RESPONSE TO LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD PETITION FOR A FINE-FREE LIBRARY

Susan Brown, Director Meeghan Rosen, Assistant Director



Recognizing that the Town Council is committed to social equity, and recognizing that the Board has considered this issue over multiple meetings and agrees with the American Library Association that Library fines represent a social equity issue, we present this petition for your review. Please find below several reasons that have led the Board to this recommendation.

First, while the initial motivation for library fines was well-considered, over time those same fines have become a barrier to equal access to Library materials. Fines have a disparate effect on citizens who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, by limiting borrowing privileges and access to those who cannot pay exercise fines.

Library Advisory Board Petition to Council

Second, fines represent a meager portion of the Chapel Hill Library and total Town budget, limiting the impact of moving to a file 1 1/2 10 12 1

Third, we offer that the fine-free model is being adopted by both national and North Carolina libraries, because fundamentally, fines do little (if anything) to deter people from returning Library materials late. New York, Chicago, Detroit and many others have moved to the fine-free model. Within in our own state, Wake, Hickory, Robeson County and Gibsonville are already (or about to be) fine-free. Libraries across the country have found that late fees and fines are not incentives to bring materials back but do serve as major barriers to access. These same libraries who have gone fine-free have seen a positive impact on borrowing.

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD PETITION

- √ Fines as social equity issue
 - American Library Association (ALA) statement
- ✓ Fines as barrier to access
 - Disparate effect on economically disadvantaged
- √ Fines as small portion of overall budget
 - Decreasing revenue from overdue fines
- ✓ National and state trend of fine-free model
 - Ineffective as incentive/disincentive
 - Impact of adopting fine-free model

Whereas monetary fines present an economic partier to dec Whereas there is mounting evidence that indicates eliminating fines increases library card

nate a barrier in public relations, and absorb valuable staff time adoption and library usage;

2018-2019 ALA CD# 38 (Rev. 1/27)

Resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequality. American Library Association

Social Equity

Rights, ALA states "All library policies and procedures, particularly those involving Whereas in Economic Barriers to Information Access, An other user charges, should be scrutinized for potential barriers to access; Whereas libraries will need to take determined and pragmatic action to dismantle practices of

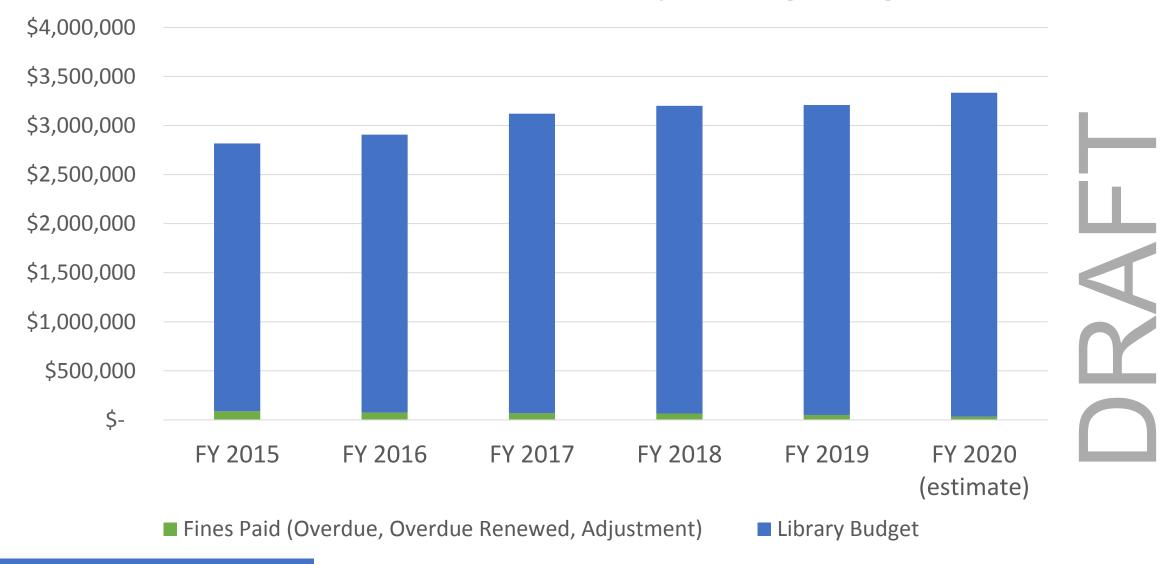
aries of all types are responsive to bodies, be they school districts, boards of trustees, college and university administration, or government entities and therefore need to

blata make the case to those bodies about eliminating fines; and

the core mission of the modern library; now,

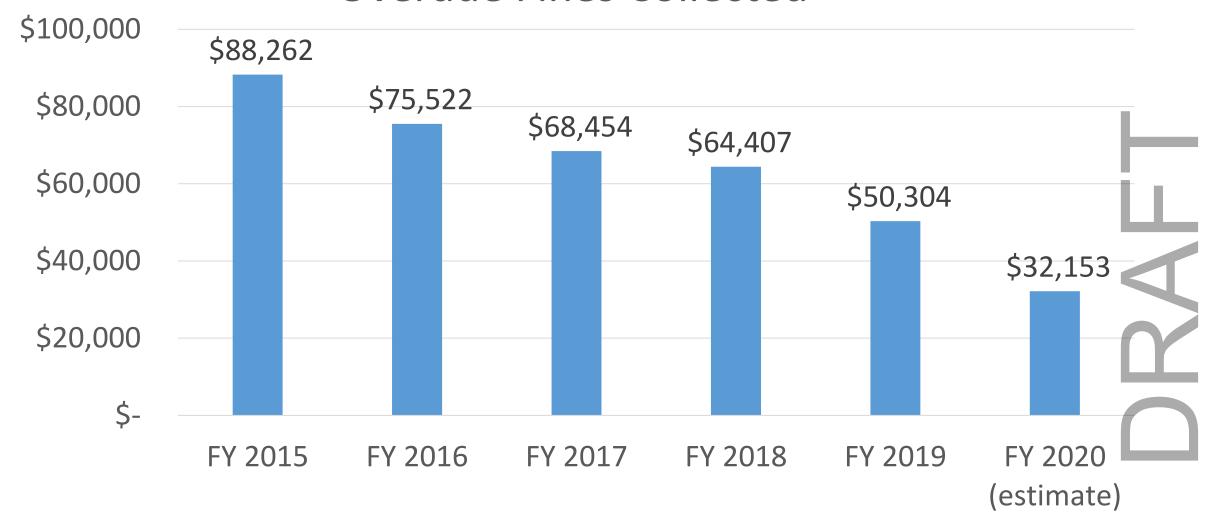
Library Fines Hotspot Analysis: Areas of Clustering of High and Low Fine Amounts Confidence scores are an indication of the degree of certainty that the observed pattern is not random. Hot and cold spots are locations where there is at least a 90% confidence level that location-specific conditions are influencing the observed clustering pattern. Spatial Clusters: Library Fines Confidence Cold Spot - 99% Confidence Cold Spot - 95% Confidence Cold Spot - 90% Confidence Not Significant Hot Spot - 90% Confidence Hot Spot - 95% Confidence Hot Spot - 99% Confidence Popular Demographics in the United States 2018 Average Household Income (Esri) ≤ \$50,000 ≤ \$75,000 Barrier to Access ≤ \$115,000 ≤ \$175,000 ≤ \$322,580 Thina (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap Corporate Limits itors, and the GIS User Community Town of Chapel Hill Enterprise Miles Carrboro Corporate Limits

Overdue Fines as Portion of Operating Budget



Percentage of Budget

Overdue Fines Collected



WAKE COUNTY

Got an overdue library book? Why Wake County won't fine you for being late

BY ANNA JOHNSON

JANUARY 04. 2020 04:37 PM

LA Libraries Will Stop Charging Late Fees And Forgive Your Past-Due Sins

BY RYAN FONSECA IN NEWS ON DECEMBER 13, 2019 12:30 PM

Got a fine for overdue books? Philly libraries will soon forgive them

By Aaron Moselle · December 11, 2019

National/Local Trend

Chicago Public Library became the largest system to eliminate late fees, a move that will increase access for low-income families. Will more libraries follow?

Brockville Fine Free Libraries Map Augus Montpelier Kingston on Public Library www.urbanlibraries.org/member-resources/fine-free-map Portl County of Brant Public Library Onondaga County Public Libraries Manchester C M Verona Public Elbrary Grand Apids Kent District Library Lor London Public Library Racine Public Libraryinsing Cromaine Hartland Library Ulysses Philomathic Library Cedar Falls Public Library Galesburg-Charleston Memorial District Library Hiawatha Public Library Cass District Library Simsbury Public Library Iowa City Public Library Lansing Public Library Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System Oak Bl Grafton-Midview Public Library Floyd Memorial Libra The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library Stark County District Library Millburn Free Public Library Pitts Wilkinsburg Public Library Harrisburg Vespasian Warner Public Library District Iren ton Southwest Public Libraries Camden County Library System In dianapolis Frederick County Public Library Owen County Public Library Chillicothe & Ross County Public Library Cincinnati Anne Arundel County Public Library Daniel Boone Regional Library Washington Pendleton County Public Library efferson St. Louis Public Library City Culpeper County Library Charleston Evansville-Vanderburgh Public Library Richmond Suffolk Public Library

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Nashington County Library

Knoxville

Caruthersville Public Library

Greensboro

Rale NWake County Public Libraries

Lost library materials and lost library users returned

Materials still come back

Removing barriers does not equate removing responsibility

Library budgets not reduced

Topic	Number
Total Patrons	75,330
Patrons who owe no money	59,123
Patrons who owe money	16,207
Median amount owed	\$5.75
Sum of fines owed	\$254,847.69

CHPL Facts

Thoughts? Comments? Questions?



