

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES' LIBRARIES

A BUDGET VOTE FOR THE FRED & HARRIET TAYLOR MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND PULTENEY FREE LIBRARY

THE FRED & HARRIETT TAYLOR MEMORIAL LIBRARY



Founded in 1876, the Fred & Harriett Taylor Memorial Library has long supported the municipalities of Hammondsport, Urbana, and Wayne. Through vital access to literature and information and robust programming for all ages, our library is the community hub. From free Wifi to support for local social services, it is the library that folks turn to. We are proud to have served for 150 years and excited to innovate new services for the next 150!



ROBERT & PHYLLIS ROSS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Pulteney Free Library has been an important part of the community of Pulteney since 1881, serving as a community center, a comfortable place to learn new skills and meet friends, look up needed information, and find just the right book. With our new building, the

Library has been able to offer more programming and services. As we go into the future, sustainable funding will enable us to increase these services to continue to meet the needs of our community.

GENERAL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A BUDGET VOTE FOR THE FRED & HARRIET TAYLOR MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND PULTENEY FREE LIBRARY

2026 Library Funding Proposition for Hammondsport Central School District General Overview

The Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library of Hammondsport and the Pulteney Free Library seek to establish a single library funding referendum that aligns with the geographic area of the Hammondsport Central School District through a public vote. Currently, both libraries receive financial support through separate library funding referendums that align with the geographic areas of the Town of Urbana (Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library) and the Town of Pulteney (Pulteney Free Library).

Residents of the school district can vote on the library funding referendum at the school district's May 2026 budget vote and school board elections. If passed, the school district will collect the approved funding amounts, and turnover such funds to the libraries' boards of trustees to provide public library services to the residents of the school district.

Additionally, the boards of the Fred and Harriet Taylor Memorial Library and Pulteney Free Library will work with the towns of Urbana and Pulteney to dissolve the current mechanisms that collect funds for the libraries from town residents. Moving to a single library funding referendum that aligns with the school district area, and dissolving the mechanisms that collect funds for the libraries from the townships will stabilize funding for both libraries, and create a tax efficiency for residents who live in the towns of Urbana and Pulteney as well as other areas around the school district.

How is a tax efficiency created for residents of the Town of Urbana and Town of Pulteney?

Presently, only the residents of the Town of Urbana pay for the majority of library services provided by the Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library. The Town of Wayne also contracts for some services from the Taylor Library. Similarly, the residents in the Town of Pulteney pay for the majority of library services provided by Pulteney Free Library.

Both libraries are funded through a mechanism in Education Law 259, subdivision 1, as amended by chapter 414 of the laws of 1995, 457 of the laws of 1996, and 184 of the laws of 2007 in New York State. This mechanism enables residents of specific municipalities (Urbana and Pulteney) to vote upon and approve funding for their public libraries.

(continued from previous page) Moving to a library funding referendum that aligns with the school district area will increase the number of homes that pay for library services, which will reduce the library tax rates in proportion to current library budgets for the residents of Urbana and Pulteney. This change in taxing area would also remove a double library tax that occurs in some areas of the Bath, Hammondsport, and Campbell-Savona school districts for the public libraries of Bath, Pulteney, and Savona. Public libraries in New York State can create funding referendums in school district areas based on Education Law 259, Chapter 16, Title 1, Article 5, Part 2.

In the Southern Tier Library System (Allegany, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates counties), 38 of 44 public libraries have funding referendums in place that align with school district areas. The Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library and Pulteney Free Library seek to establish the same efficient funding mechanism to improve tax efficiencies for school district residents and ensure everyone who uses public library services pays their equitable share.

How does a library funding referendum get on the school district ballot?

Both libraries are required to obtain 25 signatures from residents of the school district. In addition to this petition, the library boards must approve budgets for the upcoming 2027 fiscal year that justify the funding request. A request letter, proposed referendum language, petition, and approved budgets get sent to the school district board for review. The school board works with school administration and library officials to place the referendum on the May 2026 ballot.

Are there other sources of library revenue other than municipal or school district support?

Public libraries receive little support from New York State for operating costs. Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library received \$1,529 in 2025/2026 through Local Library Services Aid. The Pulteney Free Library also received \$1,529 in 2025/2026. Local property taxes account for 85-95% of library operating funds. Most libraries are fully funded by public vote through Education Law 255, 259, or Chapter 414 of NYS 1995 Laws.

Both libraries do seek grants, participate in fundraising, accept donations, or charge nominal late/overdue fees. However, these sources of revenue are not stable and only represent five to ten percent of total operating revenue.

Can libraries charge fees for library cards and other library services to increase revenue?

Under Commissioner's Regulations 90.3(a) of New York State Education Law, public libraries cannot charge fees for library cards to residents within their own library system, or to access services provided by the library. Both libraries are members of the Southern Tier Library System, which means any resident of Allegany, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates counties must receive library services free of charge.

Can libraries reduce their operational or personnel costs to maintain essential services?

Both libraries operate on minimal budgets (see proposed budgets), which is not uncommon for rural public libraries. They also employ few personnel. The Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library employs 1 full-time director and 4 part-time staff. The Pulteney Free Library employs 1 part-time director and 1 part-time staff. A total of 3.48 full-time equivalents are employed across both libraries. Both libraries offer limited benefits with respect to paid time off, insurance, and retirement.

Does the proposed library funding proposition align with the Tax Cap?

The library boards of the Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library and the Pulteney Free Library voted unanimously to put forward a single library funding referendum that aligns with the Hammondsport Central School District area considering Education Law 259, Chapter 16, Title 1, Article 5, Part 2.

This is a new tax levy, so a Tax Cap Override is not required. Both library boards voted on 2027 operating budgets that factor in the amounts requested on the May 2026 funding referendum facilitated by the school district. If this funding referendum passes, all future votes on the library funding referendum will be held to New York State Tax Cap Law.

What is the cost of the proposed funding propositions for school district residents?

The estimated 2026/2027 equalized library tax rate is .5587, or \$55.87 for a home assessed at \$100,000 in the Hammondsport Central School District to support the Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library and Pulteney Free Library considering the 2027 budgets presented.

How will the proposition language read for school district residents on the day of the vote?

Library Funding Referendum - Proposition:

Shall the proposition be approved authorizing the Board of Education of the Hammondsport Central School District to levy taxes annually in the amount of \$425,000 for the Fred & Harriet Taylor Memorial Library and \$298,000 for the Pulteney Free Library and to pay over such monies to the trustees of both public libraries to provide services to the residents of the school district?

Questions? Please feel free to contact us!

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