



Branch District
Library

www.BranchDistrictLibrary.org

AMNESTY PROPOSAL
February 12, 2021

As we see from our 2020 Audit report, expenditures last year were far under budget projections, as the pandemic kept the Library closed for three months in spring, then opened at reduced capacity for the remainder of the year. As a result, our unassigned fund balance increased by about \$180,000.

We've been fine-free for a while now, and wrote off all of the amassed overdue fines. But charges due to lost and damaged items remain on patron's accounts. Just under \$54,000 is owed the library, according to our January statistical report.

While the library has tried hard to provide meaningful services this past year, there's no question that at least some of our patrons are hurting right now. At a time like this, it would be unfortunate for an old charge for a lost or damaged item to prevent a patron from using the library to get a book or to use another service requiring a library card in good standing.

I propose that we do a one-time, no strings attached, complete amnesty for any charges owed to us by our patrons. Let's zero out almost \$54,000 worth of assessed fees and let everyone start from scratch. After this one-time amnesty, we would continue to be fine-free, but would again assess fees going forward again for lost or damaged materials.

Doing so would potentially lower our income a little this year, affecting our budget bottom line. But if it does, we have the extra put in the fund balance to pull from to make up that difference.

Respectfully submitted,

John Rucker