire House or the West Clinton Fire House. The polls will be open from 6:00am to 9:00pm.

6. How much will my taxes increase?

The Clinton Community Library Board of Trustees is proposing an annual taxpayer contribution of \$115,000 to be funded from Town property taxes. Based on our calculations, this would entail an annual taxpayer contribution of approximately \$16.00 for every \$100,000 in assessed property value. So, for example, if your assessment is \$250,000, approximately \$40.00 of the taxes you pay to the Town of Clinton will go directly to the Library.

7. Will this create a new tax district?

No. This will not create a new tax district. The Library will remain an association library. This vote simply sets the amount of Town taxes coming to the Library.

8. Our taxes go up every year – will the library tax automatically go up every year too?

No. Any increase in funding must be approved by a majority vote in a Town-wide election.

9. How will the money be spent?

Most of our budget goes towards basic operating costs: personnel costs to keep the library open 36 hours a week and other expenditures necessary to meet our patrons' growing demands for current circulation materials (such as new books and DVDs). A smaller portion will go towards other community services and outreach – regularly publishing a newsletter and hosting more programs and special events.

10. How do other towns fund their libraries?

The majority of community libraries in the Mid-Hudson Library System, including 16 of the 19 towns in Dutchess County, are supported by earmarked taxes approved by voters under Chapter 414 – exactly what we are proposing for the Town of Clinton. The Town of Clinton currently spends the least amount per capita on its library of all towns in Dutchess County!

11. What will happen if this 414 vote fails?

As in past years, we will return to the Town Board with a petition for operational funding. And as in past years, the size of the Town's appropriation will be the principal driver of the extent of services that the Library can offer. We are working hard to maintain our current level of services, but if the vote fails we may have to reduce hours, programming and purchases.

7.5.17