

November 2018

Dear Valued County Library Patron,

The public libraries of Buchanan County, otherwise known as Cities with Libraries of Buchanan County, want you to know about current challenges with funding for library services from Buchanan County. In order to improve the funding and maintain services, we need your help.

If you live in an unincorporated area in Buchanan County rather than within city limits of one of the eleven incorporated towns in the county, this is the funding that provides your library services. We would like to continue services as they are, but the lack of financial support from the county is making this difficult. Some of the libraries have already cut services. In the future, cost saving measures may include a reduction of hours, a decrease in new materials available to you, and fewer programs offered.

Each year, the Buchanan County Supervisors are updated by the six public libraries in the county about services and funding. The libraries have requested modest increases in funding in an effort to work towards support that is on average with other counties in Iowa.

Buchanan County Support is at \$13.28 per person, while average county support at \$18.54. Per person, this is \$5.26 below average. The libraries are requesting \$14.25 per person, a modest increase.

If you value library services, please contact one or more county supervisors to talk with them about the importance of libraries and the need for better funding. Contact information is on the following page. The libraries of Aurora, Fairbank, Independence, Jesup, Lamont, and Winthrop enjoy serving you and look forward to continued service in the future.

After reading this important information, please let your library director know if you have questions, need clarification, or would be willing to submit a letter to the editor. Please contact us for assistance.

Thank you,

The Cities with Libraries of Buchanan County

<b>Library</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Aurora Public Library	Kim Wessels	319-634-3960
Fairbank Public Library	Angela Berg	319-635-2487
Independence Public Library	Laura Blaker	319-334-2470
Jesup Public Library	Becky Burke	319-827-1533
Lamont Public Library	Angie Happel	563-924-3203
Winthrop Public Library	Rebecca Wearmouth	319-935-3374

## **Timeline and How to Help**

There are steps you can take, as outlined below, to encourage the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors to increase their library services allocation. The timeline for funding and services is between July 1 and June 30. Budgets are primarily determined by the county in December and January for the next year. For example, in January of 2019, the budget will be determined for the year of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. In order to secure better funding, we need your advocacy now through January of 2019.

The County Board of Supervisors are Gary Gissel, Clayton Ohrt, and Don Shonka. Please reach out to them with a letter or phone call about library funding and services. You can reach them at the following address:

Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, PO Box 317, Independence, Iowa 50644

You can also email all of them at [buch\\_board@co.buchanan.ia.us](mailto:buch_board@co.buchanan.ia.us) or call the courthouse at 319-334-3578. Following are individual emails for the Supervisors:

Gary Gissel [ggissel@co.buchanan.ia.us](mailto:ggissel@co.buchanan.ia.us)

Clayton Ohrt [cohrt@co.buchanan.ia.us](mailto:cohrt@co.buchanan.ia.us)

Don Shonka [dshonka@co.buchanan.ia.us](mailto:dshonka@co.buchanan.ia.us)

Write a letter to the editor, a letter to one or more supervisors, or give them a call to have a voice in library funding. To further assist you in lobbying in support of libraries, several talking points are below.

## **Talking Points**

- The current county support per person, \$13.28, is not enough to purchase one hardcover book per person per year. Funding is \$5.26 per person below average county funding in Iowa.
- The libraries are willing to work towards better funding gradually. There is not an expectation to reach the average Iowa support in one or two years, but it is important for the libraries to have a plan for future funding.
- The requested budget for next fiscal year is \$14.25 per person, or \$116,950 for six libraries.
- Library services are valuable to me and should be made a priority in the county's budget.
- Libraries provide access to educational and recreational materials, programming for all ages, a safe gathering place and a social outlet, assistance in finding information, computer and Internet access, and much more. They are invaluable to at-risk families and individuals as well as to a democratic society.