

Scenic Regional Library budget: 10 percent less revenue expected

Board of Trustee members of Scenic Regional Library on Dec. 15 approved its 2010 operating budget for the three-county system with nearly 11 percent less in spending planned for the coming year.

The total operating budget for the library system that serves the Franklin, Gasconade and Warren county library districts is \$2,081,883. This is an overall decrease of 10.92 percent from the 2009 budget, according to Kenneth Rohrbach, director of the system which includes a facility in Owensville.

"The budget is based upon the library system's estimated income for 2010," noted Rohrbach in his report. "Included is an estimated \$1,792,599 from the operating tax levied in each county library district served by the regional library system."

Anticipated receipts are \$1,231,169 from the Franklin County Library District, \$200,865 from Gasconade County, and \$360,565 from Warren County.

"These estimates are based on historical trends and when actual assessed valuation figures are released, reductions in the anticipated receipts as well as projected expenditures may be required," his report states.

The major drop in income came from a court-ordered reduction of the Franklin County levy from 9.11 cents to 7.58 cents. This represented a 16.7 percent decrease in revenue — or a projected \$242,233.

"Further budget adjustments will be necessary after the final disposition of lawsuits involving the Franklin County Library District's tax levy," Rohrbach stated.

Other estimated receipts included in the operating budget are: \$33,900 from surtax; \$2,150 from intangible taxes; and \$34,000 in interest with \$16,500 of that interest remaining with the reserve funds.

Also budgeted is \$45,400 in "miscellaneous income," which includes payments for lost/damaged materials, video fines, copy machine receipts, book sales and donations.

State Aid to Public Libraries is expected to be \$63,864 and is determined by the population of the three county library districts based on census data from 2000. No revenue from state equalization funds, or the out-of-state Athletes and Entertainers Tax, has been budgeted.

Funds Forward is budgeted at \$85,084, which includes end of the year operating bank balances, petty cash, and gift/endowment funds.

The total amount budgeted for the three county library system is \$2,081,883. The 2009 budget total was \$2,337,022.

"The reduced budget will impact services in a number of ways," Rohrbach cautioned library users. "Fewer materials will be purchased, specialized databases may be discontinued, expansion and improvement of facilities will be postponed, children's and adult programming will be restricted, equipment upgrades will be delayed and new initiatives to provide service to under-served populations will be curtailed."

For 2010, the "Materials" section of the budget has been dropped by 20.34 percent — down to \$495,829. Of this amount, \$249,829 has been earmarked for the purchase of books; \$75,000 for videos, DVDs, compact discs, recorded books and downloadable books; and \$16,500 for magazines and newspaper subscriptions for the seven libraries in the regional system.

Other expenditures in this section include \$100,500 for printed reference materials and on-line databases that may be accessed at the libraries as well as remotely from home or businesses. The remaining \$8,000 is for purchase of local newspapers on microfilm.