

Fact Sheet for Beverly Hills
Questions and Answers about the Baldwin Public Library and the
Services It Provides to Beverly Hills
May 2010

What is the Baldwin Public Library?

The Baldwin Public Library is the Municipal Library of Birmingham. It has long been noted as an exemplary library. In the 2010 Hennen's American Public Library Ratings, Baldwin scored in the 97% percentile, ranking sixth out of 342 public libraries in Michigan.

How has it come about that Baldwin also serves the residents and businesses of Beverly Hills?

The Baldwin Library provides public library services to the residents and businesses of Beverly Hills—and also Bingham Farms—in exchange for annual payments that are set by longstanding contracts. Beverly Hills residents enjoy the same level of service as do Birmingham residents.

Why might Beverly Hills end its contract with Baldwin?

The Village of Beverly Hills has given notice that it will terminate its agreement with Baldwin as of June 30, 2011, unless it can find the funds necessary to continue its contractual payments. It has informed the Baldwin Public Library Board of Directors that it cannot afford to continue its association with Baldwin unless it raises additional revenue.

What is the purpose of the November 2, 2010, millage vote in Beverly Hills?

A vote in favor of a millage increase would allow the Village to continue a variety of services, including the library contract with Baldwin.

What services does the Baldwin Public Library currently provide to me as a resident of Beverly Hills?

- Access to a beautiful historical building with high-quality collections and an outstanding staff
- Unlimited circulation of a wide array of print and audiovisual materials
 - Beverly Hills residents checked out 152,318 items from Baldwin between April 2009 and March 2010—an average of 14.6 items per resident. This was a 67% increase from the same period four years earlier.
- Active participation in Baldwin's activities by many Beverly Hills residents of all ages, backgrounds, interests and income levels
 - As of March 2010, 46% of Beverly Hills residents were registered at Baldwin.
 - Between April 2009 and March 2010, 656 new Beverly Hills residents registered for library cards.
 - As of October 2009, 59% of Beverly Hills households contained at least one Baldwin cardholder.

- Interlibrary loan, including MeLCat—the Michigan Electronic Library Catalog—which allows you to borrow books from over 400 libraries throughout the state, including a number of university libraries
- Services to the homebound
- Reciprocal borrowing at over 70 other public libraries in the TLN Cooperative in southeast Michigan. Bloomfield Township is the most popular of these for Beverly Hills residents.
 - Beverly Hills residents checked out 18,478 items from the Bloomfield Township Public Library between April 2009 and March 2010.
- Priority registration for computer classes and for youth, teen and adult programs, including the Summer Reading Program and Learning in Retirement
 - A total of 26,925 people attended programs at Baldwin during the last year.
- Use of electronic databases, e-books and downloadable audio books—including from home
- Reference services, including assistance to the business community
- Readers’ advisory
- Support for schoolwork
- School visits by Baldwin staff and national authors
- Extended use of public computers in the Library
- One-on-one computer instruction
- Use of Library study rooms
- Beverly Hills Reading Center: Baldwin places books at the Beverly Hills Village Office for circulation on an honor basis.

What services will the Baldwin Public Library provide me if Beverly Hills terminates its contract with Baldwin?

Essentially none. Beverly Hills residents will still be allowed to enter the Baldwin Library and browse its collections, for all members of the public have that right. But Beverly Hills residents will not be able to check out materials, register for programs—including the summer reading program—or receive any of the other services listed above.

Will Baldwin actually stop serving my children even though they go to the Birmingham Public Schools or a private school within Birmingham?

That is correct. Baldwin provides services based on the community where you live, not on the school you attend.

If the contract is terminated, will I be able to buy an individual library card from Baldwin?

No. Baldwin Public Library does not sell individual or household cards now and does not intend to sell them in the future. Baldwin provides full services only to Birmingham residents and taxpayers and to people living in communities with which Baldwin has a contract—i.e., Beverly

Hills and Bingham Farms. Baldwin is committed to serving communities on a contractual basis, and not individuals on a pay-as-you-go basis. Neither the Bloomfield Township nor the Southfield Library sells cards either.

Will I be able to go to another library to check out books?

Generally no. The Beverly Hills contract with Baldwin provides Beverly Hills residents with permission to check materials out from over 70 other local libraries belonging to The Library Network (TLN). This group of libraries includes Bloomfield Township and Southfield. If the Baldwin contract is terminated, however, and Beverly Hills has no other contract, you will no longer be able to check out materials from those 70 libraries. It is true, however, that several local public libraries sell either individual or family cards to non-residents. Purchasing a card there entitles you to use **only** the library where the card was bought. For example, if you purchase a card at Royal Oak, Baldwin and Bloomfield Township would not honor it; you would be able to use it only at Royal Oak.

If the millage passes, how long will the contract between Beverly Hills and Baldwin last?

The contract between Beverly Hills and Baldwin is open-ended. If Beverly Hills rescinds its termination, the current contract will continue in effect until either party withdraws or seeks a renegotiation.

If the millage fails, will Beverly Hills find another way to fund its payments to Baldwin?

The Beverly Hills Village Council says no. At this point, the millage appears to be the only likely option that will allow Beverly Hills to continue library services with Baldwin, for the Beverly Hills Village Council has stated that without the millage, it will not be able to pay for the Baldwin contract. This is, however, a question that you would need to ask the Beverly Hills Village Council. Baldwin cannot speak for the Council.

If the millage fails, will Beverly Hills be able to renegotiate its contract with Baldwin and pay less?

No. The Baldwin Library Board is not in a position to renegotiate its contract with Beverly Hills. The Board believes that it must represent the concerns of Birmingham taxpayers, who are already paying more for library services than Beverly Hills residents and who are also responsible for the building's maintenance.

If Beverly Hills terminates its contract with Baldwin, what will be the last day that the Library provides services to Beverly Hills?

June 30, 2011.

Is the November millage request a result of Baldwin asking Beverly Hills for more money?

No. The current contract calls for Beverly Hills to pay a millage rate of 0.9184 for library services. Baldwin is not asking for an increase from Beverly Hills, and a “yes” vote on the millage will not give it one. A “yes” vote will only preserve the current rate. And in fact, the amount of revenue that millage rate brings Baldwin is expected to decrease 20% between fiscal year 2008-09 and fiscal year 2011-12.

Why doesn't Baldwin reduce its expenses?

It has and will do more. The Baldwin Library has already taken a number of steps to reduce expenses—and it plans to take even more in the future. The Library’s 2010-11 budget calls for a reduction in expenditures of over 11%, much of which will be borne by staff.

Is the Baldwin Library taking a position on the November 2, 2010, Beverly Hills millage vote?

No. The Baldwin Public Library, as an institution, is not taking a position on the vote. The purpose of this fact sheet is to explain Baldwin’s current stance on the provision of library services. If the Village of Beverly Hills finds **any** way to continue making its contractual payments to Baldwin, the Library will be happy to continue to provide services. If the Village terminates its contract with Baldwin, however, that will result in Beverly Hills residents losing nearly all privileges at Baldwin. The Village is, of course, always free to pursue alternate ways of providing its residents with library services.

Does Baldwin wish to continue serving Beverly Hills?

Yes. Baldwin has had a long and friendly relationship with the citizens, schools, businesses and nonprofit organizations of Beverly Hills. We would very much like to continue that relationship. But the Baldwin Public Library Board of Directors must also look after the interests of the citizens of Birmingham and make sure that the Village pays an appropriate share of the Library’s expenses, given its citizens’ usage of the Library.

Where can I obtain additional information?

Feel free to contact Baldwin Public Library Director Doug Koschik at 248-554-4681 or doug.koschik@baldwinlib.org.