



East Central Arkansas Regional Library

CROSS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Cherry Valley
Hickory Ridge
Parkin
Wynne/Cross County

WOODRUFF COUNTY LIBRARIES

Augusta/Woodruff County
Cotton Plant
McCroly

April 25, 2016

County Judge Donnie Sanders and the
Quorum Court of Cross County
C/O Courthouse
Wynne, Arkansas 72396

Dear Judge Sanders and Justices:

On behalf of the Cross County Library Board of Trustees, I am writing to request that the Quorum Court allow for the sale of the existing library property located at 410 and 412 E. Merriman Avenue, with the proceeds from the sale earmarked for renovation of properties into a new, larger home for the Cross County Public Library's Main Branch in Wynne. As I understand it, these actions can be accomplished by the Quorum Court, or the property can be transferred to the Library's Board of Trustees.

The informational needs and services provided by modern libraries and required by our community have made the existing building obsolete. A 2013 study determined that a minimum of 2,500 additional square feet were needed for library services. That study, recently revamped based on a projected population of 16,000 and meeting current service needs shows that additional space is required. Three other studies, using other modern library planning paradigms have been completed and all show that substantially more space is needed for modern public library services at the Main Library.

While there is space to add on to the existing facility, the existing configuration of the building leads to security issues within the facility. Another addition would only make these problems worse. The age of the building and current building codes would lead to extensive retrofit costs which would be required if we were to add on to the existing facility. While the existing facility is a great building, it is basically an old house, renovated into office space, and used as a public library. We could build a new building at the site, or at an alternate location, but only at a substantially higher cost.

As you know, the Wynne Economic Development Corporation, the City of Wynne, the Cross County Special Workshop and the Library Board jointly commissioned a feasibility study in 2015 to look at the costs involved for multiple public use facilities, including the library. The results of that feasibility study, showed that moving the Library into existing renovated buildings in the downtown Wynne (better known as the "Big Green Switch" project) between the coming Wynne

VIA HAND DELIVERY

"We empower ideas!"


HEADQUARTERS: 410 East Merriman Avenue, Wynne, Arkansas 72396; Telephone: 870-238-3850; Web: ecarls.org
Rev. John Paul Myrick, MLS, Executive Director/Regional Librarian

Public Square and Jessie Walling Park is the most feasible option available to the Library Board without significant influxes of capital, which are simply not available to the Board or to the Quorum Court. The move is supported by the Wynne Downtown Revitalization Committee, the Friends of the Cross County Library, and the Wynne Economic Development Corporation. WEDC has pledged \$150,000.00 jointly to the Library and the Cross County Special Workshop to help make the project a reality. The Friends of the Library stand ready to help raise the remainder of the funding needed.

I am ready at any time to discuss the entire project with those Justices who have not yet seen the presentation on the project. It is a dynamic vision for the Library, and I would hope you would commend your appointed Library Board for trying to take the right steps for the citizens of Cross County, and doing so cautiously. Copies of supporting documents are available on our website.

This project will not only bring our public library into the 21st century, but change the face of our entire county. It will demonstrate that the community recognizes its historic past, but is confidently poised to face the future. It will demonstrate the Quorum Court is in firm support of education, and bettering the quality of life in Cross County. Your consideration of this historic venture will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Rev. John Paul Myrick, BA., MLS.
Regional Librarian

CC. Cross County Library Board of Trustees
The Honorable Carolyn Ashcraft, State Librarian