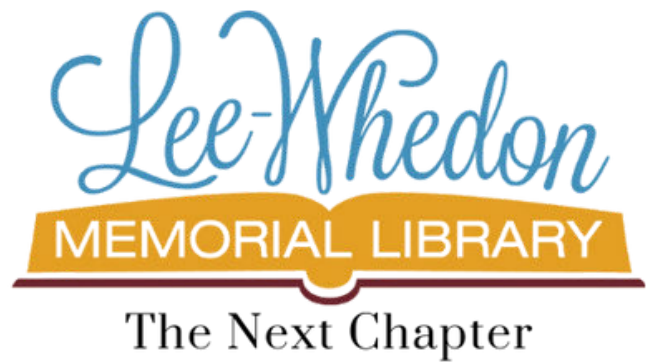


Additional Comments & Questions



Why not build a community center with a library? A multi-purpose community center seems like a better way to spend the money.

If Medina were to build a community center with a library, it would need to be twice the size of the existing library. The Chili Community Center and Library opened in 2021. It cost \$19.5 million to build. It includes all of the facilities that are currently found in the Medina YMCA, Senior Center, and Library. Asking the community to pay for a \$20 million complex seemed unreasonable. Instead, we choose to add a small community center to the library.

Needs should come before wants. It should be whatever the community needs.

We completely agree. That is why we worked so hard to reduce the initial cost of the project that was presented to us, at \$9.1 million. We wanted to ensure that this project was right sized for the Medina community and addressed the needs expressed to us by the community over the years.

This is also an important point as to why we had a public vote. The public was given the opportunity to decide if this was the project they wanted. The vote results show that this is what the community supports.

The library had over 600 tutoring sessions in the middle of the building in 2024. These students had no privacy for their learning. Teachers and students had to deal with the distractions of others using the library, programming and events happening at the same time, and just general disruptions like people on their phones or chatting. A perfect example of why we need tutoring rooms.

This is akin to investing in a Blockbuster. Aren't libraries a dying breed with the internet? Every student has access to the library and everyone has access to a computer so is this really necessary?

While students have access to their school library, all other members of the community must use the public library. Computers and internet access are not ubiquitous. Many people still do not have the option to get internet at their homes. That is why the library circulates hotspots which are continually checked out. We also let people borrow laptops and tablets because not everyone has them. Even with smartphones, not everyone has cellular service; they use public Wi-Fi.

Last year, we had 4,727 desktop computer users. There were 7,972 users who accessed our public Wi-Fi. Our hotspots were borrowed an average of 140 times per year. Tablets and Chromebooks were borrowed an average of 156 times per year.

Whether you are reading print or digital books, they are only free from the library. Not everyone has a Kindle or pays for Kindle unlimited. But you can read as many books, magazines, and newspapers as you'd like through the library.

Libraries are adaptable and thriving. They are a community hub, an educational hub, a social center, and a technology hub. The internet has existed since 1989; it did not eliminate libraries then and will not do so now.

How many books will actually be included in this expansion?

The center of the expansion provides additional shelving space. It includes an approximate 10% increase to the size of our current print collection. While it is hard to say the exact number of how many additional books will be included, we can estimate that it will be around 4,500.

Will this result in an ongoing increase in operating costs?

There will be an increase in operating cost. We are looking at every option to limit those increases including adding grant funded solar panels and joining the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI).

SLI provides library leaders with a proven path forward to co-create libraries and communities that will thrive in the coming years. The Sustainable Library Certification Program and the SLI community of practice focuses leadership to enable your library, and your community, to become more environmentally sound, socially equitable and economically feasible.

If groups don't have money to rent space, then they don't have money for a tax increase.

Our feedback did not show that organizations don't have money to rent space, it stated that space simply wasn't available for them. These are two separate issues. The fact is, there are very few spaces available for community use in Medina.

Why can't you get more grant money?

Grants come with a multitude of requirements. No one is going to give a grant for a "maybe" project. We needed to show that the community supported and wanted this project through the Bond Vote.

Grants usually do not give you the money in advance. You have to complete the project before they will give you the money.

Grants frequently have matching requirements. This is to show that the organization and the community support the project. The passed Bond Vote allows us to do that.

We are continuing to apply for additional grant funding.

Will you be fundraising? Why can't you do a one-time fundraiser?

Yes, we will begin fundraising in January 2025. We will be creating a community-based campaign committee to direct fundraising efforts.

A one-time fundraiser is not feasible for this project size. We will likely need multiple fundraisers.

Asking for money before seeking grants seems out of sequence?

Funding for municipal projects can be very confusing. In an earlier question, we talked about not receiving the full grant amount until project completion. This holds true for fundraising as well.

We will be offering a 5-year pledge period so some pledges will not be received in full until after the completion of the project. This allows people to give a larger amount of money over several years to lessen the annual impact on their giving.

Having a \$5.2 million bond allows us to borrow what we need during construction. After completion, when we have received all the grants and a portion of the fundraising we will immediately pay back what we can and then convert the remaining balance into a 20-year bond. As we continue to receive pledges and other donations and gifts, we will make extra payments to pay it off early.

Can't you just save more money?

According to NYS Real Property Tax Law Section 1318, we are limited in the amount of surplus fund balance we can save annually to 4%. Anything over that 4% must be used to offset the following year's tax levy. This is to prevent excessive taxing of the community.

At our current budget levels, we could save up to \$26,000 annually. However, the Library board works hard to ensure we do not overburden the community so there generally is no surplus for us to save.

Our current savings for the expansion have been through bequests, gifts, and donations.

This will never come off our taxes. It's a 30-year bond.

Both of these statements are false. The public vote specifically approved us for a 20-year bond. After 20 years, the tax levy will immediately be removed by the County Treasurer. If we wanted to change the terms of the bond, we would need to hold another public vote.

The school owns the Lee-Whedon Memorial Library, shouldn't they pay for it? This is a 53% increase in our school tax.

This is a common misperception. The Medina Central School District does not own Lee-Whedon Memorial Library. We are two separate organizations and our funding does not intermingle at any point. School district funds are used solely for the school. The Library levies its own tax which appears on your school bill each year. This is similar to a water district or fire district appearing on your county tax bill. The county does not get that money, the fire or water district does.

As two separate organizations, the Bond will not impact your school taxes. It will only change your Library levy. The current Library levy is \$92 per \$100,000 with a possible maximum increase of 53% though we anticipate it will be lowered through fundraising and additional grants.

With such a small margin shouldn't there be a revote? Less than 500 people showed up to vote. I didn't know about it.

As with the majority of elections, as long as one option has over 50%, a revote is unnecessary. In fact, this bond vote had a larger turnout than the school, village, or library votes in recent years.

There was a marketing campaign throughout November and December to get the word out to the community. We had several articles and ads in the Orleans Hub, ads in the Hometown Extra, and yard signs. Flyers were distributed to many of the businesses around Medina. Legal notices were run in October and November. Information was also posted on the library's website, the library's social media accounts, the School District's website, and we ran targeted Google ads.