

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION**  
*Library Committee*

**Issue Briefing**

**Topic:** Penn Wynne Library Board request to allow alcohol to be served at their Appetite for Books fundraising event in the library.

**Prepared By:** David Belanger, Director of Libraries

**Date:** July 6, 2018

- I. **Action To Be Considered By The Board:** Approval of the Penn Wynne Library request to serve alcohol at its fundraiser, Appetite for Books, to be held at the library. This includes a waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2 needed for this event.
- II. **Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** The Township Code restricts serving of alcohol on Township property, which is defined as a public place in the Code. § 111-4.2 states: No person shall drink an alcoholic beverage, nor shall any person, firm, corporation or other organization possess an open container containing an alcoholic beverage, whether inside or outside of a motor vehicle or any part thereof, on or in any public place within the Township of Lower Merion.
- III. **Current Policy or Practice (If Applicable):** The Board of Commissioners has allowed alcohol at library events in the past, most recently for the donor reception for the Ludington Library in 2012. The Township has rules in place under the Special Event Permit involving the Sale and/or Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages.
- IV. **Other Relevant Background Information:** The Appetite for Books fundraiser is a wine tasting, with each wine paired with a complimentary food. In addition, the evening centers on raffles and silent auctions, and live music. For the past three years, it was held by renting the Merion Tribute House. It has become the library's largest annual fundraising event, as well as a wonderful way to involve the community in the library's financial success. Having the event at the library will help increase attendance - both because many attendees live within walking distance of the library and because of higher visibility - and reduce costs. Moreover, the Library Board anticipates that having the event at the library will lead to more donations, since attendees will be in the space that they are supporting through the purchase of their tickets and through raffle tickets and silent auction bids.

In 2016 and 2017, the library hired JPM Catering for the event; JPM provided the necessary staff - including a certified professional bartender to serve the alcohol - as well as insurance (including general liability and alcohol liability). The library had additional general liability insurance provided by the Township. If approved, the Library Board will meet the requirements of a Special Events Permit and continue to work with JPM or

another caterer, and have professional bartenders to serve the alcohol, plus confirm appropriate insurance coverage. They will make clear on the invitation and publicity for the event that it is for adults ages 21 and up, and will verify age when attendees check in at the registration table at the event.

- V. **Impact on Township Finances:** This is the major annual fundraising event for the Penn Wynne Library. The ability to hold it at the library will reduce overhead costs. The funds generated are used to provide books and other materials for the library, along with special event programs. It helps to supplement and extend the Township funds provided for the operation of the library.
- VI. **Staff Recommendation:** That the Library Committee recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the Penn Wynne Library Board request to allow alcohol to be served at their Appetite for Books fundraising event in the library.