

SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA

Oakland Township Library Board

Thursday, August 8, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.
Oakland Township Hall, 4393 Collins Road

AGENDA

A CALL TO ORDER

1 Call to Order and Roll Call.

Henry Carels, Shirley Frazier, Mark Gerhard, Marisa Kallie, Michael Tyler

2 Public Comment.

B NEW BUSINESS

1 **M24-04.** A Resolution Submitting Library Service Millage Proposals For The November 5, 2024 General Election. (enclosed).

a. Proposal #1: Renew a previously authorized 20-year millage set to expire following 2025, (now \$0.1143 per \$1,000 of taxable value, Headlee reduced), for a period of twenty (20) years, 2026 – 2045.

b. Proposal #2: Authorize a new millage not to exceed 0.14 mill (\$0.14 per \$1,000 of taxable value, Headlee reduced) for a period of ten (10) years, 2024 – 2033.

C MEMBER OTHER COMMENTS

G ADJOURN

(Next regular meeting: August 22, 2024.)

Look ahead for future meetings: November 14, 2023; January 16, 2025.

Please Note: This meeting notice is posted at this time in order to comply with provisions of Michigan Open Meetings and Election Laws.

*The meeting **will be cancelled** if a library millage proposal, (\$0.39 per \$1,000 of taxable value), currently before the voters of Rochester Hills on the August 6, 2024 primary election is not approved.*

RESOLUTION SUBMITTING
LIBRARY MILLAGE PROPOSALS

LIBRARY BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OAKLAND
County of Oakland, Michigan

Minutes of a special meeting of the Library Board of the Charter Township of Oakland, County of Oakland, Michigan, held on the 8th day of August, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., prevailing Eastern Time.

PRESENT: Trustees _____

ABSENT: Trustees _____

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Trustee _____ and supported by Trustee _____:

WHEREAS, the Library Board of the Charter Township of Oakland (the “Library Board”) has been organized pursuant to Act 164, Public Acts of Michigan, 1877, as amended serving the residents of the Charter Township of Oakland (the “Township”); and

WHEREAS, the Library Board determines that it is necessary for the health and welfare of the Township and its residents that the limitation on taxes which may be imposed each year for library purposes upon taxable property in the Township be increased in an amount not to exceed \$0.1143 per \$1,000 of taxable value (0.1143 mills) for a period of twenty (20) years, commencing in 2026, and \$0.14 per \$1,000 of taxable value (0.14 mills) for a period of ten (10) years, commencing in 2024, on all taxable property in the Township in order to provide funds for library purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The following propositions be submitted to a vote of the qualified electors of the Charter Township of Oakland, County of Oakland, Michigan, at the general election to be held by the Township on Tuesday, November 5, 2024:

Library Millage Proposal #1

As a renewal of previously authorized millage, shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable property in the Charter Township of Oakland, County of Oakland, Michigan, be increased by 0.1143 mill (\$0.1143 per \$1,000 of taxable value) for a period of twenty (20) years, 2026 to 2045, inclusive, for the purpose of providing public library services? It is estimated that this proposal would result in the authorization to collect approximately \$221,810 in tax revenue in the first year, if approved and levied. As administered by the elected Library Board of the Charter Township of Oakland, the revenue collected may continue to be distributed to the Rochester Hills Public Library pursuant to contract.

Library Millage Proposal #2

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable property in the Charter Township of Oakland, County of Oakland, Michigan, be increased by 0.14 mill (\$0.14 per \$1,000 of taxable value) for a period of ten (10) years, 2024 to 2033, inclusive, as new additional millage, for the purpose of providing public library services? It is estimated that this proposal would result in the authorization to collect approximately \$271,684 in tax revenue in the first year, if approved and levied. As administered by the elected Library Board of the Charter Township of Oakland, the revenue collected may continue to be distributed to the Rochester Hills Public Library pursuant to contract.

2. The Secretary is authorized and directed to submit this resolution to the Oakland County Clerk and the clerk of the Township no later than 4:00 p.m. on August 13, 2024.

3. The Secretary is directed to request the clerk of the Township to post and publish notice of registration and of the election in the manner required by law.

4. The Treasurer is hereby directed to pay the costs of publishing and posting the notices required with respect to the submission of the propositions set forth above at the general election.

5. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution are rescinded.

AYES: Trustees _____

NAYS: Trustees _____

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Secretary

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Library Board of the Charter Township of Oakland, County of Oakland, Michigan, at a special meeting held on August 8, 2024, and that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Act.

Secretary

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Memorandum

Date: August 1, 2024

To: Oakland Township Library Board

From: Michael Tyler

Subject: Information about a possible request for an increase in the tax rate in Oakland Township for the library services contracted with Rochester Hills Public Library. (RHPL)

RHPL publishes a monthly online newsletter. The issue for July included several pages discussing and informing readers about the tax increase request that is on the ballot for the August 6th primary in Rochester Hills.

That article focused its attention on the proposal in Rochester Hills, but I thought it also contained a great amount of information relevant to the consideration of a possible tax increase in Oakland Township as well.

RHPL kindly provided me with an editable copy of the article. I have taken the article and: moved some photos and text specific to Rochester Hills to the end, left most of the original text intact, and added some text and exhibits that I thought were particularly relevant to Oakland Township. Hopefully all of the extras are clearly differentiated from the original with the use of fonts, colors, etc. In many cases I also appended my initials, (mpt) as well.

The sources of my information are all public documents available at the local, county and state level plus some basic math.

A New Millage for a New Century

2024 Millage Information

Originally approved in 1924, the library's millage has not increased in over 100 years. A 21st-century library can no longer thrive on a 20th-century millage. To nurture a community that is innovative by nature, RHPL needs a new millage for the next century of service.



Use of the library in our community is high, and is only expected to grow in the future.

In 1924 the library was approximately 1,700 square feet, served a population of 3,870, and circulated 14,543 items annually. Today, the library is just over 75,000 square feet and serves a population of 110,000.

1.5 million items
circulate each year

1,150 visitors
per day

553 new library
cards
net gain each month on
average

97% of patrons
said they would use the
library with the same or
more frequency in the
next five years..

20% increase in use
of eBooks and
eAudiobooks over last
year.

10,049 reservations
for meeting and study
rooms in 2023 and 3,900
reservations made in the
first four months of 2024.

RHPL is asking Rochester Hills residents for a millage increase.

The library was first established in 1924 when the citizens of Avon Township voted to fund the library with 1 mill in perpetuity (that included the Village of Rochester, now the City of Rochester). The millage rate for funding library operations has not increased in over 100 years but has been rolled back as a result of the [Headlee Amendment](#). For the City of Rochester Hills, the rate is currently only .7353. There is no mechanism for raising the rate other than to appeal to the voters for a Headlee override or a millage increase.

The City of Rochester and Oakland Township contract with the library for service and have annual contracts based on the millage rate for Rochester Hills residents.

If voters in Rochester Hills approve a new millage, a proportionate request will be necessary in those communities. (mpt)

Oakland Township has contracted with RHPL for library services in some form since 1967. In 1990 the current arrangement was established: Rochester Hills, Rochester, and Oakland Township would each contribute 1 mill, (\$1.00 per \$1,000), subject to Headlee required reductions. Residents of all three communities receive equal service from the library without regard to where they live. The current total tax rate in Oakland Township is \$0.5744 mills, (\$0.4598 + \$0.1146). (mpt)

What to expect if the millage passes.

- An increased budget for new materials (\$1 million annually) and eMaterials resulting in shorter wait times for popular items.
- Enhanced services, programming, and staffing levels, including more storytimes and a new library app
- Year-round Sunday hours
- Upgrades to the existing fleet of bookmobiles to serve individuals in our 70-square-mile service area and preschool students in local schools

- More storytimes and programming sessions
- Exploration of future projects like adding a cafe as part of library renovations
- A modernized Multipurpose Room with improved sound, lighting, and comfortable seating
- Investment in alternative delivery methods for getting items to patrons faster such as same-day delivery of holds or books by mail
- Investments in critical infrastructure for an aging, 30-year-old building as well as improvements for greater ADA accessibility and environmental sustainability

What to expect if the millage fails.

- Cuts to material and service budgets
- Deferred or delayed critical infrastructure repairs
- Longer wait times and limited availability for popular materials and eBooks
- Possible reduction in staff and operating hours
- Reduced bookmobile service, including the possibility of eliminating service to 24 local preschools
- Additionally, the library will not be able to expand access to a community bookmobile for our 70-square-mile service area. The current van will remain in service, but the library will not be able to return to a full-service bookmobile that allows for patron browsing and a larger collection. If the millage does not pass, the 23-year-old early literacy bus may not be replaced, which would eliminate service to 24 local preschools.

The new proposed rate for Rochester Hills residents is .39 mills for 10 years.

View the chart below to find out how much it will cost based on the taxable value of your home, which is typically half of the market value.

Costs for Rochester Hills Residents				
Taxable Value of Home	Current Annual Cost	Current Monthly Cost	Proposed Additional Annual Cost	Proposed Additional Monthly Cost
\$100,000	\$73.00	\$6.08	\$39.00	\$3.25
\$150,000	\$109.50	\$9.12	\$58.50	\$4.87
\$200,000	\$146.00	\$12.16	\$78.00	\$6.50
\$250,000	\$182.50	\$15.20	\$97.50	\$8.12
\$300,000	\$219.00	\$18.25	\$117.00	\$9.75

The new proposed rate for Oakland Township residents is .14 mills for 10 years.

View the chart below to find out how much it will cost based on the taxable value of your home, which is not more than 50% of its market value and often much less. (In Oakland Township, the taxable value of 47% of homes is less than 40% of their market value.) (mpt)

Costs for 6489 Oakland Township Homeowners						
Taxable Value of Home	Percent of Homes at or Below	Number of Homes at or Below	Current Cost		Maximum Added Cost (at \$0.14/\$1000)	
			Per Year	Per Month	Per Year	Per Month
\$146,000	25%	1713	\$84	\$7	\$21	\$2
\$220,000	50%	3425	\$127	\$11	\$31	\$3
\$325,000	75%	5137	\$187	\$16	\$46	\$4
\$440,000	90%	6165	\$253	\$22	\$62	\$6

(mpt)

How other communities support their library

View the chart below to find out how the Rochester Hills Public Library compares to other communities in size and demographics.

Library Funding Overview					
Library	Population	Operations	Tax Revenue	Per Capita Funding	Total Millage Rate
Birmingham Public Library	37,981	\$5,331,431	\$4,180,640.00	\$110.07	1.31
West Bloomfield Township Public Library	72,613	\$6,522,115	\$5,988,413.00	\$82.47	1.34
Troy Public Library	84,272	\$6,875,700	\$6,644,847.00	\$78.85	1.10
Orion Township Public Library	38,206	\$4,011,000	\$3,009,732.00	\$78.78	1.32
Auburn Hills Public Library	24,360	\$2,440,539	\$1,881,210.00	\$77.23	1.00
Canton Public Library	98,659	\$7,422,205	\$6,955,944.00	\$70.50	1.44
Farmington Community Library	95,583	\$7,340,338	\$6,474,503.00	\$67.74	1.47
Rochester Hills Public Library	109,402	\$5,633,000	\$4,861,970.00	\$44.44	0.73
Romeo District Library*	37,489	\$2,312,859	\$2,289,316	\$61.07	1.0607
Addison Twp. Library*	6,256	\$305,000	\$290,938	\$46.51	0.7190
Oxford Public Library*	22,419	\$1,418,977	\$1,254,150	\$63.98	1.2962

*Source: Most recent, (2023), annual report submitted to the Library of Michigan. (mpt)

If additional Tax Revenue is Approved in Rochester Hills, Rochester, and Oakland Township:

Rochester Hills Public Library	109,402	na	\$7,013,875	\$64.11	Na
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(mpt)

Frequently Asked Questions

How much do Rochester Hills and Oakland Township residents currently pay for library services?

Property taxes are calculated based on the taxable value of a piece of property. The rate by which property is taxed is called a mill. A millage is the amount per \$1,000 of a property's taxable value. To calculate the amount generated from a millage, a homeowner would divide the taxable value of their home by 1,000 and then multiply that sum by the millage rate of a service.

Oakland County sends homeowners assessed and taxable values at the start of the calendar year, but these numbers [can also be found online](#). In Rochester Hills, residents pay .73 per **taxable** thousand dollars. (*In Oakland Township the rate is .5744.*) So using the formula above, a .73 mill tax rate on a home with a **taxable** value of \$100,000 in Rochester Hills would generate \$73 in taxes annually. $((100,000/1,000) \times .73 = \$73)$
 $((\$100,000/1,000) \times .5744 = \$57.44).$

What is the new proposed millage rate?

After a year of assessing infrastructure needs, researching trends in modern libraries, and scrutinizing existing cost-cutting measures, the RHPL Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to propose an increase in the millage rate in Rochester Hills on the August 2024 ballot. The new millage rate is .39 mills for 10 years. If adopted, the new millage will yield appropriately \$64 per capita annually when combined with the existing millage.

In Oakland Township, the new millage rate being requested is .14 mills for 10 years. If approved the new millage rate combined with the existing rate will, like Rochester Hills, also yield about \$64 per capita.(mpt)

Why are only Rochester Hills residents being asked for a new millage?

The City of Rochester and Oakland Township contract with the library for service and have annual contracts based on the millage rate for Rochester Hills residents. If voters in Rochester Hills approve a new millage, a proportionate request will be made to these communities.

Why does RHPL need additional funds?

The Board of Trustees identified three critical issues in need of funding:

- Improvements to and repair of the infrastructure of a 32-year-old building and outdated bookmobile fleet.
- Material and service budgets that are falling out of step with patron requests and modern community and library needs.
- The lack of remaining cost-cutting measures. All avenues have been explored and no further cuts can be made without sacrificing existing services and materials.

How does the RHPL millage compare to what people in other cities and townships pay?

RHPL's millage ranks in the bottom five rates for libraries funded by a millage in Southeast Michigan. The only communities that pay a lower millage rate for library services are Chesterfield Township, Ray Township, Romulus, and Lincoln Park. Even if a new, additional millage is approved, RHPL's rate will still be in the middle of the range for libraries funded from a dedicated millage.

What has already been cut?

The Library Board has kept a tight rein on the library's funds, strategically cutting and avoiding major impacts to services for the public and finding other sources of revenue to make up for losses:

2010 - 2019

- Froze staff wages for 3 years
- Cut the library's retirement contribution by 40%
- Cut back staff health care plans (medical, prescription, and dental)
- Cut budgets for supplies and specialized consulting
- Reupholstered existing furniture and relaminated existing study tables

2020 - present

- Reduced staff from 135 positions to 105
- Outsourced a 5-person custodial department to a nightly cleaning service
- Eliminated 2.5 full-time equivalent positions with benefits (did not replace)
- Deferred furniture upgrades by acquiring second-hand furniture disposed of from other libraries
- Redesigned and coded website with internal team (did not outsource)
- Developed in-house strategic plan to defray fees for research, surveys, metrics, and tracking tools
- Managed major IT and facilities projects with internal team to eliminate consulting and installation fees
- Eliminated or rebid service contracts (maintenance services, internet providers, suppliers, etc.)
- Maintained garden landscapes with volunteer gardeners at no cost to taxpayers
- Deferred replacement of the Community Bookmobile with the purchase of a small utility van to transport materials with abbreviated service
- Eliminated a long-term care insurance benefit for staff
- Installed LED lighting with internal team to reduce utility costs
- The library had to downsize the original, full-size community bookmobile to operate within the current budget. The early literacy bus was purchased preowned to save money and is a 2001 model - which means the bus is now 23 years old and beyond the end of life for a commercial vehicle.

Why did the library not save more for replacement costs?

When a commercial building reaches age 15-20, the wear and tear of thousands of people using it daily starts to take a toll, and high-use items need to be replaced. This occurred around the year 2010 for Rochester Hills Public Library. 2010 was coincidentally when the worst recession since the Great Depression hit families and property values hard. From 2008 – 2014 housing values, and subsequently property values, plummeted. This directly affected the library as 86% of the budget is funded with property taxes. The Board cut what it could and prioritized general maintenance and upkeep of the library, and years of reinvestment were delayed or deferred. When critical updates were needed and could not be delayed, such as repairing a sinkhole in the west parking lot or reupholstering threadbare chairs, the library used accumulated savings. There simply isn't enough revenue surplus generated from the current property tax mechanism to operate the library and pay for major infrastructure needs – namely a new roof, new heating and cooling system, parking lot renovation, and new elevator.

Are your finances well managed?

Audits and financial information for the past three years are posted on the [Board of Trustees page of the RHPL website](#). RHPL includes monthly financial statements as part of the [RHPL Trustee board packet](#) to make all transactions as transparent as possible. Financial audits are conducted annually by varying firms and for a decade have all yielded the same result – clean financial accounting and records management.

Who uses the library; is it still relevant?

Use of the library in our community is high, and is only expected to grow in the future:

- RHPL has over 1,000 visitors every day
- In a 2024 survey of patrons, 97% indicated they would use the library with the same or more frequency in the next five years
- 553 new library cards are issued each month on average
- Demand for electronic materials such as eBooks and eAudiobooks has grown substantially (20% increase in use over last year)
- Demand for meeting and study rooms has exploded, resulting in 10,049 reservations in 2023, and 3,900 reservations in the first four months of 2024

RHPL is funded mainly through property taxes.



- 86% Property Tax
- 6% Donations & gifts
- 5% Oakland County contribution
- 2% State of Michigan
- 1% Fines & miscellaneous income



The library board has saved money and avoided major impacts on services and programming by deferring updates to the library. Library furniture (seen in its original upholstery in 1970) has been reupholstered and study tables have been re-laminated.



The library building is over 30 years old and needs crucial repairs and updates to meet ADA compliance and modernization.

Election day is Tuesday, August 6.

In Rochester Hills, early voting will be held from Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4 at Rochester Hills Public Library. Hours will be 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., except Thursday, when the hours will be 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

For information about polling locations, voter registration, and detailed ballot information, [visit the elections information page on the city of Rochester Hills website.](#)

Ballot Language:

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable property within the City of Rochester Hills, County of Oakland, Michigan, be increased by \$0.39 per thousand dollars (0.39 mills) of the taxable value on all taxable property in the City of Rochester Hills for a period of ten (10) years, beginning in the year 2024 and ending in the year 2033, inclusive, as new additional millage for the purpose of providing library funds for the Rochester Hills Public Library? It is estimated that 0.39 mills would raise approximately \$1,724,195 when first levied with the December 1, 2024 levy.