



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Announces State Aid for Construction is Heading to Four District Libraries

PETE HARCKHAM October 12, 2020

| ISSUE: **PUBLIC LIBRARIES, LIBRARY FUNDING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



Peekskill, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham announced today that four libraries in the 40th Senate District have been allocated state aid for library construction funding. The libraries receiving the grants are the Brewster Public Library, Hendrick Hudson Free Library in Montrose, John C. Hart Memorial Library in Shrub Oak and Pound Ridge Library District. The grants total almost \$85,000.

“Public libraries are, in essence, well-used and much-loved community centers, and like all of infrastructure resources, require timely investments in their proper upkeep,” said Harckham. “I am pleased to have helped secure state grants for these four libraries with a full understanding that the scheduled repairs and enhancements will benefit residents for years to come.”

In Brewster, the library received \$27,195 to build in seating, shelving and a help desk for the children's area, all of which will be special needs accessible. The Hendrick Hudson Free Library received \$26,250 to upgrade its HVAC equipment and add on three new units to the building management system. The Hart Library received \$20,999 to install new energy efficient windows. And the Pound Ridge library received \$10,200 for a new, larger septic tank and replacement of doors and windows.

“The Pound Ridge Library is an essential community resource,” said Assemblyman David Buchwald. “We need to make sure our libraries have the resources to continue to improve their energy efficiency and infrastructure so I am pleased to have been able to support the Pound Ridge Public Library through our State's Public Library Construction Grant Program.”

The construction funding is from \$34 million in capital funds for public library projects provided in the FY2019-2020 State Budget.

New York's public libraries are in urgent need of renovation and upgrading. A recent survey showed a documented need for public library construction and renovation projects totaling more than \$1.5 billion. More than 52% of the over 1,000 public library buildings in communities across New York are over 60 years old. Another 31% are more than three decades old.

In addition, many of New York's local public libraries are unable to accommodate users with disabilities, are energy inefficient and cannot provide Internet and computer and other electronic technologies to users because of outdated and inadequate electrical wiring. Many libraries also do not have sufficient space to house their collections, or host meetings or room for public access computers.

Project activities and expenditures eligible for funding from the State Aid for Library Construction Program include financing construction of new library buildings, construction of additions to existing buildings, and the renovation and/or rehabilitation of existing space. Broadband infrastructure projects are also eligible. In the FY2020-2021 State Budget, the Legislature provided \$14 million for projects that will be announced in Summer 2021.