

Germantown Library

414 Funding Proposition for the Tuesday, November 8, 2022 Election

Frequently Asked Questions

“Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest.” – Lady Bird Johnson

1. What is the 414 Proposition?

This proposition increases the amount of money allocated to the Germantown Library by the Town by \$35,000 per year.

2. Where will the additional \$35,000 come from?

The additional \$35,000 will be an allocation from property tax receipts.

3. Is this a separate tax?

No. It is from property tax receipts collected by the Town.

4. Will my property taxes go up? By how much?

Yes, if the proposition is approved.

Your property taxes would increase by \$10 per \$100,000 of assessed value; for example, a property assessed at \$300,000 would pay an additional \$30 a year to the Town.

5. How much does the Library receive now?

The library currently receives \$88,000 annually from the Town or \$25.14 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. This supports 56% of our operating budget, which is far below other towns in Dutchess and Columbia Counties, where the public support averages 83%.

6. Why does the library need this increase?

To continue to provide essential services to our community.

This is the Germantown Library’s first proposed funding increase in seven years. In that time, we’ve raised our staff’s hourly pay rate to keep up with New York State minimum wage standards and to compete with other employers such as Stewart’s (whose pay we are still slightly below). This year’s inflation has raised our fuel, electric, and maintenance costs as well.

The cost of electronic media (ebooks, audiobooks, movies, TV shows) has soared—from \$0 in 2017 to \$4,500 in 2021. Both patron demand and the cost of the media increase every year.

Our program offerings have continued to grow in popularity with both in-person and virtual attendance options.

Since our last funding request, our budget has increased 21% (\$27,500). We have been able to make up the difference with grants, fundraising events like the 5k race, donations, and volunteer labor, but we need more stable funding. This increase would bring Town funding to 79% of our current budget. We project a deficit this year between eight and eleven thousand dollars that we will need to cover from our reserve fund.

7. What will happen if this 414 funding proposition does not pass?

If Germantown taxpayers do not support this 414 funding proposition, the Library might have to adjust service offerings, including reducing the range of programs and events it offers, scaling back hours of operation, and limiting purchases of new materials and equipment. Reductions to reflect the level of funding supported by the taxpayers would take place annually based on the diminishing purchasing power of the same fixed tax revenue.

8. When and where will the vote take place?

The vote will take place on Election Day, Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at your usual voting place. All registered voters in Germantown may vote on this proposition.

To be able to vote in this election, you must register to vote by Friday, Oct. 14.

To find your polling place, learn about Absentee voting, and Early Voting (which runs from Saturday, October 29 through Sunday, November 6), visit <https://sites.google.com/a/columbiacountyny.com/elections/home>

9. Who can I contact with more questions about the 414 Proposal?

Board of Trustees Treasurer Thornton Lewis at thornton.lewis@gmail.com or 917-208-0412.

10. How can I learn more about the Germantown Library?

- Visit us in person at: 31 Palatine Park Road, Germantown NY, 12526
- Call and write to us at: (518) 537-5800; director@germantownlibrary.org
- Visit us online at: germantownlibrary.org; www.facebook.com/GermantownNYLibrary; www.instagram.com/gtownlib

Anything else?

Remember to flip the ballot over and vote on Germantown Library funding, Tuesday, November 8, 2022!