

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE CINCINNATI AND
HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Date: April 15, 2025

Meeting: Regular

Place: Main Library

REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Trustees Present: Ms. Allen, Mr. Harding, Ms. Louis, Mr. Olson,
and Ms. Redden.

Trustees Absent: Mr. Hendon and Ms. Reynolds

Present: Paula Brehm-Heeger, Kathy Bach, Molly
DeFosse, Staci Dennison, Kyla Hardin,
Michelle Matthews, and Holbrook Sample

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Olson recommended the following:

2026 BUDGET

The Hamilton County Budget Commission has allowed the Library to file modified tax budgets since fiscal year 2005, with the understanding that ongoing approval is subject to annual review. A request to submit a modified 2026 budget was submitted to the Budget Commission on March 18, 2025 and approved at their meeting the same day.

The Library is required to submit its annual budget to Hamilton County by May 31, 2025. The proposed

2026 operating budget balances current funding expectations, current operating costs, and capital project plans. The capital budget has been constructed on the basis of need – that is, what is needed to fund top priorities for capital building and improvement projects as identified in the Facility Master Plan. The 2026 appropriations presented at the December 2025 board meeting will be based on the actual anticipated revenue and operations as of that time.

- **Approve the 2026 Operating Budget and Capital Budget as follows:**

OPERATING BUDGET

The proposed general fund operating budget of \$89,015,600 is approximately 6.0% greater than the original 2025 appropriations. This includes allowances for increases to salary costs for the annual merit increase and annualized planned staffing modifications to align with service needs. The budget also accounts for slight increases in other categories of expenditure in support of the strategic plan of the Library.

Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library 2026

	<u>General Fund</u>	
	2025	2026
Beginning Balance	33,691,190.28	30,691,190.28
Public Library Fund	50,406,974.00	63,699,595.00
Local Tax Levy	53,259,450.00	53,259,450.00
Subtotal	103,666,424.00	116,959,045.00
Other Library Revenue	2,083,576.00	2,515,364.72
Total Receipts	105,750,000.00	119,474,409.72
Operating Expenditure	83,750,000.00	89,015,600.00
Transfers Out	25,000,000.00	59,000,000.00
Total Expenditure	108,750,000.00	148,015,600.00
Ending Balance	30,691,190.28	2,150,000.00
Less Contingency	-	2,150,000.00
Available Balance	30,691,190.28	-

CAPITAL BUDGET

The capital budget includes the remaining anticipated projects identified in the Facility Master Plan released in January 2020 for projects between 2026 – 2028 (costs updated for current estimates).

Intended use of 2026 Funding:

PROJECT		Estimate
Lifecycle Repair and Maintenance		30,207,220
Land acquisition		3,000,000
Symmes Township	Renovation, addition and maintenance	2,000,000
College Hill	Replacement with New, Expansion	6,000,000
Main Library	9th St and HVAC Updates	2,000,000
Avondale	Additional Maintenance	1,500,000
Elmwood Place	Makeover	700,000
Delhi Township	Replacement with New, Expansion	18,500,000
		63,907,220

CONTINGENCIES

The budget reserves two contingencies – a \$2,150,000 operating contingency (3%) in the General Fund and a \$2,000,000 capital contingency in the Building and Repair Fund.

FUNDING – CARRYFORWARD & REQUIRED NEW FUNDING

The General Fund expects to end 2025 with approximately \$30.7 million of available funding. To fund the 2026 budget, the Library will need intergovernmental revenue of almost \$117 million. The source of that revenue is the Public Library Fund and local property taxes. For budget purposes, property tax receipts for 2026 are estimated at \$53,259,450. This is approximately the amount expected for 2025. The balance of the intergovernmental revenue, \$63,699,595, is being requested from the Public Library Fund. We recognize that this is likely much greater than the revenue we are likely to receive but our ongoing facility needs remain greater than our resources.

COCHRAN FUND

As shared in the past, the Library has 44 permanent funds that have specific restrictions for purchases. These funds range from a little over \$1400 to over \$2.7 million in principle balances with 2 funds representing 60% of the total \$6.773 M and a total of 4 funds representing 80% of the balance.

The Cochran Fund with a principle balance of \$12,000 was established in 1944 to benefit international travel for staff training/conferences with oversight by the Library Board of Trustees. The Staff Association was named to manage the process for staff to access the grants from the fund. The donor's request was the awards be for a minimum of \$150 and a maximum of \$500.

Over the last 25 years, this fund has been used 1 time – in 2006 for \$187. The current available balance to spend is a little over \$20,000. This year, we have an opportunity to use these resources when the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director attends a conference in Denmark. Given this rare opportunity, we would like to utilize the fund. Given the cost of inflation since 1944, the minimum of \$150 would be \$2681 in 2025 dollars and the maximum of \$500 would be \$8937 in 2025 dollars. Taking a conservative approach to maintain a healthy balance in the expendable funds, we recommend the following:

- **Authorize adjusting the minimum grant amount from \$150 to \$1500 and the maximum grant**

amount from \$500 to \$4000 in the Cochran Fund.

The application for the funding will be coordinated with Staff Association.

2025 BRANCH MAINTENANCE – MT. WASHINGTON BRANCH, MARIEMONT BRANCH AND OAKLEY BRANCH AND REPLACEMENT OF SHARONVILLE CHILLER

We are wrapping up the construction documents for each of these maintenance projects and work is expected to commence in the next few months. Given the system wide impact of closing three branches at the same time, we have evaluated the need for a temporary space for at least one of the locations. Given that Mt. Washington has the longest planned closure and the most extensive amount of work, along with the fact that there is a viable affordable option in the area, we will be entering into a lease for temporary space within 2/10th of a mile of the current branch. The overall cost of the lease is expected to be less than \$60,000 and will be factored into the project costs.

We have also worked with Turner to treat these branches as one maintenance project to maximize efficiency and streamline costs.

- **Authorize the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director to modify the Branch Renovation and Replacement 2022-2027 agreement (along with necessary change orders subsequently reported for confirmation) with Turner Construction via GMP amendment subject to owner and attorney review as follows:**

GMP inclusive of CMR fee and CMR contingency equal to or less than \$5,300,000 with a project budget of \$7,650,000 (which includes an owner contingency of approximately 8.5%) detailed below:

2025 BRANCH IMPROVEMENTS

Mt. Washington Branch GMP cost inclusive of fee	\$	2,000,000.00
Oakley Branch GMP cost inclusive of fee	\$	1,000,000.00
Mariemont Branch GMP cost inclusive of fee	\$	1,500,000.00
Sharonville Chiller GMP cost inclusive of fee	\$	800,000.00
Total Turner	\$	5,300,000.00
Owner costs estimated(design fees, permits, and furniture)	\$	1,750,000.00
Design Fees and consultants - combined	\$	550,000.00
Furniture and Equipment - combined	\$	1,000,000.00
Other expenses - combined	\$	200,000.00
Contingency	\$	600,000.00
	\$	7,650,000.00

Ms. Allen seconded.

Voting for the motion: Ms. Allen, Mr. Harding, Ms. Louis, Mr. Olson, Ms. Redden...5 ayes. The motion

carried. (05-2025).

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Prior to the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director's Report, Mr. Harding and Ms. Redden spoke about participating in the advocacy events in Columbus related to the budget.

EVA JANE ROMAINE COOMBE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Brehm-Heeger reported that:

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATES AND ACTIVITIES

Library Legislative Day at the Ohio Statehouse

On Tuesday, April 8, several hundred library staff members, administrators and trustees met in Columbus to advocate on behalf of Ohio's public libraries at the Ohio Library Council Legislative Day. Library supporters spent the morning listening to briefings including opening comments by Governor DeWine and First Lady Fran DeWine. Governor DeWine stated that "libraries are the heart of our communities." CHPL staff members Carrie Ratterman and Drew Pearson were part of the "Library Showcase" for peers and legislators, highlighting our services for seniors and those suffering from dementia and memory impairment. Senior Leaders Michelle Matthews and Holbrook Sample joined Government Relations Coordinator Rae Vuic, Trustee Diane Cunningham Redden, Board President Christopher A. Harding and me in meeting and talking with our Hamilton County legislators as well Senate leadership.

State Budget House Bill (HB) 96

The Ohio House of Representatives voted to approve HB 96 on Wednesday, April 9. This Bill differs significantly in its approach to Public Library funding than the Budget previously introduced by Governor DeWine. HB 96 moves the Public Library Fund (PLF) from being a percentage of the overall General Revenue Fund (GRF) to a line-item in the budget. Additionally, the Governor's Budget increased the PLF to 1.75% of the GRF (up from the current 1.7%) which was projected to provide \$531.7 million in FY26 and \$549.1 million in FY27, representing a projected increase in public library funding from the state. HB 96 provides \$490 million in FY26 and \$500 million FY27.

Virtual Meetings House Bill (HB) 257

HB 257, which authorizes certain public bodies (including public libraries) to hold virtual and/or hybrid meetings, officially became law on April 9, 2025. This allows for the option to hold board meetings virtually or in a hybrid format by video conference. The law requires the public body to adopt a policy prior to having a virtual meeting. The law also stipulates certain restrictions on virtual or hybrid meetings if they involve a vote to approve a major nonroutine expenditure, significant hiring decisions, or a vote on a tax issue. We will provide recommendations to the Board in the coming months for

consideration should we decide to move forward with the option. The new law does not require this option, it simply allows us to do so.

MAY OHIO LIBRARY LEVIES

Thirteen public library systems around the state will have levy issues on the May 6th ballot. The issues include: 8 renewals, 2 replacements; 2 additional/new; and 1 bond

INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM & LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS) FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATE

President Trump recently issued an Executive Order (EO) regarding the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). As a result of this EO, the State Library of Ohio has indicated that all IMLS staff were placed on administrative leave and as such, the State Library does not believe anyone is available to process federal IMLS funding or offer guidance on the grants managed with IMLS Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds. The State Library has temporarily paused the disbursement of LSTA grants. Our State Library relies on IMLS funds to provide programs, grants, and services for libraries of all types. In late March, Deputy Secretary of Labor Keith E. Sonderling was sworn in as Acting Director of the IMLS.

ANNUAL STAFF RECOGNITION EVENT

Our staff recognition celebration will be on Sunday, May 18 from 5:30 – 8 p.m. at the Main Library. We are inviting current staff, retirees, Library Trustees, and their families to celebrate with us this year. Thanks to our dedicated members of the Staff Recognition Team for ensuring we have this opportunity to celebrate our great staff! Thanks, too, for the support of the Foundation in ensuring we have great refreshments for our event.

CINCINNATI STATE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM GRADUATION

The first cohort of staff will be graduating from the Cincinnati State Technical and Community College Community Leadership Certificate Program on April 17th. Congratulations!

YEAR IN REVIEW VIDEOS

Thanks to 2024 Board President Gregory W. Olson for introducing CHPL's Year In Review video of 2024 highlights for our Library, available at https://youtu.be/51vFi8Ksuko?si=_yA7FfcROCbGLuJl

PRESENTATION AT NEXT LIBRARY CONFERENCE

Thanks to funds available through the Cochran Fund, a long-standing fund created through a donation made in the 1940s that is specifically designed to support staff international travel, I have the opportunity to present at the *Next Library* conference in Aarhus, Denmark at the end of May. This event features forward-thinking library leaders from across the globe presenting services and ideas that support learning in the 21st century. My co-presenter will be Daniel LaRossa from Group4 Architecture, Research & Planning, the firm CHPL worked with on our FMP. Mr. LaRossa was central to the redesign of our Main Library, including the social stairs.

FACILITIES AND FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Redden reported that:

PROPERTY ACQUISITION – 1609 W NORTH BEND ROAD

Subsequent to the February 2025 Board of Trustees meeting, representatives from College Hill CURC presented an updated purchase sale agreement to the Library. The updated agreement includes the following modifications to the terms of the LOI:

- Additional language regarding the AS IS condition of the property
- Right of First Refusal. In the event Purchaser intends to sell, transfer, or otherwise dispose of the property, Seller shall have the right of first refusal to purchase the property at a price equivalent to 100% of the market value of the property. Seller shall have 90 (ninety) days to show proof of funds for the purchase.
- Restricted Use or Conditional Deed. Purchaser agrees to utilize the property solely for purposes consistent with community, educational, or library objectives.

In addition, they have requested a good faith commitment that the Library will complete the project within two years of successful closing. Given the uncertainty of the state funding beginning July 1, 2025, no action will be taken on this property at this time.

2024 AUDIT

For the first time in several years, the Auditor of State has outsourced our audit to a third party – Julian and Grube (this is a common practice on a periodic basis and we participated in the selection process last fall). The work has recently commenced and will continue over the next few months. The Local Government Services (LGS) unit of the Auditor of State's Office is assisting the Library with our Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

MAIN LIBRARY PROJECT UPDATE

We continue our work with Champlin Architecture and Turner on façade concepts to refresh the 9th Street exterior and provide a clear design connection between the two buildings. We hope to have a direction by the June 2025 Board meeting.

The issue with the public art on the south plaza has been resolved. A few punch list items remain and we are working to remedy these items as quickly as possible.

CHEVIOT BRANCH ACCESSIBILITY, MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION

On the exterior, the masonry work is complete. The site work is expected to be complete soon which includes sidewalks, curbs, paving and landscaping. On the interior, finishes are being completed in

anticipation of the shelving and furniture delivery once the temporary certificate of occupancy is received.

We are working towards the opening on May 10, 2025.

SYMMES TOWNSHIP BRANCH RENOVATION AND ADDITION

The majority of the geothermal wells have been completed. The concrete foundation is complete and underground line installation is ongoing. The masonry contractor and the site contractor have mobilized and more significant structural work is getting started.

Additionally, the children's play element design is almost complete.

AVONDALE BRANCH MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION

We held a very well attended community engagement session on March 27, 2025. During the session, the community expressed their strong need for a temporary space as well as an interest in a makerspace. We are exploring the temporary space options that several local partners have brought to us.

We are continuing with the construction documents and plan to incorporate a flexible space for the makerspace area. The community also weighed in on the direction for the new accessible front entry.

MIAMI TOWNSHIP BRANCH REPLACEMENT

The Library held a community engagement in Miami Township on April 3, 2025 to discuss the status of the project along with gathering feedback for plans for the branch. There were over 30 people in attendance who provided great input on the future Library.

The design process will begin in the second half of 2025 with hopes of construction beginning in 2026. The current project budget, exclusive of the property acquisition, is \$6,500,000. We will be working with SHP and Turner on this project.

DELHI BRANCH REPLACEMENT PLANNING

The Library will hold a community engagement in Delhi Township on April 10, 2025 to discuss the status of the project along with gathering feedback for plans for the branch.

The design process will begin in the second half of 2025 with hopes of construction beginning in late 2026. The current project budget \$18,000,000. We will be working with J.S. Held, SHP and Turner on this project.

FOREST PARK BRANCH

We successfully closed on the former branch on Waycross in mid-March and transferred the property to the City of Forest Park.

We are working on obtaining the project close out documentation.

MT. HEALTHY BRANCH REPLACEMENT

We are working on obtaining the project close out documentation.

EXTERIOR SIGN UPDATE

The second round of the exterior signage updates was recently completed. It included Corryville, Harrison, Mariemont, Northside, Reading, Sharonville, West End and Westwood.

We are getting ready to start a small third phase which will include Cheviot, North Central, Covedale and Norwood.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Allen reported that:

DREW PEARSON, MANAGER, PROGRAMS & EVENTS DEPARTMENT

Drew Pearson is the Programs & Events Manager, bringing nearly 30 years of experience to the library system. He earned his Master of Library and Information Science from Kent State University in 2003. Throughout his career, he has held a variety of roles, including Children's Librarian at the Mt. Healthy Branch, before transitioning into management. With 17 years of leadership experience, Drew has served as the Avondale Branch Manager, Bond Hill Branch Manager, and spent 11 years as the Outreach Services Manager. In his current role, he oversees system-wide programming, spaces and events, and key literacy initiatives, including the Winter Checkout Challenge and Summer Reading Program. Through strategic planning and collaboration, Drew works to enhance library services, foster community engagement, and create meaningful experiences for customers across the system.

Drew discussed the objectives of his department and upcoming projects and events.

LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP WITH ADOPT A CLASS

The Library is proud to partner with Adopt A Class (AAC) to support students through mentorship, literacy enrichment, and community engagement. This year, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) adopted two 5th-grade classes at Saylor Park Elementary, visiting monthly to provide library resources, read stories, and lead enrichment activities. In addition, the Library has worked with AAC leadership to bring students to the Main Library for field trips, including special author visits, offering valuable exposure to literature and learning opportunities. This is a valuable opportunity for us to reach young people in one of the few areas identified in our FMP as not having a Library location as close as is typical for most of Hamilton County.

AAC recognized the Library's impact, stating: "Thank you for being a 2024-25 Adopt A Class partner! Because of you, 5,600 students (K-8th grade) participated in our AAC Community Experiences this school year—almost 60% of our program!" Recent field trips welcomed students from Academy of World Languages, Lincoln Heights Elementary, Oyler, Rockdale, Saylor Park, and Woodford, further reinforcing the Library's role as a community resource for education and enrichment.

EXPANSION OF LIBRARY POLLING LOCATIONS

The Library is pleased to announce the addition of two new polling locations at our Anderson and Delhi branches as part of our contract with the Board of Elections. With these additions, a total of 18 Library locations will now serve as polling places, reinforcing our commitment to supporting the democratic process and ensuring accessible voting opportunities for our community. By expanding our role in local elections, the Library continues to provide a trusted, welcoming space for civic engagement.

CINCINNATI ENQUIRER PHOTO ARCHIVE DIGITIZATION UPDATE

As noted in the February 13, 2024 board report, the Library now offers over 11,000 digitized images from the Cincinnati Enquirer Photo Archive through our Digital Library. This collection, which includes more than 1 million photographs taken by Enquirer staff photographers between 1945 and 2005, represents a significant historical resource for our community. Each digitized image is enriched with detailed metadata, including subject headings, ensuring easy discoverability for customers searching for specific content. Additionally, customer requests drive digitization priorities, making this an interactive and user-focused initiative.

FAMILYSEARCH AFFILIATE LIBRARY STATUS

The Library is now a FamilySearch.org Affiliate Library, expanding access to valuable genealogy resources for our customers. As an affiliate, customers can explore a broader range of historical records and genealogical materials that are otherwise restricted to FamilySearch partner locations. This enhanced access is available on Library computers or through Library Wi-Fi on personal devices, ensuring flexibility for researchers. FamilySearch.org is a widely recognized free genealogy platform, offering more than 6 billion searchable names and 2 billion historic records, making it an essential tool for those exploring their family history.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

April 25 – Stuffed Animal Sleepover, Wyoming Branch

April 26 – Ballet and Books series, Walnut Hills Branch

April 30 – Spring Literacy Fair, Clifton Branch

May 6 – Cybersecurity Training for Ohio Small Businesses and Non-Profits, Forest Park and Downtown Main Library

May 28 – So You Think You Know Cincinnati Baseball, Miami Township Branch

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Olson and Holbrook Sample reported that:

DIGITAL STRATEGY: CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

As previously reported, Technology and Logistics is working to develop a Digital Strategy that will help guide decisions in this important area over the next one to three years. To craft this strategy, we are reviewing three areas of our digital portfolio that are under pressure due to costs and demand:

- Integrated Library System (ILS/Sierra)

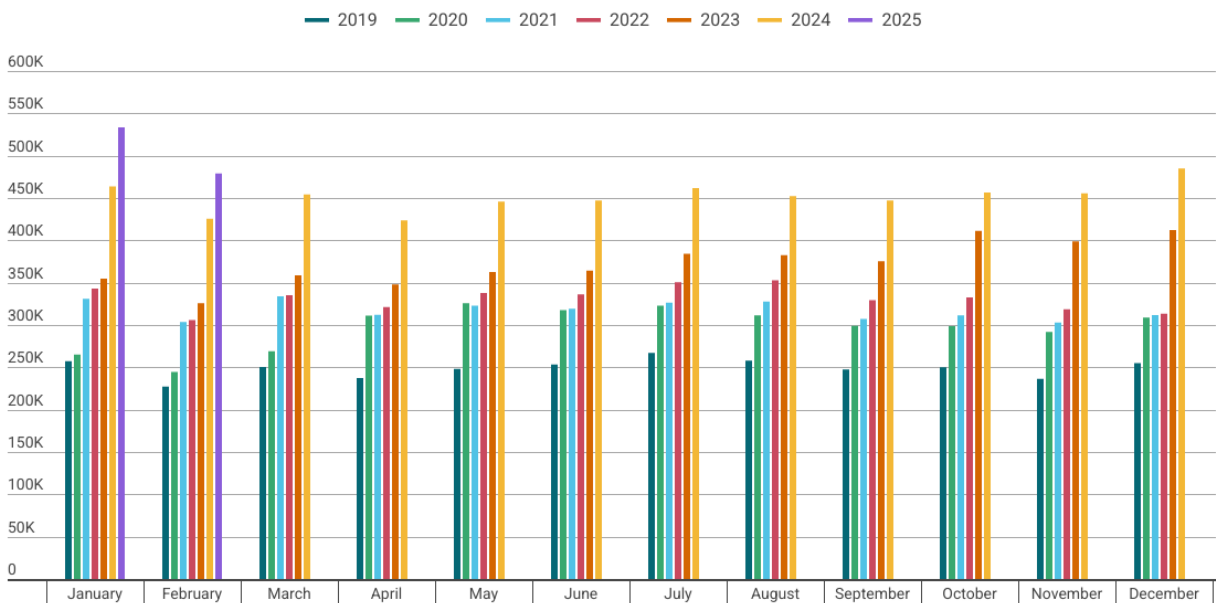
- Digital material (eBook and eAudiobook) vendors/suppliers such as Hoopla, Libby and Freegal
- Research databases
- For context, we are also highlighting the spending on physical materials such as print, DVDs and CDs

Growing costs, and the increasing use of digital materials, particularly the exponential growth of eBooks and eAudiobooks, coupled with the complexity of publisher/producers' terms that control how we can offer our users access to eMaterials, have significantly challenged public libraries' ability to meet demand in a sustainable way. It is also a challenge to effectively communicate to our community why their digital checkouts are not instantaneously available and that often they have to wait for holds on digital items.

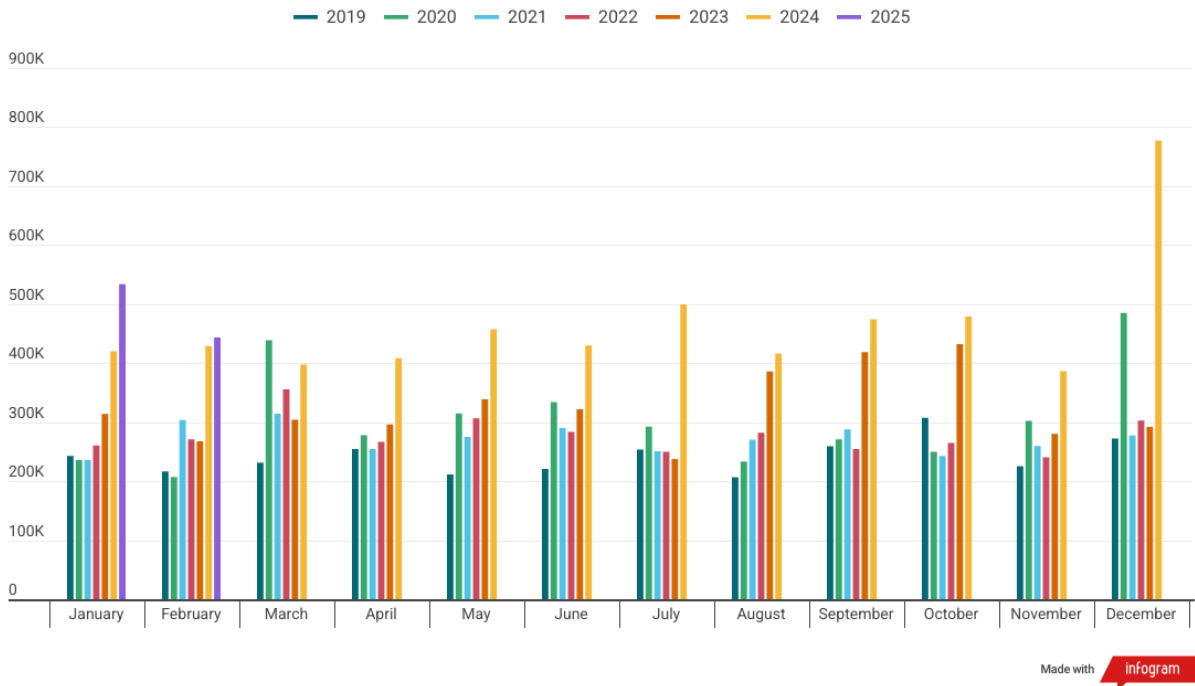
The appetite for digital materials has grown as evidenced by:

- In 2015, the whole of CHPL's materials budget was \$8,450,000.
 - Of that, \$1.5 million went to digital materials like Hoopla and Overdrive.
 - There were a million digital checkouts by the end of October, 2015.
- In 2025, the whole of CHPL's materials budget is \$13,500,000.
 - Of that, \$4.3 million will go to just Overdrive and Hoopla
 - We already hit a million digital checkouts in February.

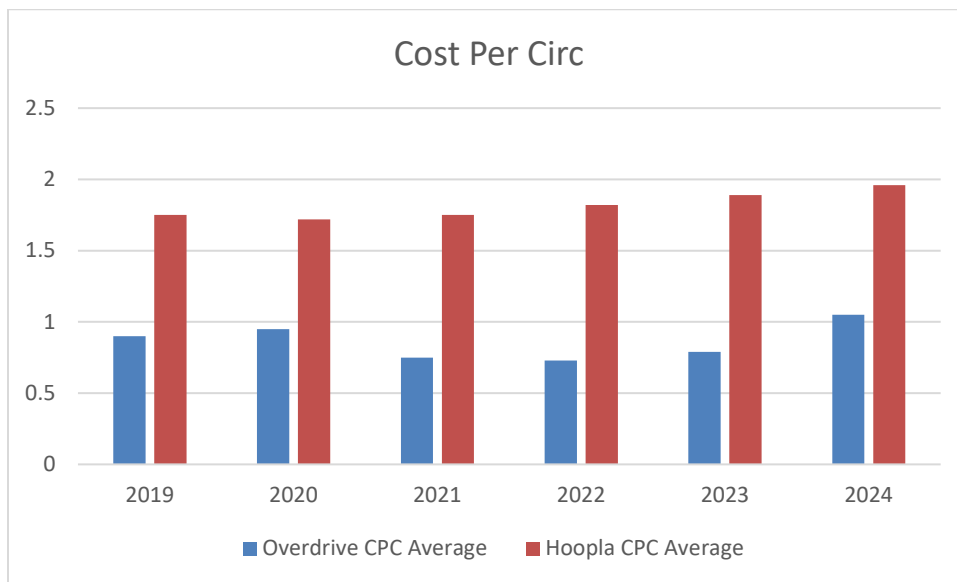
Overdrive and Hoopla Checkouts



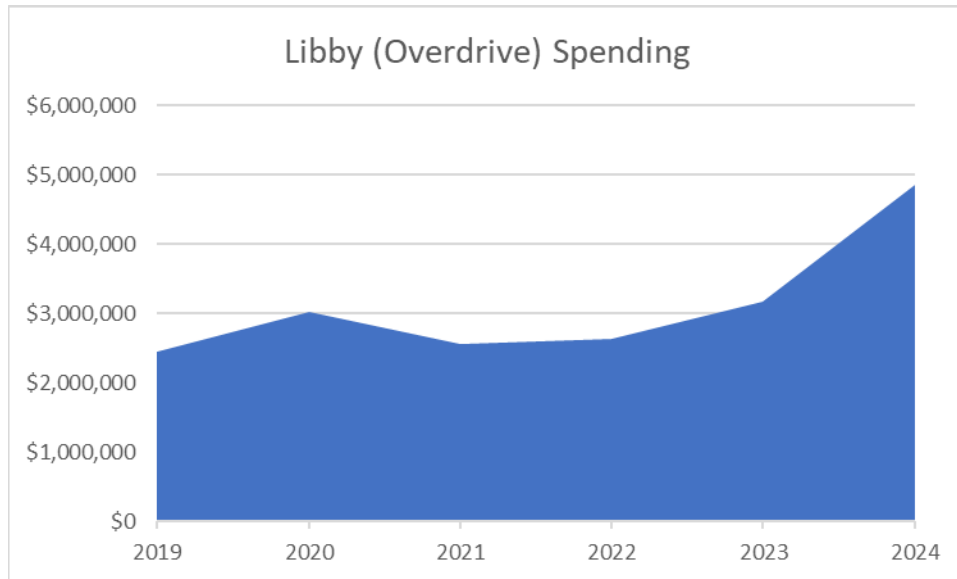
Overdrive and Hoopla Money Spent



The “pay per checkout” model from the vast and difficult to throttle offering from Hoopla continues to be twice as costly per checkout as the collection we individually select for lease for Libby (Overdrive):



The Library’s additional dollar investment in the collections in Libby (Overdrive) has resulted in 6:1 holds ratios on eAudiobooks, and a 4:1 holds ratio for eBooks.



Concurrently, we have started to explore alternative options in other areas of our digital offerings, specifically reviewing the changing landscape for providing the Integrated Library System. To that end, a small team from the Library visited Cuyahoga Public Library for a presentation on Koha, which is an open-source ILS that is potentially less expensive than our current ILS, Sierra. Additionally, there are less expensive, and somewhat less robust discovery layers that provide the overlay for users when searching for items in our collection, which is held in the ILS, Sierra.

POTENTIAL CHANGES TO EMATERIAL VENDOR MARKET

Recently there has been discussion by several long-time library vendors regarding the possibility of entering the eBook/eAudiobook market as another intermediary option for providing access via the publishers' terms. Our understanding is that publishers/providers of eMaterial are agnostic on their terms and discounts to intermediary companies (like Overdrive and Hoopla), though it should be noted this is simply our understanding and not confirmed at this point. If another vendor entered the market and was able to pass on more discounts to libraries this might change the nature of pricing in the library market. However, this is a costly endeavor for vendors and success in opening this market might require thoughtful and challenging decisions from libraries. We will continue to offer updates on this evolving piece of the puzzle as we learn more.

SEARCHOHIO/OHIOLINK UPDATE

SearchOhio and OhioLINK, Ohio's public and academic library resource sharing services, that we participate in heavily, will pause borrowing and renewing for a period this summer as they transition to a new statewide sharing tool called Rapido, which promises to simplify the user experience and improve operational efficiencies:

- OhioLINK the academic library service, pauses on May 23 at 5 p.m. and relaunches October 27 at 8:00 a.m.
- SearchOhio, the public library service, pauses on August 1 at 5 p.m. and relaunches October 27 at 8:00 a.m.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Louis reported that:

MARKET ASSESSMENT

We are making steady progress through the first phase of our Market Assessment, which is being led by the compensation experts at Organizational Architecture. This phase is focused on refining job descriptions into a clear and consistent format, assessing our current position classifications, and updating our pay scale. Due to the high volume of job descriptions that require updating, the assessment is progressing at a slower pace than initially anticipated. However, we expect to have more detailed information to share during the June Board meeting.

NATIONAL LIBRARY WORKER'S DAY

Tuesday, April 8, was National Library Worker's Day! This is the day where we celebrate and honor all library workers for the valuable contributions and lasting impact they have on our communities. This year, the Staff Morale Team sponsored fun, virtual activities throughout the week, encouraging staff to connect with each other and take part in the celebration. To add to the excitement, Senior Leadership held an hourly raffle, and the 20 winning locations will receive a party of either pizza, donuts, ice cream or tacos. These parties will be coordinated and hosted by different members of Senior Leadership and brought directly to the agency to be enjoyed with the staff. We are looking forward to these upcoming celebrations!

ARTSWAVE CAMPAIGN

The Library's ArtsWave Annual Community Campaign ended on March 16th. We are thankful to staff who contributed a total of \$1465.

STRATEGY COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Louis reported that:

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST & SHOWCASE

On February 24, 2025, the Library hosted a Legislative Breakfast & Showcase at the Forest Park Branch. Fourteen elected officials attended the event, including three of the ten State Legislators representing Hamilton County: Representative Abrams, Representative Denson, and Representative Odioso.

- Library staff showcased programs, services and resources in 6 focus areas: Youth Literacy, Workforce & Small Business Resources, Senior Programs & Outreach Services,

Civic Engagement, Connections to Government Resources, and the Library's Facilities Master Plan.

- A presentation to the local officials focused on Library resources and the impact of the new Forest Park Branch on the surrounding communities. Forest Park Mayor, Aharon Brown, gave opening remarks.
- The Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director, Trustees Christopher Harding, Colleen Reynolds, and Diane Redden, and representatives from OLC engaged the State Legislators in a presentation and discussion on Library funding and the FY26-27 budget, including the need to increase the PLF to 2% of the General Revenue Fund.
- After the event, The Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director met with all but one of the State Legislators who were unable to attend the Breakfast to discuss Library funding and the importance of increasing the PLF. Trustees Christopher Harding, Colleen Reynolds, and Diane Redden also participated in some of these meetings.

PARTNER'S BREAKFAST

On March 17, 2025, we held a community partner thank you breakfast. Approximately 35 guests attended from partnering organizations such as Cincinnati NAACP, City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County Public Health, Independence Alliance, Lighthouse Youth Services, and more. Our partners shared their mission, vision, and initiatives. Paula Brehm-Heeger gave an overview of CHPL accomplishments, services and strategic vision for 2025. Guests marveled over our new Forest Park Branch Library.

EMPOWERING THE MIDWEST: OHIO'S ROLE IN CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Public Knowledge, the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, UnidosUS, and CHPL participated in "Empowering the Midwest: Ohio's Role in Closing the Digital Divide" on March 18th at the Main Library. This event brought together leaders from Cincinnati and Washington, DC who are on the front lines of closing the digital divide—working to ensure every community has access to affordable, reliable broadband that empowers families, strengthens local economies, and builds a more connected society. We welcomed Congressman Greg Landsman who provided opening remarks. Next, we heard from policymakers and representatives from local and national organizations on the urgent need to:

- Protect Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding
- Secure a permanent affordable broadband subsidy
- Establish long-term, sustainable support for digital navigators

Civic Engagement Coordinator David Siders served on the panel, emphasizing our strategic vision to help eliminate the Digital Divide through services and resources CHPL offers.

BARBERSHOP BOOKS

We have soft-launched the Barbershop Books program. The Community & Employee Engagement (CEE) team are delivering books to the barbershops. We are working with the Barbershops to plan a kick-off event later this spring.

DENISON CULTURE SURVEY UPDATE

Staff had two weeks to complete Denison Culture Survey before the deadline of February 7, 2025. Valerie Thomas, Vice President of Consulting provided to the survey results to SLT on February 26 and to the managers and supervisors on March 27.

Overall, the scores improved from the previous survey that was completed in the first quarter of 2021. Some scores improved significantly. Results will be shared with all staff in the coming weeks. We are planning to host staff engagement sessions as we prepare to plan, design and execute future plans for Investing in Staff as part of our Strategic Priority of Healthy Culture.

The Board inquired about the number of staff participating in the survey and its frequency. Ms. Brehm-Heeger explained that participation is typically between 60% and 70%. She continued in saying that while the pandemic has impacted its frequency, the intent would be every two to four years.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Allen reported that:

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

The annual Spring campaign and multi-channel appeal is underway, starting with Library Giving Day on April 1st. Early results from Library Giving Day have been very positive, especially in gifts made by new donors.

Significant gifts have been received from the H.B., E.W., and F.R. Luther Charitable Foundation and Turner Construction Company Foundation to support the Homework Helper program, Kristen and David Skidmore, Jr., Judith Eisenberg, Sarah and James Goldman, and Sally and Anthony Delisio.

FRIENDS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

On March 12th, the Friends hosted a pop-up bookshop at the Nine Giant's Fermentarium. This boozy book fair event was very successful, attracting many new customers and potential volunteers.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Olson moved the Board approve the consent agenda as follows:

- Minutes of the Annual Meeting held February 11, 2025
- Monthly Financial Reports – for the periods ending February 28, 2025 and March 31, 2025
- Media Activity Report – February 9, 2025 – April 7, 2025
- Contributions, Gifts, and Donations – February 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025

CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS RECEIVED GREATER THAN \$1000
February 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025

12/06/2024 Friends of PLCH	Support for Library programs	85,000.00
12/20/2024 Estate of Frank Dinne	Support for various Library projects and initiatives	2,365,246.63
12/20/2024 Anne N. and Samuel S. Wilson	Support for Library programs	1,026.00
01/14/2025 Library Foundation	PNC Foundation - Summer Reading	20,000.00
01/14/2025 Library Foundation	Ed & Joann Hubert Family Foundation - Summer Reading	7,500.00
01/14/2025 Library Foundation	Scripps Howard Foundation - Summer Reading	30,000.00
01/14/2025 Library Foundation	HCGS support for 2 South Book Scanner	10,354.00
01/17/2025 Library Foundation	2024 Pet Memorials and Honor with Books	7,826.51

- Personnel Change Report through April 7, 2025

<u>ACTIO N</u>	<u>REASON</u>	<u>FULL NAME</u>	<u>JOB TITLE</u>	<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>FT E</u>	<u>GR ADE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Appoint ment	New hire	Schultz, Gage	Truck Driver	Shipping&Receiv ing	1.0 0	6	02/16/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Gould, Aaron J.	PT20-Main Shelver	Sorting and Mat Retrieval	0.5 0	2	02/16/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Digby, Madison J.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	Bond Hill	0.5 0	4	02/16/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Carmicle, Jesse D.	PT20-Youth Librarian	Bond Hill	0.5 0	7	02/16/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Jones, Kurstin	Com&Emp Engagement Coord	Community & Employee Eng	1.0 0	7	02/16/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Lieske, Mary E.	Branch Shelver	Loveland	0.3 0	1	03/02/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Engelkamp, Joseph W.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	West End	0.5 0	4	03/02/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Feacher, Lauryn	HW Help & Enrichment Asst	Elmwood Place	0.3 0	3	03/02/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Sexton, Carrie A.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	1 South	0.5 0	4	03/02/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Ramos, Jazmin C.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	Price Hill	0.5 0	4	03/02/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Striker, Douglas S.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	Mt. Healthy	0.5 0	4	03/16/ 2025
Appoint ment	New hire	Ogden, Alexandra E.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	Mt. Healthy	0.5 0	4	03/16/ 2025

Appointment	New hire	Fentress, Martha Q.	Fund Dev Data Coordinator	Development Office	1.00	7	03/30/2025
Appointment	New hire	Cordier, Rose	Branch Shelver	Madeira	0.30	1	03/30/2025
Appointment	New hire	Manley, Mackenzie	Content Specialist	Brand Team	1.00	7	03/30/2025
Appointment	New hire	Piaskowy, Ilona	Annual Fund&DonRel Leader	Development Office	1.00	9	03/30/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Pinkston, Jaxson J.	Public Safety Team Leader	Public Safety	1.00	7	02/16/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Scherer, Linda A.	PT24-Library Customer Adv	Price Hill	0.60	4	02/16/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Schwab, Robert A.	Public Safety Team Leader	Public Safety	1.00	7	02/16/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Dole, Sarah A.	Library Customer Spec	Harrison	1.00	5	02/16/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Burns, Larry G.	Public Safety Team Leader	Public Safety	1.00	7	02/16/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Ludwig, Jessie R.	Library Customer Spec	2 South	1.00	5	03/02/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Thompson, Victoria D.	Copy Cataloger	Catalog& Processing	1.00	5	03/02/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Griffis, Emily P.	Youth Program Coordinator	Programs & Events	1.00	8	03/30/2025
Promotion	Promotion	Wehrle, Lacey K.	Outreach Services Manager	Outreach Services	1.00	10	03/30/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Schmidt, Brian	Customer Service Sub	Customer Service Subs	0.725	4	02/16/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Kuhl, Casey R.	PT20-Library Customer Adv	Reading	0.50	4	02/16/2025
Change	Transfer	Pearson, Drew D.	Programs & Events Manager	Programs & Events	1.00	10	02/16/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Jenkins, Gabrielle R.	Customer Service Sub	Customer Service Subs	0.725	4	03/02/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Jenkins, Kenneth T.	Public Safety Specialist	Public Safety	1.00	6	03/02/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Cook, Ashlee E.	PT24-Library Customer Adv	Madeira	0.60	4	03/02/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Smart, Marcia	Public Safety Specialist	Public Safety	1.00	6	03/02/2025

Change	Lateral transfer	Buschle, Olivia D.	Human Resources Asst	Human Resources	1.00	5	03/03/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Thatcher, Patrick W.	PT24-Library Customer Adv	Norwood	0.60	4	03/16/2025
Change	Hours increase	Burgess II, Michael P.	Library Customer Adviser	North Central	1.00	4	03/16/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Gregory, Brett T.	Customer Service Sub	Customer Service Subs	0.725	4	03/16/2025
Change	Change in FTE	Wood, Susan M.	PT20-Main Shelver	Outreach Services	0.50	2	03/30/2025
Change	Lateral transfer	Wynn-Piao, Sarah K.	Library Customer Adviser	Harrison	1.00	4	03/30/2025
Departure	Resignation	Glemaker, Jacob M.	Copy Cataloger	Catalog& Processing	1.00	5	02/05/2025
Departure	Departure	Phillips, Terrin S.	Public Safety Specialist	Public Safety	1.00	6	02/06/2025
Departure	Retirement	Jones, Angela S.	Human Resources Asst	Human Resources	1.00	5	02/20/2025
Departure	Resignation	Behen, Linda D.	Customer Service Sub	Customer Service Subs	0.725	4	02/20/2025
Departure	Resignation	Luecke, Robert M.	PT24-Library Customer Adv	Madeira	0.60	4	02/21/2025
Departure	Resignation	Cobb, Joshua M.	Public Safety Specialist	Public Safety	1.00	6	02/22/2025
Departure	Return to School	Maxfield, Ellie C.	Branch Shelver	Madeira	0.30	1	02/28/2025
Departure	Resignation	Miller, Rodrick D.	PT20-Public Safety Spec	Public Safety	0.50	6	03/05/2025
Departure	Resignation	Stern, Lynne T.	Fund Dev Data Coordinator	Development Office	1.00	7	03/07/2025
Departure	Resignation	Tewodros, Kema A.	PT20-Main Shelver	Outreach Services	0.50	2	03/13/2025
Departure	Resignation	Jones, Racquel R.	PT20-Monitor Mentor	Madisonville	0.50	6	03/21/2025
Departure	Resignation	Berwanger, John	Maintenance Technician	Maintenance Services	1.00	6	03/25/2025
Departure	Resignation	Buck, Margaret H.	Youth Librarian	Covedale	1.00	7	03/28/2025
Departure	Resignation	Gray Jr., Jeffery L.	PT20-Monitor Mentor	Covedale	0.50	6	03/29/2025

Depart ure	Resignati on	May, Sanaa J.	HW Help & Enrichment Asst	Norwood	0.3 0	3	03/31/ 2025
Depart ure	Resignati on	Fogle, Cheryl R.	PT24-Main Shelver	Outreach Services	0.6 0	2	03/31/ 2025
Depart ure	Departure	Gardner Jr., Thomas A.	Library Customer Spec	Madeira	1.0 0	5	04/01/ 2025
Depart ure	Resignati on	Murphy, Carolyn M.	PT20- TC_Makerspace Tech	1 & 2 North	0.5 0	4	04/05/ 2025

2/5/2025 - 4/7/2025

- Statistical Report for February 2025 and March 2025

Statistical Report - February 2025

Trailing 12 Months of Data

Original Circulation



Digital Circulation



Visits In-Person



Visits Curbside & Drive-thru



Wi-Fi Sessions



PC Sessions



Statistical Report - March 2025

Trailing 12 Months of Data

Original Circulation



Digital Circulation



Visits In-Person



Visits Curbside & Drive-thru



Wi-Fi Sessions



PC Sessions



- Statistical Highlights – Search Ohio

CHPL serves customers in Hamilton County and beyond

SearchOhio

CHPL partners with 48 public libraries throughout Ohio to offer users the ability to borrow material from a wide variety of collections. These services are free, fast, and easy to use.



2nd highest net lender

CHPL is a top lender of items in the SearchOhio network.

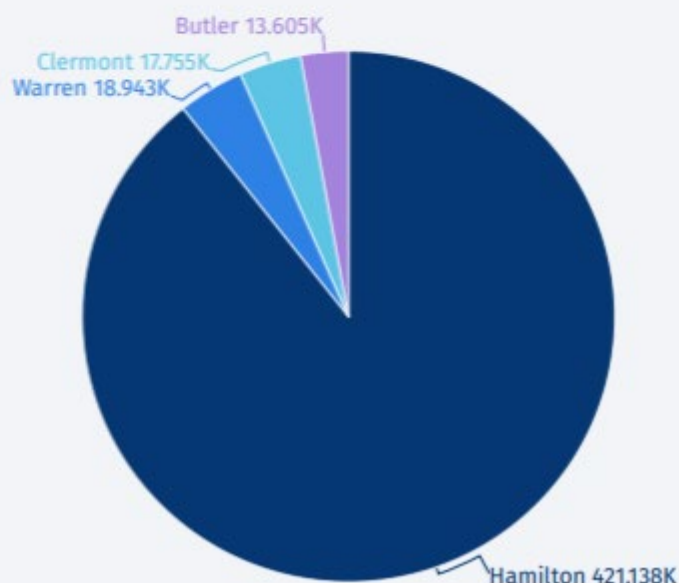


68,749

CHPL lent 68,749 items to SearchOhio libraries.

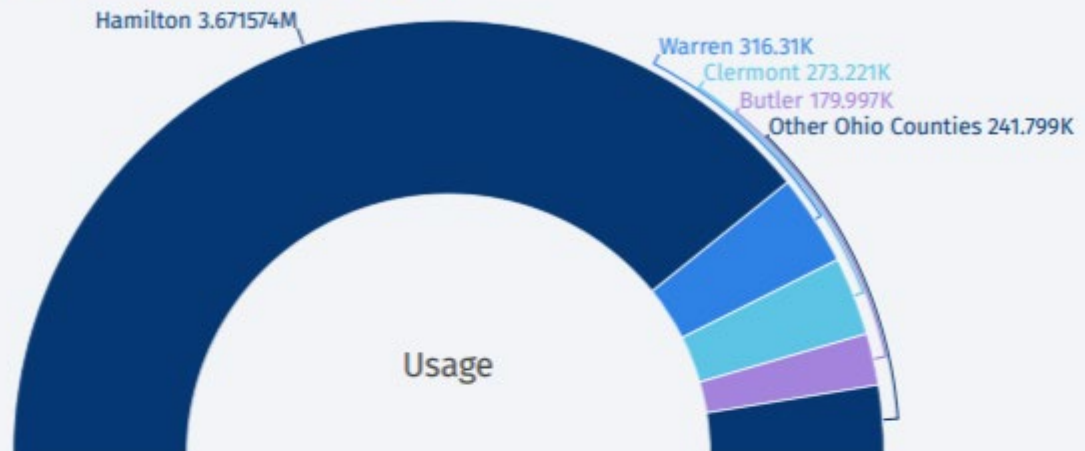
We offer Ohioans across the state the opportunity to obtain CHPL cards free of charge.

Library cardholders have access to eBook/eAudiobook services

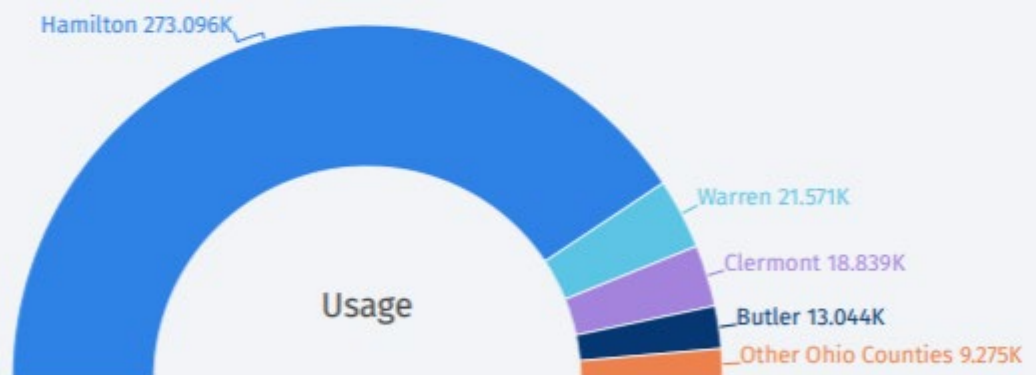


CHPL serves customers in Hamilton County and beyond

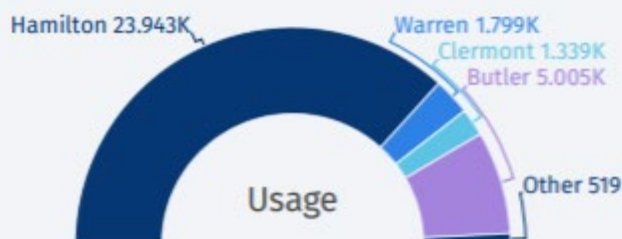
Overdrive Usage by County



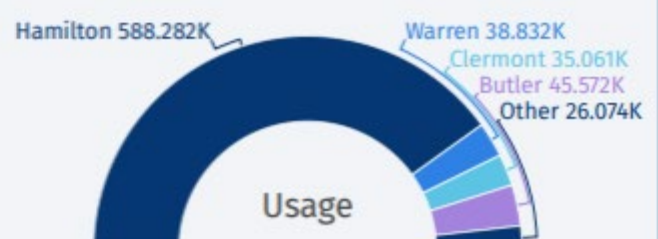
Hoopla Usage by County



Freeding Usage by County



Freegal Usage by County



- Investment Report (summary of invested balances) as of March 31, 2025

Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library
Investment Summary as of March 31, 2025

	Amount As of 2/28/2025	Amount As of 3/31/2025
Fifth Third Investment:		
General Fund	\$21,486,247.50	\$21,486,247.50
Building and Repair	\$15,532,205.00	\$14,628,120.00
Total	\$37,018,452.50	\$36,114,367.50
 Fifth Third Operating Account:		
General Fund	\$13,522,908.51	\$11,570,861.67
Insurance Reserve	\$230,000.00	\$230,000.00
Special Revenue Funds	\$3,073,880.96	\$3,075,353.69
Building and Repair	\$16,302,256.37	\$16,140,281.13
Permanent Trust Funds	\$1,604,586.82	\$1,596,565.94
Total	\$34,733,632.66	\$32,613,062.43
 STAR Ohio:		
Building and Repair	\$1,270,686.83	\$1,270,686.83
Total	\$1,270,686.83	\$1,270,686.83
 U.S. Bank Managed Investments (Trust Funds):		
Total	\$6,776,403.00	\$6,776,403.00
 Grand Total	 <u>\$79,799,174.99</u>	 <u>\$76,774,519.76</u>

Ms. Redden seconded.

Voting for the motion: Ms. Allen, Mr. Harding, Ms. Louis, Mr. Olson, Ms. Redden...5 ayes. The motion carried. **(06-2025)**.

The Regular Meeting was then adjourned.

President

Attest: Secretary