



**GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**



Meeting Date	07/07/2021	Department	Library
Agenda Item	4.g) Consideration of suspending library late fines indefinitely.		
Est. Cost	\$6,000		

Background Information	<p>During the COVID pandemic, Council allowed library staff to suspend levying late fees for returned items.</p> <p>The Gardiner Public Library Board of Trustees reviewed the data on late fees in public libraries and studies have shown that this punitive action disenfranchises the people who need a public library the most. Studies also show that when fines are levied on overdue items, it gets harder to retrieve that library item. The Board recommends that Gardiner City Council suspend late fines indefinitely.</p> <p>Often times, we have to purchase a title twice due to our inability to get an item back. Studies indicate that the item is not returned because the borrower is unable or unwilling to pay a late fee.</p> <p>The library does have a local ordinance and a state statute that allows for us to have law enforcement retrieve our items, but this seems too heavy handed.</p> <p>Though we would prefer to have most library items returned fine free, we will continue levying fines on borrowed computers, certain ephemera and passes to Maine State Parks. Though we will not send along overdue notices, after a certain amount of time, we will send out a bill for the item that hinders access until that bill is paid.</p>
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Requested Action	"I move to suspend library late fines indefinitely with the exceptions stated above. (borrowed computers, certain ephemera and passes to Maine State Parks)"
City Manager and/or Finance Review	The Acting City Manager and the Library Director approve the above action.
Council Vote/ Action Taken	
Departmental Follow-Up	

City Clerk Use Only	1 st Reading _____	Advertised _____	EFFECTIVE DATE _____
	2 nd Reading _____	Advertised _____ w/in 15 Days	
	Final to Dept _____	Updated Book _____	Online _____