



MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR TIM BURCHETT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BURCHETT: Library hours will be restored, returned to '08 levels *Will serve more citizens at no additional cost to taxpayers*

Knoxville, Tenn. — The Knox County Public Library will return operating hours at all of the system's branches and locations to 2008 levels in early November, at the direction of Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett. Although libraries will be open longer than they have been over the past two years, there will be no additional costs to Knox County taxpayers.

"Our library branches—whether it's Burlington, Cedar Bluff, downtown or any of the others—are the heart of our library system," Mayor Burchett said Thursday. "If we can extend hours, add some staff members and serve more people without impacting the budget, it's the right thing to do."

Library hours were cut and a hiring freeze was put into place in December 2008, a move that was touted at the time as a means of bringing savings to the system. At the request of Mayor Burchett, Library Director Myretta Black was able to determine that more than 175 additional library hours can be added each week within the current library system budget.

"That's 175 more hours that families, seniors and school kids can use their library system," Burchett said.

Fourteen full-time or part-time positions will also be filled, without any additional impact on the library system's budget.

"It was important for me to ensure that all of the new positions will be filled by people actually serving the public directly, and that's what they'll do," Mayor Burchett said. "It's about service, efficiency and savings."

"This is exciting news for the library staff, and even more so for the families, children and seniors who visit the libraries in their communities," Director Black said.

Although the level of service is being restored, the actual hours of operation for each branch are being worked out. The hours of operation will be released at a later date.

Currently, the Knox County Public Library operates 710 hours per week, and runs 18 library branches, in addition to the Knox County Archives and the McClung Collection, which are housed at the East Tennessee History Center. When the library hours are restored, the system will be open to the public for an additional 177.5 hours per week, for a total of 887.5 total operating hours.

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