

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

## A G E N D A

**December 12, 2005 - 12:00 P.M. - Caucus Room - City Hall - City of Dover**  
*Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times.  
When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at [Jgreen@dover.de.us](mailto:Jgreen@dover.de.us))  
should you wish to be recognized.*

### AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. Discussion - Senior Citizens Overdue Library Books Fine

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NOTE: At the direction of Chairman Sadusky, the **time** of the PR&CE Committee meetings will be changing effective January 2006 from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. (There is no change for the dates of the meetings which are held on the Tuesday following the first Council Meeting of each month)



# Memorandum

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**To:** Parks, Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee

**From:** Anthony J. DePrima, AICP  
City Manager

**Date:** December 8, 2005

**Subject:** Discussion – Senior Citizens Overdue Library Books Fine

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In order to prepare for the Committee meeting on December 12, I asked our Library Director, Sheila Anderson to provide information concerning this issue so that a more informed decision can be made. Below is her response.

Kentnet, our current online public access catalog (OPAC), includes participation from the Dover Public Library, Kent County Library, the Harrington, Smyrna, and Milford public libraries, the Delaware Division of Libraries, and the library at Wesley College.

Beginning in March, Kentnet will be replaced with the Delaware Library Catalog which will include the agencies that were part of Kentnet as well as all of the public libraries in Sussex County, the Delaware State Archives, and all three Delaware Technical Community Colleges.

All parties agreed to have the same policies related to fines in order to maintain much-needed consistency throughout Kent County, Sussex County, and the Wilmington branch of Delaware Technical & Community College. We all agreed that senior citizens should begin paying library fines for overdue materials.

In the past, we have had problems with the lack of consistency in Kentnet. For example, some senior citizens register for their library cards in Dover knowing that they will not have to pay fines, and they will accumulate fines and overdue books at other libraries in the County. This is a problem because other patrons cannot use the materials that are checked out. Sometimes they are checked out for months at a time since the borrower knows there is no penalty for bringing the materials back late. Circulation statistics are affected because other patrons do not have access to the materials, and this may have an impact on State aid and reciprocal borrowing amounts.

The Milford Public Library and all of the public libraries in Sussex County have always charged fines to senior citizens. The Kent County Public Library began charging fines to senior citizens in 2003.

In preparation for the new OPAC, the library directors in Harrington and Smyrna worked with their town managers for permission to begin charging fines to senior citizens in January 2006. City staff agrees that it is necessary to be consistent throughout the entire system.

Besides extending fines to seniors, we are implementing the following changes so that we are all consistent throughout the system:

- \* DVDs and videos can be checked out for two weeks instead of one week.
- \* All fines for materials besides DVDs and videos will be \$.10 per day. Previously, the fines were \$.05 per day for juvenile materials and \$.15 per day for adult and young adult materials.
- \* People under the age of 18 can check out DVDs and videos that are cataloged as "juvenile" materials. In the past, only those ages 18 and older could check out videos and DVDs.

We rely on the Delaware Library Catalog for our main library service, which is fulfilling the informational and recreational needs of our patrons by allowing them to check out library materials. Statistics from the Delaware Library Catalog will be used for the allocation of funding. For example, the statistics used to determine our reciprocal borrowing amount from Kent County will be derived from the OPAC. Also, each year we report our usage statistics from the OPAC to the Delaware Division of Libraries, and this report is used to determine the amount of State aid that we are given each year. Library usage circulation statistics are also used when we apply for grant funding from local, State, and national agencies.

/clc

cc: Mayor and Council  
Zach Carter  
Sheila Anderson