

Residential Customer



# Important Information from the Mount Vernon Public Library

## Dear Mount Vernon City School District Resident,

The Mount Vernon Public Library provides opportunity for anyone who walks through our doors. A staple of our community for generations, over 208,000 people crossed our threshold in 2013. Our users have come to explore new opportunities, find new potential and create new lives for themselves and their families.

The residents of the Mount Vernon City School District have come to depend on the Library to enable our children to love reading, to provide job search and skills for those who need them, to keep our families entertained and educated and our seniors engaged, to provide public computers and free WIFI and to provide space for our City's thriving arts community.

In fact, we've been busier than ever! In 2013:

- 12,482 children attended 242 programs
- 26,470 adults attended 749 programs
- Our WiFi was used 25,067 times
- 135,338 items were borrowed
- Our 20 public computers were used 37,171 times
- 49,078 reference questions were answered
- Our website was accessed 513,565 times

Mount Vernon's Board of Trustees and staff are committed to the community. Many of the staff live in Mount Vernon and are committed to making sure the library is here for all of us when we need it.

## The Funding Issues Facing the Library

The Library has relied on a direct appropriation from the City of Mount Vernon since its doors opened in 1896—118 years ago.

A few years ago, the Division of Library Development, an office of the State Education Department, conducted a routine review of public library charters throughout the state and found that the Mount Vernon Public Library should have been functioning as what is known as a School District Public Library. It is called a school district public library because the Library's service area is the same as the school district's service area. As a district library, the public votes on its budget and elects its trustees. There are currently over 200 library districts in New York State and, as a result of the review, DLD directed the Library to begin operating as a School District Public Library by this year.

Over the last few years, the Library's Board of Trustees has worked to stabilize the Library's operations and prepare for a public vote. The past few years have also seen a decrease in the amount of City funding for the Library. The Library's Board has been told that the City will no longer be able to support the Library. The City's 2014 budget only contains enough funding to keep the Library's doors open through September of this year.

## The Solution

The Library is at a crossroads. It must go directly to the public for support—based on its status as a library district—but also because it is losing its main source of support.

Mount Vernon's Board of Trustees is asking school district residents to vote on Tuesday, May 6th to approve its \$4.35M in community-based funding. The voters will also be asked to elect four Library Trustees. Voting on a budget and electing trustees are the two main attributes of a library district. There are over 200 library districts throughout the state that operate in this manner—those libraries are financially secure and able to plan for their future service to their communities.

The \$4.35M in community-based funding amounts to \$28.32 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For a home assessed at \$10,000, this would mean direct support of \$283.20 a year—merely 81 cents a day to guarantee library programs and services for our community. All one needs to do is take out or download 10 books or borrow 12 new DVDs over the course of a year and this investment will pay for itself. And even with the change, Library funding will account for just 2% of all the taxes you pay throughout the year—county, city and school.

In addition to providing this community-based funding to support the library, school district residents will also elect four library trustees. Anyone interested in running for trustee may go to: [www.mountvernonpubliclibrary.org/become-trustee](http://www.mountvernonpubliclibrary.org/become-trustee) to get all the information you'll need and to download the trustee nominating petition.

The Library's funding will amount to approximately 2% of an average tax bill. For just 2%, any one of any age can come into the library, borrow books, access information, create new job prospects, keep their families entertained and keep Mount Vernon focused on our community's future.

## What Stable Funding Means

With this stable funding, the library will:

- Open on Sundays and extend weekday hours
- Have more public computers and an expanded Computer Lab with classes for all ages
- Expand our popular book and DVD collections
- Create Streaming Video Collections and online magazines
- Establish an Early Learning Center so that every child will be ready to read!
- Enlarge our Homework Help Center
- Enhance our Job Center and Career Assistance
- Greatly improve our facility including upgrading furniture

## Without Stable Funding, the Library will,

- Either close or be severely hampered in its ability to provide programs and services.
- Cut hours to the bone
- Cut new materials including children's books and DVDs for all ages
- Lose Central Library funding
- Extensively cut all programs—including Story Time for children and Homework Help
- Limit access for community groups to use our meeting space
- Not be able to repair and protect our historic building

Additionally, there will be a considerable negative economic impact on our community and local businesses because folks who live in Mount Vernon will lose their jobs.

## The Vote

Thank you for your interest in and continued support of Mount Vernon Public Library. The vote takes place in the Library's Community Room on Tuesday, May 6th from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. You must be registered to vote in order to participate. Absentee ballots are available. Call the Library at 914/668-1840, ext. 223 to request one. The Library is working with the City and County to increase available parking around the Library.

**For more information go to [www.mountvernon.fundourlibraries.org](http://www.mountvernon.fundourlibraries.org) or contact the Library's director, Carolyn Karwoski at 914/668-1840, ext. 215.**

The Mount Vernon Public Library Board of Trustees

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**PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
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