

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — April 27, 2015

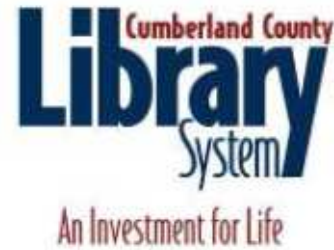
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jonelle Darr, Executive Director

Cumberland County Library System

1601 Ritner Highway, Suite 100 | Carlisle, PA, 17013

(717) 240-6175; jdarr@cumberlandcountylibraries.org



How Should Libraries be Funded?

Public Forum Discussion Set for April 30, 2015 in Mechanicsburg

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, PA – The Cumberland County Library System and County Commissioners’ will hold a panel discussion on **Library Finance** on Thursday, April 30, 2015 from 7 pm to 9 pm at the Parmer Cinema Center located in Boyer Hall at Messiah College. The meeting is free and open to the public.

Jonelle Darr, Executive Director of the Cumberland County Library System said that “we’re excited to have four experts discuss the major funding challenges and changes libraries have faced since the recession hit. We’ll also hear how libraries have adjusted over time to balance budgets.”

Darr said that the guest panelists include:

1. Karen Cullings, Community Relations Director for the Dauphin County Library System
2. Deborah Fulham-Winston, Asset Development Associate for The Foundation for Enhancing Communities
3. Glenn Miller, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Library Association
4. Dr. Thomas R. Stone, Principal of the Franklin Group

Larry Thomas, Cumberland County’s Chief Clerk, said that this session would be the third in a multi-part panel discussion series. The first was held in February on the topic of **Community Needs for Libraries** and the second was held in March on the topic of **Libraries of the Future**.

“At the first panel discussion, we had a very positive outcome. There was a strong consensus on six areas where libraries were uniquely equipped to address our County’s unmet needs,” said Thomas. These included:

1. Provide young children with the resources and programs they need to be ready for school and to support children’s learning needs so that they are able to graduate successfully from high school.
2. Provide more programs and resources for the county’s growing elderly population.
3. Provide greater library access and support to the growing numbers of people in Cumberland County who are living in poverty.
4. Provide resources and programs to address five essential literacies: basic, information, financial, health and civic/social.
5. Provide access to information technology, especially the Internet.

6. Provide community meeting and gathering spaces.

At the second session about the relevance of libraries in the Future, Darr said that the experts identified a number of areas in which libraries will be invaluable in the coming years. These included:

1. The library will remain a place where people can learn about and use new technology and digital tools.
2. Libraries will remain a destination of choice for citizens. Library buildings will also continue to be a very important place where the community can gather to share and learn.
3. The library will remain a learning place, but it will go beyond books as lifelong learning and e-learning become intertwined for all generations.
4. Collaborations and strategic partnerships are a must for future sustainability.
5. Staffing libraries effectively and providing ongoing training for library staff to learn about new technology and digital tools are critical to keeping up with the community's changing needs.
6. The library must continue to make significant investments in youth services, especially for the very young as these will have huge payoffs in our community's future.

For more information about the meetings, visit

http://www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org/?q=Building_Consensus.

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