



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**November 15, 2005**

**Ordinance 15317**

**Proposed No.** 2005-0424.2

**Sponsors** Gossett

1 AN ORDINANCE related to the support of the King  
2 County Law Library; recognizing the need for additional  
3 financial support for the King County Law Library;  
4 directing the director of the department of judicial  
5 administration to reallocate from the current seventeen  
6 dollars to twenty dollars the portion of superior court civil  
7 filing fees paid to the credit of the library as provided by  
8 RCW 27.24.070; amending Ordinance 12383, Sections 2  
9 and 3 and adding a new chapter to K.C.C. Title 4.

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12 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

13 **SECTION 1. Findings:**

14 A. The primary funding source, which supports the operation of the King County  
15 Law Library comes from fees assessed on civil filings in district and superior courts. The  
16 filing fee funding mechanism uses a fixed fee formula set by the legislature. The portion  
17 of the filing fee paid in superior court designated for the support of the King County Law

18 Library was amended by the legislature in May 2005 under Chapter 457, Laws of  
19 Washington 2005 (Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5454), Section 16.

20 B. Filing fee income has failed to keep pace with the growing cost of law library  
21 operations driven primarily by escalating legal publication costs which account for half of  
22 the library's operating expenditures. Even with stringent collection management  
23 practices, the costs of providing a legal collection to support the research needs of the  
24 judiciary, prosecutor's office, government officials, practicing bar and members of the  
25 general public has increased significantly.

26 C. Concerned about the failure of the law library's existing funding sources to  
27 generate adequate funds to support current operating demands, in November 1995 the  
28 board of trustees of the King County Law Library revised the existing borrowing policies  
29 and instituted an annual subscriber fee for attorneys, businesses and residents of the  
30 county who wish to borrow books from the library.

31 D. While the institution of this fee created a new source of revenue, the library  
32 has adopted a deficit budget for the third year in a row- from 2002 through 2004. In prior  
33 deficit budget years, the library reduced spending by delaying special projects, curtailing  
34 the reinstatement of lapsed collection subscriptions and limiting spending for new books.  
35 The size of the deficit projected for 2006 makes such practices impracticable as the sole  
36 remedy. The trustees and staff spent the time during the seismic renovation relocation  
37 preparing for the return of the Seattle Library to the Courthouse by engaging in a space  
38 planning needs assessment. After developing a series of renovation goals, the board  
39 turned the library in a new direction when they initiated the planning process for the  
40 library's 85th Anniversary Capital Campaign. The goal of the capital campaign was to

41 raise from private contributions the funds needed to renovate the sixth floor Courthouse  
42 space to better meet the needs of those who rely on the resources and services provided  
43 by the library. When the library returned to the Courthouse at the end of September  
44 2004, the refurbished space contained new public computer work terminals, public  
45 wireless access, new carpet and paint, art pieces from the county's circulating collection,  
46 larger public conference rooms and a new information service counter and research  
47 assistance desk. While this capital campaign was successful, reliance on this method for  
48 a long-term funding solution is inadequate for the operation of the law library's two  
49 branches in Seattle and the Regional Justice Center.

50 E. The King County council last increased the law library's contribution from the  
51 superior court filing fee in 1996 with Ordinance 12383. Over the past nine years since  
52 this last increase, major changes in the legal publishing world have resulted in annual  
53 double digit price increases, an inflationary spiral that has forced changes in how the  
54 library provides access to legal information. In addition, over the last thirteen years since  
55 the legislature last increased the county law library's share of civil filing fees in superior  
56 and district courts, the number of district court filings have dropped each year and the  
57 number of superior court civil filings has remained virtually unchanged. During the same  
58 period, the cost of resources provided by the law library has skyrocketed.

59 F. RCW 27.24.070 provides that, upon showing of need, the seventeen-dollar  
60 portion of the superior court fee paid for the support of the law library may be increased  
61 up to twenty dollars by the county council upon the request of the law library board of  
62 trustees. The law library board of trustees has requested that the King County Law  
63 Library's share of the superior court filing fee be increased effective January 1, 2006, to

64 the statutory maximum of twenty dollars to support the operations of the Seattle  
65 Courthouse Law Library.

66 SECTION 2. Ordinance 12383, Section 2, and Ordinance 12383, Section 3, as  
67 amended by this ordinance, and sections 5 and 6 of this ordinance should constitute a new  
68 chapter in K.C.C. Title 4.

69 SECTION 3. Ordinance 12383, Section 2, is hereby amended to read as follows:

70 The ~~((D))~~director of the ~~((D))~~department of ~~((J))~~judicial ~~((A))~~administration is  
71 directed to ~~((reallocate from the current twelve dollars to fifteen))~~ allocate twenty dollars  
72 from the portion of the filing fee paid for civil filings in superior court to the credit of the  
73 King County Law Library as provided by RCW 27.24.070.

74 SECTION 4. Ordinance 12383, Section 3, is hereby amended to read as follows:

75 On or before ~~((August))~~ July 1~~((, 1996))~~ of each year, a report and review of  
76 ~~((L))~~law ~~((L))~~library financial status including the development of a proposed budget for  
77 the Kent Regional Justice Center branch law library shall be prepared by the King County  
78 Law Library and transmitted to the ~~((Council and the Executive))~~ superior court and the  
79 department of judicial administration for inclusion in the department of judicial  
80 administration budget submitted to the executive. The report shall include a  
81 recommendation on whether to include in the ~~((1997))~~ annual ~~((C))~~county budget any  
82 projected ~~((L))~~library budgetary shortfall resulting from operating costs associated with  
83 the Kent Regional Justice Center branch law library facility. The report also shall  
84 address potential funding sources, including, but not limited to ~~((Criminal Justice Excise~~  
85 ~~Tax revenues))~~, a portion of criminal code filing fees or from the ~~((C))~~county general  
86 fund.

87            NEW SECTION. SECTION 5. To assist the council in reviewing the future  
88 needs of the law library, the law library board of trustees shall continue to submit to the  
89 executive and the council a proposed Kent Regional Justice Center Law Library budget  
90 with a request for supplemental funding on or before the first Monday in September each  
91 year.

92            NEW SECTION. SECTION 6. Pursuant to RCW 27.24.040, the law library  
93 board of trustees shall, on or before the first Monday in September each year, submit an

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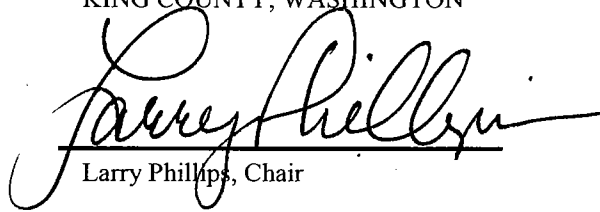
94 annual report to the county council giving the condition of their trust with a financial  
95 report showing all receipts and disbursements of money.

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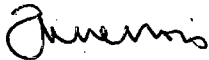
Ordinance 15317 was introduced on 10/24/2005 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 11/14/2005, by the following vote:

Yes: 13 - Mr. Phillips, Ms. Edmonds, Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Pelz, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Hammond, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague, Mr. Irons, Ms. Patterson and Mr. Constantine  
No: 0  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

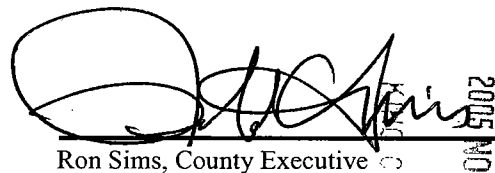
  
Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 22 day of NOVEMBER, 2005.

  
Ron Sims, County Executive

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RECEIVED  
CLERK  
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

Attachments None