

Indian Trails Public Library board expected to approve \$8.3 million budget



Patrons browse the DVDs at the Indian Trails Public Library in Wheeling earlier this year. The library board will meet next week to vote on a roughly \$8.3 million budget for the new fiscal year, which started July 1. (*Russell Lissau | Staff Photographer, June 2021*)



Russell Lissau

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The Wheeling-based Indian Trails Public Library District's spending should remain relatively flat in the 2022 fiscal year compared to the

previous year, officials say.

At next week's meeting, the library board is expected to approve a roughly \$8.3 million budget for the fiscal year, which began July 1. That's up less than \$85,000 from the previous budget's spending prediction of about \$8.2 million, an increase of only 1%, Executive Director Brian Shepard said.

Revenue from property taxes, fees and other sources should increase by an even smaller percentage, Shepard said.

A revenue total of nearly \$8.3 million is predicted, virtually the same as the 2021 budget's estimate.

Expenses will slightly exceed revenue, Shepard said, because officials are funding reading programs and other special projects with money from a trust established by the late Helen Morrow, a Wilmette resident who died in 2015 and left money to several suburban libraries.

Shepard and his staff don't have any big projects or purchases planned for the next year.

"As we are still emerging from the pandemic, we are focused on bringing back many services that were paused during the pandemic and increasing capacity," Shepard said. "While we are looking to restore things like in-person programming, we continue to look for ways to incorporate what we learned during the pandemic -- for example, virtual and take-home service -- into our ongoing service offerings."

Still, patrons and employees may notice some upgrades over the next year.

For example, the library plans to spend \$12,000 to replace 10 computers that each are nine years old, Shepard said.

Additionally, the library's computer network firewall will be replaced at a cost of \$12,000. That will complete a two-year overhaul of Indian Trails' entire network infrastructure, he said.

The main Indian Trails library is at 355 Schoenbeck Road, and a branch operates at 99 E. Palatine Road in Prospect Heights. Officials are considering building a branch in Buffalo Grove, but no decisions have been made.

The library board approved a preliminary draft of the budget in June. A public hearing and a final vote are scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday.

The board meeting will be held remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The public can observe the meeting at bitly.ws/gga4 (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86918599893?pwd=K2laNoVIY2JHVVG4oeXk2YnlPQ21XUT09>). The agenda can be found at itpld.org/boardmeetings (<https://itpld.org/about-us/board-of-trustees/library-board-of-trustees-agendas-and-minutes/>).

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