



**Agenda Action Form Overview**

The Board is requested to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 21BCC000006 to recognize \$15,000 in grant revenue from the Durham Library Foundation awarded by The Forest at Duke. The funds are for the library to purchase ebooks, e-audio and large print books for the library's digital and large print collections during the fiscal year 2020-2021, ending June 30, 2021.

The first week the library was closed due to COVID-19, circulation of all Overdrive collections rose 32% over the prior week. In the month after the library closed on March 15, over 9,000 Durham County Library patrons checked out 43,000 ebook and e-audio titles and placed almost 25,000 holds.

Even after stay-at-home orders are lifted and the library reopens, demand for ebooks and e-audio will likely remain high as patrons may be cautious to return to public spaces or, in the case of those who previously had not used these collections, may find they prefer digital materials. Grant funding from The Forest at Duke for ebooks and e-audio will increase access and reduce wait times for both veteran and new users of these formats.

Prior to the closure due to the pandemic, the library experienced increased circulation of large print books from July 2019 through February 2020 as compared to the same period the previous fiscal year. Large print best sellers attract significant holds queues just as regular editions do, and these funds will enable selection librarians to purchase more titles and copies to support the ongoing interest of the community in large print materials.

**Background/Justification**

The closure of libraries and the inaccessibility of physical library collections put unprecedented demand on the library's digital collections. Digital collections are more expensive than print collections with ebooks costing an average of \$40 per title and e-audio costing an average of \$75 per title. Further, many ebooks are subject to publishers' licensing restrictions. All the big 5 publishers offer only time-limited or circulation-limited licenses for ebooks. Once a title expires, it must be repurchased to retain access. The continual pressure to repurchase older popular titles competes with interest in new titles. While the cost of large print books has remained steady this year, large print books still cost an average of \$10-\$15 more per copy than regular print editions.

These funds will allow a greater number of ebooks, e-audio titles and large print books to be added to the collection, increasing options for library users who utilize these collections. The ability to order additional copies of popular titles will alleviate wait times and get ebooks, e-audio, and large print books into the hands of these users more quickly.

**Policy Impact**

NA

**Procurement Background**

NA



**Fiscal Impact**

Durham Library Foundation is providing \$15,000 from The Forest at Duke. Any expenses incurred beyond that will be covered by Durham County Library.

**Recommendation**

The County Manager recommends that the Board approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 21BCC000006 to recognize \$15,000 in grant revenue from the Durham Library Foundation awarded by The Forest at Duke.