



City of Ishpeming Information Regarding the Library Operating Millage Proposal

Dear Residents,

On Tuesday, November 3, 2026, City of Ishpeming voters will be asked to consider a Library Operating Millage Proposal that would provide funding for the continued operation, maintenance, and capital needs of the Ishpeming Carnegie Public Library.

The proposal language would authorize a total levy of 2.5 mills:

“For continuing to provide current Library services, shall the City of Ishpeming, Marquette County, Michigan be authorized to levy up to an additional 2.1 mills (\$2.10 per \$1,000.00 taxable value) for Library operations and, concurrently, up to .4 mills (\$.40 per \$1,000 taxable value) for Library capital expenditures on all property assessed for taxes within the City of Ishpeming for a period of six (6) years (2026 – 2031, inclusive)? The combined new 2.5 mills will raise approximately \$399,527.30 in the first year.”

For the average primary residence, the estimated cost would be approximately \$90.52 per year, or \$7.54 per month.

If the Proposal is Approved

If voters approve the proposal, the library's current level of operations is expected to continue. The funding would provide greater long-term financial stability by supporting:

- Current staffing levels.
- Existing library hours and public services.
- Collections, technology, and programming.
- Routine maintenance and preservation of the historic library building.
- The ability to plan for future capital improvements and ongoing facility needs.

Approval of the proposal would provide a dedicated funding source to help sustain library operations and maintain the facility for years to come.

Current Library Programs and Participation.

The City of Ishpeming has maintained a public library for 150 years and this is the first ballot proposal for dedicated funding for these services. The library continues to see increased use in all areas including visits, circulation, and programming. 34% of library cardholders signed up for a card in the last three years.

Also in the last three years:

- 97,247 people visited the library (26% of visits were to attend a program)
- 980 programs were offered for all ages, with 25,410 in attendance
- 165,536 physical items were checked out (58% were children's items), plus 50,407 digital items

The library also offers a Summer Reading Program, access to new releases, inter-library loan, a meeting room, public computer and wireless internet use, exam proctoring, technology help, puzzle swap, seed library, monthly digital reading challenges, and more.

If the Proposal is Not Approved

If the proposal is not approved, the library will see significant cuts to its operation. The existing funding sources are not sufficient to maintain current service levels.

As a result, the City and Library Board would likely need to consider measures such as:

- Reductions in hours or elimination of staff.
- Reduced public service hours, or closure.
- Reductions in and elimination of programs and other library services.
- Deferral of building maintenance and capital improvements.
- Limited ability to address future facility needs and preserve the library building.

Any operational or budget adjustments would be made through the normal public budgeting process and would depend on available funding.

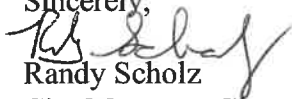
Reason for the Requested Funding

The City funds nearly 85% of the library's annual budget, with the remainder comprised of contract fees from surrounding townships for library service, State Aid, penal fines, etc. The City's General Fund Revenues are insufficient to fund services provided to residents at current levels, specifically the operation of the Ishpeming Carnegie Public Library. The City plans to balance its General Fund budget by increasing revenues or by decreasing and eliminating services. The ballot decision will leave the course of action taken by the city up to the residents.

Learn More

This letter is intended to provide residents with information about the Library Operating Millage Proposal so they can make an informed decision. The City of Ishpeming encourages all eligible voters to review the proposal, ask questions, and participate in the election on November 3, 2026. If you have any questions please contact Randy Scholz the Ishpeming City Manager.

Sincerely,



Randy Scholz

City Manager, City of Ishpeming

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