Office of Community Involvement

Multnomah County

CBACs SPEAK!

Multnomah County
Community Budget Advisory Committees
FY25 Budget Reports & Recommendations
May 2024

Table of Contents

CENTRAL COMMUNITY BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and the Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners

From: Multnomah County Central Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

Subject: Central CBAC Report & Recommendations

Date submitted: April 25, 2024

Central CBAC Members

- Department of County Assets and Management: *No representation*
- Health Department: Rosalie Lee
- Multnomah County Library: Madison Riethman
- Joint Office of Homeless Services: Daniel DeMelo, *Chair*
- Non-Departmental: *No representation*
- Department of Community Services: Conrad Hulen
- Multnomah County Sheriff's Office: Corinne Frechette
- Department of County Human Services: *No representation*
- Multnomah County District Attorney: *No representation*
- Department of Community Justice: Tom Karawaki

Executive Summary

The Central Community Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC) has encountered significant obstacles in effectively carrying out its mandate during the FY 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025 budget cycles. These challenges include a lack of timely support from the Office of Community Involvement (OCI), inconsistent representation from departmental CBACs, and compressed timelines for reviewing budget proposals and submitting recommendations.

Key issues identified by the CCBAC include:

- Staff and community safety concerns across County departments
- The need for climate change preparedness, particularly in addressing health risks during extreme weather events
- Hiring and retention challenges, with a focus on ensuring qualified staff and addressing abusive behavior among leadership
- Lack of clarity regarding the impact of CBAC input on final budget decisions

The CCBAC recommends that the County:

1. Prioritize investments in sustainable, evidence-based programs that support staff and community health and safety
2. Implement recommendations from the Multnomah County Budget Process Audit, including engaging CBACs earlier in the process and providing transparency on actual expenditures
3. Extend CCBAC service terms and timelines to allow for adequate participation and review
4. Standardize departmental CBAC processes and improve communication pathways with OCI
5. Evaluate and address other limitations to CCBAC participation

By addressing these challenges and implementing the recommended changes, the County can enhance the effectiveness of the CCBAC and ensure that community input is meaningfully incorporated into the budget decision-making process.

Process

The Board of Commissioners is aware from the April 23, 2023 report submitted by the Central CBAC that, during the FY 2023-2024 budget cycle, the Central CBAC encountered significant obstacles that impeded its ability to effectively carry out its mandate. Unfortunately, these obstacles continued to occur during the 2023-2024 fiscal year and the FY 2024-2025 budget process. To provide context and detail on Central CBAC operations during this time, we have outlined processes and events from both the FY 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025 budget cycles.

FY 2023-2024 budget cycle

In 2023, the Central CBAC (CCBAC) first convened on February 8th, 2023 without support from the Office of Community Involvement (OCI), despite repeated requests from the apparently sole member of the CCBAC for the "technical assistance and clerical support" mandated by Multnomah County Code (§ 3.306 (E)). Only after the conditionally-elected chair testified at a Board of Commissioners meeting on February 16, 2023 to implore Multnomah County to support its CCBAC as required by Multnomah County Code did OCI finally reach out to assist the committee's efforts.

On March 15, 2023, the CCBAC chair held a private meeting with the OCI director, during which they agreed to convene the CCBAC on March 29 at 6pm. However, OCI failed to provide timely communication or assistance in organizing the meeting, and the agreed-upon date passed without acknowledgement from OCI. Instead, on April 3rd, OCI announced an "informational" meeting to be held on April 5, giving representatives less than 48 hours' notice.

On April 12, 2023, CCBAC representatives met with County Chair Vega-Pederson. Each representative was instructed to ask the Chair a single question; however, this proved challenging since the group had not been given any prior opportunities for discussion or deliberation.

As the meeting unfolded, it became increasingly apparent that the representatives to the CCBAC had not been provided with accurate information from the County regarding their participation. The Department of County Assets and Management CBAC and Sheriff's Office CBAC sent multiple representatives, despite Multnomah County Code stipulating that each CBAC should select only one member (§ 3.306 (A)). Conversely, the Department of County Human Services CBAC, District

Attorney CBAC, and Department of Community Justice CBAC sent no representatives to the CCBAC. At least one representative disclosed that they were not selected in a public meeting by vote. This revelation posed a significant issue, as the committee could not determine with absolute certainty whether it had a quorum. Despite repeated requests, the County failed to provide the CCBAC with a comprehensive list of its membership. It is crucial to highlight that this appears to have been a substantial and long-standing error in practice: every CCBAC report submitted since 2019 has reflected the participation of multiple CCBAC representatives from at least one departmental CBAC.

2023-2024 fiscal year

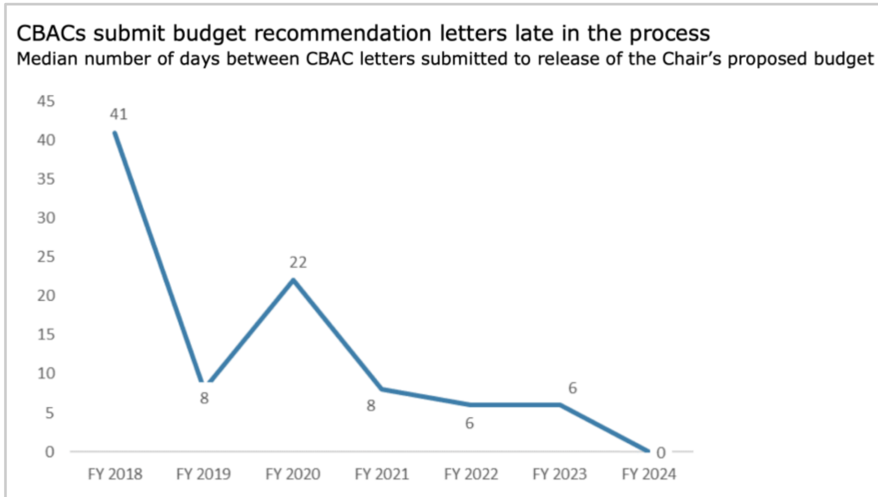
Regrettably, these inconsistencies and compressed timelines persisted into the current fiscal year, further exacerbating the challenges faced by the CCBAC in fulfilling its mandate and responsibilities.

On June 15, 2023, the Multnomah County Chair released a June 13 letter addressed to CBAC members stating that "Over the summer I will be working with the Office of Community Involvement (OCI) and Department staff leads to make updates to our CBAC process for a better future experience. During this time, we will be asking all current and previous CBAC Members to offer insight to their experience and give feedback on needed changes. I believe together we can create a process we can all be proud of." As far as this committee is aware, this did not occur.

On August 9, 2023, the CCBAC convened at the Hollywood Library, once again without support from OCI. The committee invited each Commissioner to this meeting; Commissioners Meieran and Brim Edwards met with the Central CBAC to discuss the difficulties the committee was encountering in pursuing its mandate. CCBAC Chair Daniel DeMelo and Sheriff's Office CBAC representative Patrick Pangburn were in attendance.

On October 17, 2023, Willamette Week reported that the Sheriff's Office CBAC had dwindled to a single member, Patrick Pangburn, despite Multnomah County Code's requirement that each departmental CBAC "will be composed of seven members appointed by the Chair upon the approval of the board" (§ 3.302 (A)). However, in a subsequent discussion between Pangburn and the CCBAC chair, it was revealed that Pangburn's term, limited by Multnomah County Code to 3 calendar years (§ 3.302 (C)), had expired on December 5th, 2022. No County representative had informed Pangburn that his term had lapsed, and County staff continued to encourage and facilitate Pangburn's participation in both the Sheriff's CBAC and the CCBAC, despite the fact that Pangburn was no longer a member of any CBAC *(the CCBAC would like to note that Pangburn's participation was nevertheless extremely helpful and that responsibility for this lapse in lawful compliance with Multnomah County Code lies only with county administration)*.

Shortly thereafter, County Auditor Jennifer McGuirk released an audit on Multnomah County's Budget Process. The audit notes that "In three of the last four years, CBACs submitted budget letters fewer than 10 days before release of the Chair's proposed budget. With this in mind, it is not surprising that CBAC members surveyed by the Office of Community Involvement said they did not believe their input had an impact on the budget."



The survey data mentioned in the Budget Process Audit was obtained by the CCBAC chair via public records request. The survey – conducted after the conclusion of the FY 2022-2023 budget cycle – revealed the following averaged responses to several recommendations (where a score of 1 represents strong disagreement and 5 represents strong agreement):

- "I would support changes to my CBAC's meeting schedule that would allow our committee to provide input earlier in the budget process." – 4.41
- "I support changing the program timeline so CBACs submit a recommendation letter, centered on a set of priorities, to department and county leadership in January or early February." – 4.14
- "It would be useful for the Chair to meet with each CBAC in January or early February, prior to her receiving program offers from departments and finalizing her executive budget." – 4.30

Notably, the results of this survey were available to County administration well before the "pause" that forced the CCBAC to meet on a compressed schedule in 2023, and certainly prior to the current CCBAC process and budget cycle for FY 2024-2025. Despite this feedback, the County failed to take meaningful action to address the concerns raised by previous CCBAC members and failed to implement any recommendations from the Auditor's Budget Process Audit during this year's budget cycle.

2024-2025 budget cycle

On December 5, 2023, OCI announced new guidelines for CBACs. These guidelines made explicit the County's preference for County staff to set meetings and agendas for CBACs, rather than their volunteer participants.

The release of these guidelines included a note about key dates in the FY 2024-2025 budget engagement process. Notably, despite the overwhelming desire from CBAC participants for earlier engagement in the budget process and the County Auditor's recommendation to the same effect, departmental CBAC letters were once again due to OCI on the same date that the Chair would release her budget, leaving no time for the CCBAC to use these departmental CBAC letters in developing their recommendations.

Additionally, these guidelines noted that on February 12, 2024, OCI would convene the CCBAC. February 12, 2024 passed without a meeting of the CCBAC.

On April 2, 2024, the chair of the CCBAC inquired with OCI about the status of the CCBAC. In an exact replay of the prior year, on April 3, OCI responded, stating that "we just confirmed the dates with the Chair" and once again announced an April 5 "Info Session" meeting with less than 48 hours notice.

The CCBAC was first convened on April 11, 2024 to begin activities for the FY 2024-2025 budget cycle. We re-elected our chair, discussed and agreed upon the role of the CCBAC, and established our shared values of equity, compassion, and human dignity, which drive our input on the budget and County activities. The three (3) CCBAC members present for the full meeting then drafted an outline of this report.

In our discussion, we lamented the fact that the CCBAC was unable to support the work of individual departmental CBACs throughout the budget engagement process, and noted the severe limitations placed on our ability to complete our mandated objectives due to rushed and unclear communications from County conveners, a constricted timeline, and the absence of representation from 6 of the 10 departmental CBACs. Given these limitations, the CCBAC was unable to adequately fulfill the mandate to provide input on the budget in areas that cross one or more departments.

On April 18, 2024, the CCBAC finalized this report, with participation from 6 departmental CBAC representatives.

EMERGING ISSUES

Contributing CBAC members discussed two categories of emerging issues as part of the review process: 1) Issues addressed in multiple departmental CBAC budget proposals and reports, and 2) Issues with the CCBAC in trying to meet its objectives.

1. Issues addressed in multiple departmental CBAC budget proposals and reports

Staff and community safety remains a chief concern across County departments, especially within the context of policy changes at the state level. Departmental budgets and memos reflect this concern, as resources are allocated towards addressing health and safety issues through dedicated staffing, speciality contracts, and facilities maintenance and upgrades. In many cases, this comes in addition to new and existing programs that support staff and community members in receiving the upstream care and services they need. The CCBAC applauds departments in their focus on community and staff health and safety, and encourages the County to support this focus in its budget, while also recognizing that these increased costs come with the risk of losing other programs, staff, and activities valued by the community.

In addition to the focus on immediate health and safety concerns, the County must also prepare for the long-term impacts of climate change on our community. As extreme weather events become more frequent and intense, it is crucial that we invest in strategies to protect the health and well-being of our residents during both warm and cold weather. The Health Department should continue to develop and implement plans to mitigate the health risks associated with heat waves, such as expanding access to cooling centers and providing education on heat-related illnesses. Similarly, the Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) should work to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness have access to safe, warm shelter during cold weather events. All County departments must prioritize facilities maintenance to ensure all County facilities are prepared for any foreseeable climate-related issue. Unfortunately, some climate responses have been hindered by a lack of clear organizing for volunteer support during severe weather events. By proactively addressing the challenges posed by climate change, we can build a more resilient community that is better equipped to weather future crises. The CCBAC urges the County to prioritize funding for these climate change preparedness efforts, recognizing that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

We are dismayed by the apparent toleration of abusive behavior among leadership in multiple departments. It is deeply troubling to see a common thread emerge, where staff under investigation for misconduct appear to continue to have been employed or otherwise work with the County, as has been the case in multiple departments, including at JOHS and the Health Department. This pattern suggests a systemic issue that must be addressed. The county has a responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, and that starts with holding leadership accountable for their actions. We strongly urge the County to take swift and decisive action to investigate and address any allegations of abusive behavior, and to implement policies and procedures that prioritize the well-being of staff. Failure to do so not only puts employees at risk, but also undermines the ability of departments to effectively serve the community. The CCBAC believes that investing in a positive and supportive workplace culture is essential for attracting and retaining talented staff, and ultimately for delivering high-quality services to our residents.

The CCBAC acknowledges the difficulties faced by various County departments in hiring and retaining staff. However, we strongly emphasize the importance of ensuring that all staff members are qualified for their positions and have earned the trust of the community, their colleagues, and volunteers. Competitive pay and positive work conditions play a crucial role in attracting and retaining talented employees. By prioritizing fair compensation and fostering a supportive work environment, the County can reduce turnover and maintain a skilled, experienced workforce. This is particularly important when it comes to trauma-informed training, as retention helps ensure that staff members are well-equipped to handle the complex challenges they face in their work. Moreover, focusing on retention is an effective strategy for combating burnout, which can have a detrimental impact on both staff well-being and the quality of services provided to the community. The CCBAC urges the County to invest in its workforce by offering competitive wages, promoting a healthy work-life balance, and providing ongoing professional development opportunities. By doing so, we can build a stable, committed team of public servants who are dedicated to meeting the needs of our residents.

2. Issues with the Central CBAC in trying to meet its objectives

The aim of the CCBAC is to review and discuss departmental budget proposals and CBAC memos, in order to provide feedback on the direction of the County budget and operations at large. While participating members agreed upon this central aim, the CCBACs ability to achieve it was severely hindered by lack of representation and significant time constraints.

With only 6 of the County's 10 departmental CBACs participating in this year's CCBAC report, discussion was limited to the perspectives and departmental expertise brought by these individuals. There are likely additional commonalities that would have been valuable to discuss, but were ultimately unable to be included in this report due in part to a lack of representation. Of those CCBAC representatives who were present, some were appointed late and with limited knowledge of the CCBACs role and objectives. Departmental CBAC processes and timelines varied greatly; for example, some departmental CBACs had already convened and submitted their memos, while others had not. This resulted in valuable time lost to first understanding these process differences in order to then talk through contents and commonalities.

Adding to the challenges faced by the CCBAC, multiple departmental CBACs reported a lack of clarity regarding the value and impact of their input. Volunteers across all County CBACs have invested countless hours in reviewing and providing feedback on budgetary matters, yet there is little clarity on how their efforts have influenced the final budget decisions. While it is understood that certain aspects of the budget are mandated and non-negotiable, CBACs have expressed a need for clearer guidance on which areas of spending are more discretionary and open to their input. This opacity in the process has left many CBAC members questioning the true purpose and efficacy of their involvement. It is disheartening to consider that the collective efforts of over 70 dedicated volunteers may have had minimal tangible impact on the budget beyond the mere fact that it has undergone the CBAC review process. The County must take steps to provide greater transparency and clear communication regarding the role and influence of CBACs in the budgetary decision-making process. Failing to do so risks undermining the very purpose of these advisory bodies and diminishing the trust and engagement of the volunteers and the community writ large who generously contribute their time and expertise.

This CCBAC was ultimately given seven days to complete its objectives: convene, review and discuss the ten departmental budgets and memos, and submit a final CCBAC report. This amount of time is greatly insufficient, particularly when combined with the participation and process challenges discussed above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Prioritize aspects of each program offer that address staff and community health and safety, and identify ways to support this without sacrificing core department services

The CCBAC applauds individual departments in their efforts to dedicate resources to ensuring staff and community health and safety, while also maintaining adequate funding for their core programs and activities. We request the County support departments in achieving this difficult balance, and that the budget prioritizes investments in sustainable, evidence-based, upstream programs that support staff and community member health and safety and therefore reduce the need for individual departments to apply reactive and expensive temporary measures.

The CCBAC is encouraged by Chair Jessica Vega Pederson's support for a "One County" vision, and we support the de-siloing of departments and services within Multnomah County in order to support more efficient and cost-effective operations. In particular, we request an increase in collaboration and referral pathways between County departments, to best utilize each department's resources and expertise while limiting duplicative departmental spending.

2. ***Implement recommendations from the [Multnomah County Budget Process Audit](), published October 2023***

The Central CBAC requests timely implementation of the recommendations outlined in this audit to facilitate more effective CBAC operations. In particular:

- *"The central budget office and Chief Financial Officer should develop an ongoing process for all county departments to report to the Board of County Commissioners at least once each fiscal year to compare the adopted budget to actual expenditures at the program offer level":* Information on actual expenditures, particularly in relation to the budgets on which the CBACs are tasked with advising, is essential information to CBACs for providing informed budget feedback year over year.
- *"The Board of County Commissioners should develop a policy requiring departments to report to them when they intend to make expenditures in a way that that the Board defines as materially different than how they proposed to spend funds in program offers":* As highlighted above, CBACs cannot provide adequate input on program offers if they do not have data on how previous program offers aligned with actual spending.
- *"The Chair should direct the central budget office and departments to engage community budget advisory committees earlier in the budget process so their comments have more time to be addressed before the release of the Chair's proposed budget":* As has been demonstrated over multiple fiscal years, departmental and central CBACs cannot adequately carry out their objectives within the current time constraints (see item 3 below).

3. ***Extend CCBAC service terms and timelines***

We reiterate previous support and recommendations for a year-round CCBAC, with members appointed with ample time to understand and participate in CCBAC operations and in a manner consistent with requirements per Multnomah County Code. We recommend Central CBAC members be appointed no less than six (6) months prior to the submission due date of the Central CBAC report, which should be set for no less than one (1) month prior to the release of the Chair's proposed budget. We also recommend that the CCBAC, in collaboration with OCI, establish procedures in which new departmental CBAC representatives are appointed, in the event of continued non-participation by the initially appointed representative.

The CCBAC appreciates the effort to implement leadership involvement early in the CBAC process, and found the presence of County commissioners at CBAC events prior to budget review and report development was helpful. We request that involvement by the County Commission and OCI be incorporated year round, not just in the weeks approaching the release of the proposed budget.

4. Standardize Departmental CBAC processes

While the Central CBAC recognizes the importance for each departmental CBAC to maintain its own review processes and operations, the lack of alignment on core activities and timelines between departmental CBACs placed severe constraints on the CCBAC's ability to achieve its aims.

We advise that departmental CBACs meet year-round, and elect their CCBAC representative no less than six (6) month's prior to the submission due date of the CCBAC report. Departmental CBACs should be required to submit their departmental memos no less than six (6) weeks prior to the release of the Chair's proposed budget, in order to be effectively used by the CCBAC in preparing its report.

Each departmental CBAC that participated in a site visit as part of their review process found this very valuable; we recommend all departmental CBACs incorporate this as standard practice.

All participating departmental CBAC representatives reported rushed and unclear communication on the CCBAC appointment process, as well as a lack of information about the roles and responsibilities of CCBAC representatives. We recommend OCI establish stronger communication pathways with departmental CBACs in order to ensure stronger engagement in CCBAC operations.

The CCBAC also recommends that the County's de-siloing effort extend beyond County departments, with collaboration between Portland and Gresham Budget Advisory Committees (BACs) and County departmental CBACs with similar functions (for example, the Sheriff's Office CBAC should meet at least once with the Portland Police Bureau BAC). This would allow for greater alignment on County-wide aims, as well as operational best practice sharing.

5. Evaluate and address other limitations to Central CBAC participation

We have identified a lack of early engagement, inconsistent and unclear communications, and an extremely condensed timeline for participation as major contributors to the lack of CCBAC participation by departmental CBAC representatives; however, we request OCI assess and respond to other factors that may be contributing to poor participation.

Office of Community Involvement

Multnomah County

DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners (3) pages

FROM: Department of Community Justice Community Budget Advisory Committee

DATE: April 25, 2024

SUBJECT: DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

Introduction

April is National Second Chance Act Month, commemorating the passage of the historic and bi-partisan law in 2008 that authorized a federal investment to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, while reducing corrections costs to local communities. The Act recognizes that the over 2 million Americans coming out of jails and prisons face complex challenges reintegrating into society, including those relating to mental health, substance use, housing and homelessness, education and employment, and providing for their children and families.

Given the remarks of the Chair in her recent 2024 State of the County address, as well as her comments on the FY 2025 budget, we feel that this anniversary of the passage of this historic Act is particularly resonant with the issues currently facing our county, and its spirit can serve as a guide for how we move forward in our approach to Community Justice. The Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ) has multiple programs that make strong efforts to give our County's citizens important Second Chances. This is done through a host of programs that take place pre-sentencing, at jails and other correctional facilities, as well as in the community for both offenders and those who are victims of crime.

We thank the the Chair Vega Pederson and the Board of County Commissioners for their efforts to persuade the State of Oregon to live up to its agreements with the County to fund these programs, but we also ask that the board continue to push State lawmakers on this issue, as a significant portion of this year's budget shortfall is due to a lack of State funding. Simply put, the people served by the DCJ have far more serious mental health, substance abuse, and housing concerns that require more time and resources than in the past.

It is for that reason that, in lieu of improved State funding, we members of the DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee fully endorse and support the proposed FY 2025 budget submittal by the DCJ.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee is committed to helping achieve a safe county for all residents. We affirm that the DCJ is a nationally recognized pioneer in juvenile justice, gun violence reduction, and in helping youth and adults obtain mental health and substance abuse treatment and social services. We encourage County leaders to build on these successful programs by bolstering this department's professional staff with the support and resources they need. We urge County leadership to prioritize those services that promote true community safety, rather than inflating the funding of supervision and law enforcement programs. Specifically, this means investing in culturally specific, community based programs and victim services throughout the County and creating a working environment that is safe for all.

PROCESS

During 2023 and 2024, the DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee met monthly with DCJ staff, visited various DCJ sites to learn about their programs, and were educated on the County budget process. The DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee appreciates having the opportunity to review and speak with DCJ staff about the Department's budget, to gain a better understanding of the issues facing the department and the budget process. We encourage the department and the Chair's Office, as well as the Office of Community Involvement, to continue to explore ways to increase transparency, timeliness, and engagement for the Multnomah County community in the budget process.

In order to enable better engagement, we would suggest more intentional efforts to expand the membership of the Community Budget Advisory Committees. Two obvious first steps would be offering stipends to committee members and more aggressive recruitment of affected populations. Stipends would enable more consistent attendance and participation, especially from those community members who are lower income. For the Community Justice Advisory Committee in particular, an effort to recruit members who have directly interacted with the criminal justice system would lead to a sharpened focus on those programs which help justice involved individuals the most. Efforts like these to expand the Community Budget Advisory Committees would lead to richer dialogue and a better representation of the community in the budget process.

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK

We urge County leadership to consider a reduction in the supervision population and reallocate funding from supervision-related services toward victim services and culturally specific community based programs. These programs are underfunded, but they serve an increasing number of individuals. We also want to celebrate the successful work of the DCJ employees who are using innovative approaches and taking a whole-person and team-based approach with their clients. We urge the County leaders to require “warm-hand-offs”, so that there is a seamless transition between departments and programs. With this approach personal success is encouraged and the investment the County has made in the individual and for community safety is protected. This means that mental health, housing, and other services County and contractor staff provide are involved earlier in the transition process, and that the resources and people of the community are engaged.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

We call out several DCJ initiatives and program offers for your special consideration.

The first is Program # 50041: DCJ’s Stabilization and Readiness Program (SARP). This is an incredible program serving individuals struggling with mental illness, who are currently on supervision, many of whom are unsheltered. This program has over a 50% success rate in getting participants into housing, 40% success rate in getting participants into substance abuse treatment, and an 80% success rate in getting participants into case management or skill training. Strongly BIPoC, this population is at high risk for reoffending and 64% have been convicted of a crime against a person. The DCJ Community Budget Advisory Committee recommends increasing the funding for this program at the level requested by the DCJ so that the department can serve more people at this crucial and necessary point of intervention.

In keeping with the Chair's “Whole County” approach, the DCJ experience with the SARP Day Center could also be a helpful model for the Health Department as it opens up a Day Center in

St Johns. The different departments of the County should use these Day Centers as a sort of “one stop shop” to provide services to unsheltered and mentally ill individuals.

The second is Program Offer # 50066A: Juvenile Restorative Practices Team, and a similar Program Offer # 50013 funding culturally responsive programming. Together these programs continue and build upon the DCJ's nationally recognized models of diversion and applying restorative justice with juveniles. It also includes staffing for the DCJ to more fully participate in County-City teams that deal with preventing gun violence by juveniles. The DCJ has expertise and a different perspective, which will prove valuable in these efforts.

The third Program is Program #50003A: DCJ Victim and Survivor Support Services. Provide at least $100,000 to provide for supplemental support for victims and survivors (shelter, groceries, transportation etc.). These funds are used as a last resort when other community resources have been exhausted, so removing them would be especially painful for those who need them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee would like to give special thanks to all DCJ staff that took time out of their evenings to attend our monthly meetings and provide us with valuable information about the budget and the department. In particular, Tami Wallis facilitated and arranged our meetings, and she was always available to respond to our questions. We appreciate your commitment to this work!

Department of Community Services CBAC Report

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners
(4) pages

FROM: Department of Community Services Community Budget Advisory Committee (DCS CBAC)

DATE: April 25, 2024

SUBJECT: Department of Community Services Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The members of the DCS CBAC appreciate the opportunity to support the county budget process. Following a comprehensive review of Elections, Land Use Planning, Transportation, and Animal Services divisions' practices and needs, as well as those of the Director's Office, we identify six (6) priority, out-of-target program offers under two themes: Maintaining Trust in Elections and Restoring Trust in Animal Services. These address critical needs but are not exclusive. In our judgment, all work that DCS does is urgent and essential to our community. We expand on emerging concerns that factored into our prioritization decisions within this document.

PROCESS

This CBAC began meeting to prepare for this budget season in October, and thanks to the proactive help and preparation of DCS staff, we were able to get a full overview of the work, priorities, and budget requests of the Director's Office and each DCS division in time to inform this document. At presentations arranged by DCS staff, Directors explained the work of their divisions, rationales for their budget appeals, and future plans. In evaluating program offers we applied two criteria.

1. Prioritize funding for services that equitably benefit the broadest array of community members.
2. Prioritize funding for repair of structural issues in existing division operations so that expected services can be reliably provided without recurrent dependence on employees' crisis-level efforts.

CBAC members met for work sessions to rank and discuss the proposed budget items. There was also a follow-up meeting with Department staff to facilitate additional questions. We'd like to thank everyone involved for creating an atmosphere of transparency and collaboration.

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK

After reviewing all of the DCS program offers, we believe that the Chair and the Board should prioritize Elections and Animal Services operations support. Our core motivation is to maintain - or in the case of Animal Services, restore - a high level of service, which is essential to earning community trust (a critical priority for the County at this juncture).

In the case of Elections, Portland's transition to the new Ranked Choice Voting methodology poses an enormous challenge, and having the resources to prepare for and execute the election in a timely, transparent, and accurate manner will be key in setting the new system of government up for success. The Elections team is prepared, professional, and thoughtful, so we have high confidence that any resources dedicated will be deployed effectively.

For Animal Services, our goal is to help them obtain the resources they need to recover from previous mismanagement. When the County takes on the responsibility of caring for these animals, there should be no question about whether they are getting the care they need. We have been heartened to see the efforts that have gone into getting this critical County function back on track, and we want to make sure that progress continues.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

Our specific recommendations for program offer prioritization are as follows:

1. Maintain Trust in Elections - Total: $1,276,435
    a. a. 90010B - Presidential Election
    b. b. 90010D - Ranked Choice Voting (OTO)
    c. c. 90009 - Charter Reform Rank Choice Voting
    d. d. 90010C - Restore Elections Outreach and Operations

    The Elections Division must both implement a new system of voting for both the County and the City of Portland and educate the public on how the new voting and vote-counting processes will work. Not only must the Division be able to effectively execute this work, but it needs to do so in a way that earns and maintains the trust of all residents. We believe that funding the four program offers listed above will give the Elections Division the resources it needs to accomplish this tall order in FY2025.

2. Restore Trust in Animal Services - Total: $516,171
    a. 90008B Animal Health Professional Services - emergency care and spay/neuter
    b. 90007B Animal Care

    The Committee specifically chose these two program offers from Animal Services because we believe that the highest priority for the Division right now is to demonstrate a commitment to delivering good care for the animals that go through the Animal Services system.

Members: *Matt Tuckerbaum, James Ellis, Peter Finley Fry, Conrad Hulen, Taylor Scott, Chuck Woods*
Staff: *Denell Broncho, Britta Schinske, Rose Cervenak, Tina LeFebvre, Hoa Vu*

EMERGING THEMES FOR BOARD ATTENTION
Through our conversations with DCS staff, the CBAC identified three emerging challenges to the ongoing or expanded operations within the department:

Land Use Division Organizational Stability
Over the last few years, we have observed two problems at the Land Use Division: difficulty managing the Land Use domain with an outdated code, and significant staff turnover and hiring challenges. We can see that these problems might exacerbate each other, but we do not have sufficient insight to determine what the root cause is. Despite our belief that the Land Use code update is important to simplifying the Division's work and improving equity and outcomes for residents, we are not convinced that additional funding for the code improvement project is what the Division needs right now. We hope that, with strong leadership at the Department level from Director Bradway, Land Use can find the organizational stability that will make additional funding a clear choice without a significant opportunity cost.

Transportation and Animal Services Revenue Models
The Transportation and Animal Services Divisions provide direct value to members of the community, and there are specific transactions (e.g. pet registration, vehicle registration, etc.) that provide some of the funding for their operations. However, the current revenue models used to fund these two Divisions are unsustainable or are insufficient to meet necessary service levels. Transportation is experiencing a decline in gas tax revenues and fees from vehicle registrations, and Animal Services has proposed reducing or eliminating adoption fees to address equity issues. Transportation is also limited in what it can fund with gas taxes, leading to the annual submission of a program offer to fund ADA ramp construction. This committee strongly believes that the Department should prioritize development of revenue models that will (1) keep these Divisions from competing for scarce general fund dollars and (2) enable the County to easily fund projects like ADA ramps, which advance our community's equity goals.

Fairness of Elections Funding
In our current governmental structure, our County Elections office is often squeezed between unfunded mandates passed by the State Legislature and the responsibility of administering elections for our state's largest city. In some cases, the Elections office is able to charge entities like the David Douglas School District for the cost of administering special elections. That is not the case with Portland's Charter Reform effort, which imposes significant preparation and administrative costs on the County team. We want to highlight these challenges and ask that the County Board set policies in collaboration with City and State officials to reduce the funding burdens and uncertainty imposed on our critical Elections service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS –
The committee would like to give special thanks to Denell Broncho, Department Assistant Director, for her proactive leadership and commitment to assisting our CBAC throughout this process.

The committee would also like to thank the following folks for the information, insight, and perspectives they brought to this process:

Members: *Matt Tuckerbaum, James Ellis, Peter Finley Fry, Conrad Hulen, Taylor Scott, Chuck Woods*
Staff: *Denell Broncho, Britta Schinske, Rose Cervenak, Tina LeFebvre, Hoa Vu*

- Margi Bradway, Department Director
- Adam Barber, Interim Land Use Planning Director
- Tim Scott, Elections Director
- Erin Grahek, Animal Services Director
- Jon Henrichsen, Transportation Director
- Britta Schinske, Senior Finance Manager

We also appreciate Rose Cervenak, Tina LeFebvre, and Hoa Vu for their work in facilitating the committee, coordinating with staff, and for their excellent taste in takeout.

Department of County Assets & Department of County Management CBAC

TO:	Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners	(6) pages
FROM:	Department of County Assets (DCA) and Department of County Management (DCM) Community Budget Advisory Committee	
DATE:	April 25, 2024	
SUBJECT:	Department of County Assets and Department of County Management Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations	

The Dept. of County Management/Dept. of County Assets Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) members appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the Fiscal Year 2025 budget priorities of these two departments. The perspectives we bring come from our lived experience, professions, education, and community work. This year's members' professional backgrounds include financial services, nonprofit work, retail, and customer service, and contracting. We share common desires to give back to our community and to ensure fiscally responsible use of our tax dollars.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - Our final report will focus on program offers that align best with our core values and guiding principles. The DCA/DCM CBAC believes each of the items below is important to strive for and a prerequisite for good budgetary oversight.

- Ensuring the County is using public money responsibly.
- Making sure government agencies are responsible for their actions.
- Viewing budgets as moral documents and commitments to the most vulnerable members of our community.
- Making sure everyone in the County workforce is treated fairly, and that their health and safety are prioritized.
- Promoting transparency so that the public can see what the government is doing.
- Recognizing that racism exists in our government systems.

Our recommendations cover a wide range of issues, which is reflective of the diverse needs that DCA and DCM serve within the County. These recommendations include increased strategic planning, organizational and operational efficiency, workplace security, and information technology improvements. Our members discussed the relative merits of each program offer and collectively decided which offers to highlight for the Board. We also noted the impact of a looming constraint year and the need to make responsible reductions in services. Our hope is that these programs help support the County's continued growth and service to the public.

PROCESS - Our group convened for virtual, hour-long meetings every other week for twenty weeks, where collaborative discussions were held with ten representatives from the County. Before each meeting, we identified the department and the individual(s) with whom we intended to engage. We used a shared file to brainstorm a range of questions, drawing from past years' meetings and focusing on current departmental issues. The guests were asked to provide answers to these questions and comment on how specific programs aligned with the county's mission and values.

We decided to meet first with DCM's and DCA's Equity Managers so they could share with us some tools and strategies for evaluating the budget and program offers with an equity lens. The rest of the guests answered questions about their respective departments or relevant program offers. Below is a complete list of our guest speakers.

- Estelle Norris, DCM Equity Manager
- Sophie Wilson, DCA Equity Manager
- Serena Cruz, Chief Operating Officer
- Jeff Renfro, County Economist, Budget Office
- Tracey Massey, DCA Director and Chief Information Officer
- Sim Ogle, Deputy Chief Information Officer
- Dan Zalkow, Director of Facilities and Property Management
- Travis Graves, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
- Travis Brown, Chief Human Resources Officer
- Dorothy Elmore, Director of Workplace Security

After wrapping up our meetings with county leaders, we delved into the budget, collectively analyzing program offers, with a focus on one-time-only out of target requests. Through individual readings of budget documents outside of our sessions and active engagement in group discussions, we compiled our findings and formulated recommendations for the Board of Commissioners to assist with their decision-making during this year's budget process.

EMERGING THEMES/TRENDS - Throughout the various interviews with DCA and DCM leadership, there were several themes that emerged, including a desire to focus on capacity building within the departments to create structures and supports for high-level, strategic focus on long-term planning for county health. This focus starts with developing new and better metrics for what constitutes a healthy and safe environment for both county staff and county assets. In discussions with leadership and review of the program offers for DCA and DCM, we can see the interest in long-term planning objectives, including prioritizing increased leadership capacity within what is expected to remain a constrained budget and streamlining IT and countywide systems to maximize efficiency and user satisfaction.

We heard from leadership the importance of promoting Multnomah County as a diverse, dynamic, and advanced workplace. This includes upgrading technology, analyzing recruiting practices, and growing security systems to align with the countywide mission, vision, and values. This group acknowledges the county's need to invest in technology to promote strategic leadership and comprehensive, long-term plans for growth in an ever-changing, highly competitive environment.

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK - Because DCM and DCA's budgets are subject to a 3% reduction this fiscal year, we were pleased to learn that they participated in exercises focused on incorporating equity into decisions to cut or fund certain activities. We learned that DCA did not experience any major reductions and did not eliminate any programs, all while maintaining current service levels. DCM piloted a new Budget Equity Process which guided their reductions and helped them meet the General Fund target allocation.

However, because DCM and DCA are not generally public-facing departments, it is difficult to assess the full impact of their decisions, which largely occur downstream in the form of reduced operational efficiency and services in *other* departments. We did not note any concerns in their targeted reductions, but our review was naturally constrained to the information they provided to us.

Overall, we appreciated DCM and DCA's prioritization of strategic planning, organizational restructuring, workplace security, and IT improvements in this year's budget. We would like to see the County continue to explore ways to use its assets to address urgent issues, such as homelessness and stray animal care. We would also like to convey our position that the best tools for recruitment, hiring, and retention are competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits, and workplace flexibility.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS - Due to the nature of the essential and supportive services DCM and DCA provide, it is difficult to recommend any one program offer over another; therefore, they are listed **in no particular order of priority** below. Furthermore, the CBAC does not consider program offers not listed below to provide no potential value to the County; rather, the below programs are being highlighted as offering essential or exceptional value.

Department of County Assets

1. 78233B - Justice Center Electrical System Upgrade - Bus Duct Replacement $6,500,000

This program offer is for the continuation of construction work to replace the electrical Bus Duct System at the Justice Center, which the County has described as its greatest operational risk. The CBAC sees this project as an essential upgrade to a vulnerable county asset which has already seen millions of dollars in investments. Leaving this project unfinished would not constitute a good use of public funds, nor would it further the County's goal of providing County staff and the public with a safe and functional space.

2. 78240 Hansen Complex Deconstruction Project (Enterprise): $750,000

The Hansen Complex Deconstruction Project aligns with the core values of the County by creating a safer environment and less of an eyesore in the community. Moreover, County leaders presented a possible use for the site as a shelter for people experiencing homelessness, which the CBAC would consider a very worthwhile investment. The need for more shelter space is increasing each year as extreme weather events force more and more people to seek refuge indoors, and the CBAC encourages creative, responsible repurposing of the County's surplus property.

3. 78332B Website and Digital Services Transformation $1,500,000

A government website is not just a tool for communicating with the public, it is also a gateway for people to access essential services. For many individuals, it is also the only way in which they interact with the County; therefore, clarity, accessibility, and navigability should be of paramount importance. Given that equitable access is a core value of both the CBAC and the County, we highly recommend adoption of this program offer.

4. 78337 Network Access Control $310,000

Although the CBAC members lack some technical expertise, we do recognize the importance of investing in cybersecurity generally as a means of protecting County assets and safeguarding sensitive public data. The County must continue to make investments like this to stay ahead of emerging threats and prevent unauthorized access to restricted systems. A potential ransomware attack or data breach could be extremely costly and jeopardize the privacy of thousands of people.

5. 78340 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Historical Data Retention $1,000,000

This program will help the County maintain legal compliance with Executive Rule 301 (Retention of Public Records) and support the ongoing availability of data required for historical pay equity management, both of which are laudable goals; however, the CBAC would like to note some concerns about the estimated total cost of the two year project, which is $1.5 million, and the yearly maintenance cost estimate of $150,000. Both of these figures seem high, and some questions remained regarding the details of the software solution being sought.

Department of County Management

6. 72000B & 72000C - COO Organizational Redesign SPARK Unit and COO Organizational Redesign Assistant Chief Operating Officers $2,224,644

The CBAC supports the County's efforts to invest in long-term strategic planning by restructuring the office of the COO. This restructuring will allow the COO to focus more on urgent issues and improving operations, which is well-timed with the rollout of Mission, Vision, Values. A nimbler, more adaptable government has many downstream benefits that are in line with our commitment to using taxpayer dollars responsibly.

7. 72033B & 72034B DART Reappraisal Program $755,000

This is projected to add $1.8 million in annual revenue, which more than offsets the cost of the program. Additionally, this program promotes financial sustainability and the ability of the county to invest more in better services. This can provide a pathway to meeting the County's changing needs.

8. 72064 Countywide Strategic Planning $250,000

We recognize the importance of continuing to invest in this process, which should result in a countywide roadmap for setting goals, priorities, and outcome metrics for years into the future. This program helps leaders make sure that the services provided are effective and that they focus on community needs.

9. 72065 Multnomah County Managers Conference $250,000

This offer promotes the rollout of the County's Mission, Vision, and Values to a large number of staff in a collaborative environment. We recognize the impact that the pandemic had on the organizational community and feel the manager's conference is a vital opportunity for employees to reconnect. If this offer is adopted, we hope there are measurable outcomes that can be used to advocate for similar program offers in future budget periods.

10. 72056C Workplace Security - Security Operations Center Dispatch Expansion $400,000

The County has stated these proposed enhancements are in response to increasingly frequent security-related incidents, and the CBAC recognizes the right of every County employee to enjoy a safe working environment; however, we are tempering this recommendation with a firm insistence that any contracted security personnel be held to the highest possible standard then dealing with the public, especially when engaging with the unhoused community. We also urge the County to be consistent and transparent in communicating their policies around "addressing" campsites on County property–a goal which we acknowledge can be challenging given the changing legal landscape.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – The Committee would like to give special thanks to Lisa Whedon, Deb Anderson, and more for their support, coordination, facilitation, responsiveness and enthusiasm. They were essential to the organization and scheduling of our discussions and provided excellent perspective on all of the budget requests discussed. We would also like to acknowledge and extend our gratitude to Kerensa Mauck and Allison Don for filling in for Lisa and Deb during their respective absences. Finally, we would like to thank all of our guests/presenters for their time, informative presentations, and responsiveness to our questions.

Members: *Ben Brady, Amanda Matlin, Jenna Lewis, Nick Prolosky*
Staff: *Debra Anderson (DCM) and Lisa Whedon (DCA)*

Department of County Human Services CBAC

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners
(3) pages

FROM: Department of County Human Services Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

DATE: April 25, 2024

SUBJECT: DCHS Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This letter represents the Department of County Human Services Community Budget Advisory Committee's (CBAC) recommendations regarding the FY 2024-2025 budget. Given the number of programs administered by the department as well as the limited number of CBAC members, we tried to focus our attention on budget process, performance measures/outcomes and the impact of elimination of American Rescue Plan funding.

As we considered local budget realities, current community needs, and global health and economic uncertainties, we made sure to adhere to the following guiding principles while making our recommendations.

DCHS CBAC Guiding Principles:

- Inclusively and intentionally leading with race through the application of the equity and empowerment lens
- Prioritize stable housing
- Consider impact to vulnerable populations
- Protect match/leverage dollars
- Protect programs and/or services not provided in another venue/mission
- Consider outcome or success of program in decision making

PROCESS

The three members of CBAC who were new in the prior year met informally in the summer and then met with DCHS leadership in September to explore ways to make CBAC more effective. The DCHS CBAC met virtually each month beginning in October 2023. During these meetings we listened to presentations from Jeff Renfro (general fund economic forecast), presentations from each Division Leader in DCHS with updates on their programs as well as other department wide initiatives such as basic income. emergency management and the focus on people experiencing homelessness. Later in the year, we were joined by two new members (Ray Anderson and Truls Neal) at the February meeting. We also had regular updates on the FY24 financial reports and reviewed an audit report from the Multnomah County Auditor's Office regarding the County's budget process.

EMERGING THEMES/TRENDS

The following issues emerged in discussions throughout the year.

- The continuing need for services previously funded by the American Rescue Plan (ARP).
- The need to focus program funding on our most vulnerable community members, given the funding shortfall.
- The need for housing continues to be a critical need for the community, and impacts a number of the programs administered by DCHS.
- The future revenue forecast (impact of downtown vacancies) and on-going systemic structural deficit creates the need for long-range planning.
- Creating a system to track outcomes in order to demonstrate that currently funded programs have a significant positive impact on the community

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK

We have the following feedback related to the budget process.

- Set appropriate performance measures and report on them consistently.
- Continue emphasis on funding upstream solutions.
- Continue efforts to coordinate and gather data consistent with other departments/partners to allow for cross-comparison and enhanced metrics.
- Concur with Multnomah County Auditor's recommendations related to CBAC. The CBAC process should be revised to be more effective.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS -

DCHS staff presented their FY25 Budget Submission to the CBAC at our March and April 2024 meetings. CBAC members had an opportunity to ask questions and gain additional insight into how DCHS staff had set budget priorities. Based on limited discussions at these two meetings the CBAC concurred that the general fund reductions of $1,741,920 were appropriate given the emphasis on supporting our most vulnerable community members. We also concurred with staff's out of target requests as follows:

1. 25047B YFS - DV Services $237,061
2. 25156B YFS - Bienestar Social Services Expansion $62,049
3. 25147B YFS - Food Security/Pantry Enhancement $179,235
4. 25133B YFS - Emergency Rent Assistance $5,623,600 (previously funded by ARP)
5. 25121B YFS - Climate Resilience $153,419

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS -

The Committee would like to give special thanks to the DCHS staff who provided their time and information to us to better understand the programs in their department.

Members: *April Ybarra Black, Barb Sorg, Becky Graham, Ilyse Ball, Ray Anderson, Truls Neal*
Staff: *Dr. Richard, Mohammad Bader, Rachel Pearl, Robert Stoll, Tahira Rivera*

District Attorney’s Office CBAC

The Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office (MCDA) Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) met repeatedly over several months to evaluate the MCDA proposed FY 2025 budget. District Attorney Mike Schmidt (DA) and his staff presented information about MCDA workloads, outcomes and they provided information we requested. We appreciate the DA’s commitment to transparency, accountability, and candor around this process.

As a prelude, several members of the current MCDA CBAC were involved in the prior year budget process, and we believed the increase in funding that was approved by the Chair last year was a meaningful step forward to address chronic and systemic long-term funding shortfalls. We recognize the challenges and root causes of higher rates of crime are complex, systemic, and subject to varied interpretations.

Our thoughts are as follows:

1. We understand that because of structural deficits, the DA was asked to submit a budget with lower spending. We appreciate the difficult choices that are being made across Multnomah County because of the deficit. But at the same time we do not support that the DA and this CBAC had to work through multiple scenarios to lower spending on prosecutors, investigators, and other key support staff when this community is finally starting to see improvement in rates of prosecutions, backlog, and other key metrics. This is not the time to go backwards. This is the time to continue the leadership of the past year.
2. In evaluating support services, we spent time with the leadership in IT and the victim advocate program. This leadership is well intended and professional. We discussed the proposals for increased funding and FTEs and did a deeper dive into these requests. We did not consistently receive quantitative outcomes associated with the proposals for higher spending in these areas. We recommend that in next years’ budget process there be clear and measurable outcomes, particularly from the new case management system, and if none is offered the Chair reduce spending accordingly.
3. While we cannot speak to the overall CBAC process, our group is down to three people, and we received no engagement from the County on recruiting additional members. Further, we were invited to participate in the central CBAC, we only received the invite to the first meeting hours before it happened, and were informed that the work of this group would require a group letter of recommendation within another week. We are also disappointed that CBAC input is not timed to provide input for the Chair’s proposed budget. With the CBAC recommendations being presented a mere 1 month before the final budget is adopted, we are doubtful that our input has a meaningful impact. We are eager to substantively contribute to the budget writing process and to do that

effectively we believe the CBAC processes need vast improvements as with this current system time, effort, and money are being wasted.

Finally, we would like to offer kudos to two wonderful members of the DA staff: Michelle Myers and Jillian Detweiler. They are true professionals and provided valuable insight to our many questions.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

MCDA – CBAC Members:

Babak Zolfaghari-Azar

Lily Sobolik

Wayne Graham

Health Department CBAC

TO:	Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners	(7) pages
FROM:	Health Department Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)	
DATE:	Apr 25, 2024	
SUBJECT:	HD Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

FY 25 marked the third consecutive budget cycle with our current CBAC committee members. As we did last year, the committee supports and recommends prioritizing transformative investments for FY25 in behavioral health, corrections health, and workforce support for the department.

Behavioral Health continues to be both a highly visible and highly intersectional issue within the community, given the significant challenges faced by many of our neighbors and the concurrent impacts of substance use disorders on our behavioral health system. A program offer to expand the capacity of the department's Overdose Prevention and Response plan is our top out-of-target program offer recommendation for the current cycle.

In corrections health, our committee discussed the dual impact of systemic disparities in incarceration rates by race as well as in health outcomes for an incarcerated population with high-acuity health needs. Significant turnover and high vacancy rates in corrections health staffing, especially in patient-facing roles, pose a critical threat to service delivery that our committee sought to address with our second-ranked program offer.

The committee appreciates the department's recognition of the historical impact of health disparities and the current inequity in health outcomes across our community. In shaping our recommendations, we continue to ground our work in a values statement with the following guiding principles. These guiding principles affirm that:

- We are transformative leaders

- We offer expert knowledge
- We uphold racial justice
- We operate with dignity and respect
- We believe in inter-cultural intelligence
- We hold ethics at the core

Your health department CBAC sends forward the following recommendations with both deep gratitude for the work of the Department as well as significant concerns about process and impact of the work of the CBAC committees.

PROCESS:

As in the past two budget cycles, our committee were asked to limit our consideration to out-of-target program offers. All of these program offers had already been selected, ranked, and put forward by the department in its own February transmittal letter to the Chair. As a whole, these seven program offers totaled just under $9 million, or 1.74% of the $512 million budget submission by the department in its transmittal letter.

Beginning in October 2023, the committee heard from representatives from the following Health Department divisions and the office of Diversity and Equity. Directors shared high-level budget priorities with the committee and committee members had the opportunity to ask questions about functions, operations and outlook.

- Valdez Bravo (Director’s Office)
- Chantell Reed (Operations)
- Heather Mirasol (Behavioral Health)
- Myque Obiero and Rachael Lee (Corrections Health)
- Andrea Hamberg and Neisha Saxena (Public Health)
- Teresa Everson (Deputy Health Officer)
- Jenna Green and Adrienne Daniels (Integrated Clinical Services)
- Rachael Banks (Director’s Office)
- Terralyn Wiley (Office of Diversity and Equity)

In evaluating program offers within the framework of current and emerging issues in our community, the committee utilized a matrix to measure community impact and department capacity, focusing on high-impact, ready-to-implement programs as well as longer-term investments. As federal ARPA funds are spent down, the committee’s focus shifted to a return to core service delivery and investing in departmental infrastructure.

Throughout our process, committee members increasingly had questions about our role and felt uncertain about how our feedback is considered and acted upon. These concerns prompted the committee to reach out to both the Health Department and the Office of Community Involvement on April 12, 2024. In an email, the committee asked for the following information: examples of how our past feedback during the FY23 and 24 budget cycles has impacted department decision-making, an understanding of how our FY25 feedback would be considered given the current timelines, clarity around the scope of our work and an understanding of how department leadership envisions the committee's role in the budget process going forward.

Our committee reached out a second time a week later to both the department and OCI after receiving no response. Department leadership did then acknowledge our outreach and offered to try to respond but did not answer any of the questions we put forward. We received no response from the Office of Community Involvement.

In an audit of the County budget process released in October 2023, the County Auditor's office recommended that in response to concerns from committee members, "...the Chair should direct the central budget office and departments to engage community budget advisory committees earlier in the budget process so their comments have more time to be addressed before the release of the Chair's proposed budget." Our committee strongly agrees with that recommendation and was disappointed to see that, like last year, the FY25 budget calendar does not include even a single day for consideration of our input prior to the Chair's budget being released as committee recommendation letters are due the same day. This marks the sixth time in the last seven budget cycles that there were less than ten days for consideration prior to the release of the Chair's budget.

Chair Vega Pederson's response to the audit states that "OCI [The Office of Community Involvement] is commencing a process over the next year to bring forth recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners to be implemented for FY 2025. The specifics of this update would include:
a) Collecting community feedback from past and existing CBAC members and other partner organizations
b) Collecting feedback from budget and department staff about the process and recommendations for improvement
c) Incorporating any input from the Community Involvement Committee (CIC) on the budget process and broader community involvement
d) Overseeing a working group of staff and community volunteers to produce recommendations for adoption to the Board of County Commissioners.

The letter goes on to inform the auditor's office that "...OCI is working to clarify the scope of work, expectations, and timeline for CBAC members and County staff to ensure a consistent vision moving forward." We support these recommendations, however this committee has not been made aware of any steps to begin this process in the seven months since. As such, we have significant concerns about a lack of clarity and expectations continuing to hamper any effort for meaningful community engagement on the part of the committee.

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES:

During the past several budget cycles, the operations and funding from the department were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 response and an influx of federal ARPA dollars. As the work of the department returns to core service delivery and the federal funding winds down, FY 25 also marked the first year that the department was not exempt from general fund constraints during the current committee's tenure. The department asked to differentiate general fund constraints by division, with some divisions offering a -2.5% constraint and others -5%, with the goal of limiting the impact on community partners and service delivery.

The committee shares the department's commitment outlined in the transmittal letter to prioritize significant investments in behavioral health, to recognize, reconcile and rectify race-based inequities in service delivery and to support workforce restoration and stabilization plan.

Our committee emphasized the emphasis of the current housing crisis as a key barrier for accessing expanded behavioral health and addiction services as well as the impact of climate change and extreme weather events on service delivery and increasing community needs.

PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS: The committee puts forth the following recommendations for out-of-target program offer funding in the FY25 budget in the following order:

1. ***40000B - Overdose Prevention & Response***
   Many Multnomah County residents have had their lives negatively affected by accidental substance overdose, even before the recent increase in fentanyl-related concerns. Evidence has shown that the "War on Drugs" and similar punitive and reaction-based strategies have not been effective at reducing overdoses in the U.S. The methods employed in this program have shown more efficacy: prevention efforts supporting people in poverty and targeted identities; harm reduction approaches for safer substance use; and quick and reliable access to drug testing data.

   Expanded access to naloxone by itself saves lives. As a part of the County's Overdose Prevention and Response plan as well as the 90-day Fentanyl Emergency Declaration,

Members: CJ Alicandro, Eleanor Carrick, Rhonda Combs, Alysia Cox, Rosalie Lee, Jimmy Mak, and Nathan Miley-Wills. Staff: Wendy Lear, and Michael Eaves

overdose prevention and response is a critical investment in the current budget cycle and the committee's top priority.

2. ***40059B - Additional Corrections Health Behavioral Health Staff***
   The repeal of Measure 110 in Oregon means that correctional facilities will need additional staff. The expected increase in arrests and convictions related to drug possession will increase their workload. Additionally, the reversal of this policy may require a redistribution of resources within correctional facilities.

   It is crucial to recognize the wider implications of the repeal of Measure 110. This policy change affects public health, worsens racial disparities, and impacts community relations. Despite these challenges, attention should be given to public health objectives, and access to treatment and care for those affected by substance use should be ensured.

   This request is for a mental health case manager and a behavioral health supervisor at MCDC. This addition of staff is not only about providing relief to correctional staff but also emphasizes our commitment to ensuring compassionate, equitable, and effective care for every individual under our supervision and care.

3. ***40110 - Gun Violence Impacted Families Behavioral Health Team***
   Gun violence, shootings, and homicides have increased in Multnomah County. Exasperated political and community leaders in Portland acknowledge gun violence continues to rise in the city despite efforts to counter it. The committee recognizes gun violence is a racial justice issue fueled by discrimination and structural inequities in our society. Gun violence in Multnomah County disproportionately impacts our African American, Latinx, Asian, and African Refugee communities.

   This program provides additional direct mental health services to youth and their families affected by gun violence. Therefore, the committee recommends funding this offer to improve health outcomes and provide trauma-informed services and community-informed practices in partnership with community partners and providers.

4. ***40061C - Harm Reduction Street Outreach Team***
   Similar to program offer #40000B above, this program acknowledges the effectiveness of harm reduction approaches to address accidental overdoses and other substance-related issues. It focuses on strategies that work: connecting people to transitional housing, providing cell phones as lifelines to services, and building trust and rapport with people who typically have experienced trauma in our available helping systems.

Members: CJ Alicandro, Eleanor Carrick, Rhonda Combs, Alysia Cox, Rosalie Lee, Jimmy Mak, and Nathan Miley-Wills. Staff: Wendy Lear, and Michael Eaves

We often say "it's important to meet people where they're at" and this program reflects that concretely.

5. ***400007B - Restaurant Inspections Restoration***

   The Health Inspections and Education (HIE) program is crucial for safeguarding vulnerable populations that are disproportionately affected by health risks. Low-income communities are at a higher risk of contracting food and waterborne diseases due to poor sanitation practices. Marginalized communities may lack access to safe recreational spaces, increasing the likelihood of accidents or injuries. During outbreaks, rapid response and intervention are essential in preventing further spread, especially among marginalized communities. Equitable enforcement practices ensure fairness and inclusion in regulatory measures. Supporting HIE prioritizes the protection of our most vulnerable neighbors, ensuring that they live in safe and healthy environments. Investing in HIE means committing to upholding the health and dignity of every member of our community, regardless of their background or situation.

6. ***40054 - Nurse-Family Partnership Restoration***

   The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program stands as an indispensable lifeline for our community, offering invaluable support to first-time, low-income pregnant individuals through its innovative nurse home visiting services. With unwavering dedication, this program strives to achieve its dual goals of improving pregnancy outcomes and fostering optimal child health, development, and safety. The program's remarkable track record speaks volumes, with consistent evidence of enhanced prenatal health, reduced childhood injuries, extended birth intervals, heightened maternal employment, and improved school readiness for children.

   NFP's strategic collaboration with the Healthy Birth Initiative (HBI) exemplifies its commitment to inclusivity and cultural responsiveness, particularly for African American first-time pregnant individuals. By integrating wraparound, culturally specific services and leadership development from HBI, NFP ensures equitable access to essential resources for all families. In endorsing the Nurse-Family Partnership program, we embrace a vision of a healthier, more resilient community where every family receives the support they need to thrive.

7. ***40044B - Supplemental Data Sets Partnership with DCA***

This initiative is designed to align with our division's goals by leveraging the full potential of data automation to enhance equity and promote racial justice. Through data analysis, we can uncover hidden disparities and prioritize resources, interventions, and policies that address systemic biases. Furthermore, automating data processes streamlines our operations, enabling us to tackle a backlog of essential projects scored against comprehensive criteria such as racial equality, public disease response, data accessibility, and more.

Investing in these positions advances departmental goals and signifies our unwavering commitment to promoting equity and justice within our community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS -

The Committee would like to give special thanks to Michael Eaves, Wendy Lear, Derrick Moten, Jonathan Livingston, Keenan Toya, and Trista Zugel at the Health Department for all of their time and support of our work. Special thanks to the Health Department program leaders for their insightful presentations, shared valuable experiences, and unwavering commitment to our community's well-being.

On behalf of our committee, we want to extend a warm and enthusiastic welcome to Rachael Banks, the new Health Department Director. We're happy to have you on board and look forward to collaborating with you and your team to enhance public health in our community.

Members: CJ Alicandro, Eleanor Carrick, Rhonda Combs, Alysia Cox, Rosalie Lee, Jimmy Mak, and Nathan Miley-Wills. Staff: Wendy Lear, and Michael Eaves

Joint Office of Homeless Services Community Budget Advisory Committee

To: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and the Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners

From: Multnomah County JOHS Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

Date: April 25, 2024

Subject: JOHS CBAC Report & Recommendations

Executive Summary

The Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) has encountered significant challenges in its ability to review and provide recommendations due to a lack of support and collaboration from County administration. Despite these obstacles, the committee remains committed to delivering well-informed recommendations and ensuring accountability in the County's homelessness response efforts.

Key findings and recommendations:

- County administration has insufficiently provided timely support to the CBAC, hindering the committee's ability to effectively review and advise on budget matters.
- The proposed Homelessness Response Action Plan (HRAP) seeks to abolish the CBAC without addressing the underlying issues or providing clear objectives for the proposed replacement Advisory Committee.
- The committee recommends several adjustments to the proposed Advisory Committee structure to ensure continuity, representation, and effectiveness.
- The County should prioritize transparency by sharing program expenditure and outcome data, design and facilitate a direct cash pilot program for homeless individuals, and develop a comprehensive plan to support the influx of migrants and asylum seekers.
- JOHS must commit to reducing the size of our unsheltered homeless population by at least one individual by the end of 2025 to maintain public trust and secure the necessary resources to address the issue effectively.

The CBAC urges the County to closely scrutinize JOHS spending, prioritize the responsible use of funds, and address the identified procedural and oversight issues to foster genuine collaboration and work towards a more effective and transparent approach to addressing the homelessness crisis.

Process

As the Board of Commissioners is aware from our previous report, the Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) encountered several challenges during our inaugural year that hindered our ability to review and provide recommendations. Despite these obstacles, our committee remained committed to delivering well-informed recommendations while navigating the complexities of public meeting regulations and fostering a collaborative and culturally responsive approach.

Unfortunately, these procedural issues persisted into the current fiscal year. Acting on guidance from the County Chair, JOHS and OCI did not engage with our committee for an extended six-month period from June 2023 to January 2024, despite Multnomah County Code mandating that "Each department director will be responsible to assign technical and clerical support for Community Budget Advisory Committees" (§ 3.305). On October 6, 2023, JOHS staff confirmed to our Chair via email correspondence that no technical or clerical support had been assigned at that time. During a private meeting with JOHS Director Dan Field on November 13, 2023, our Chair referred Director Field to the relevant section of Multnomah County Code requiring the provision of technical and clerical support and invited him or his staff to attend the upcoming November 27, 2023 meeting of the JOHS CBAC. However, no JOHS or County staff attended this meeting, and only began meeting with us again in January 2024.

Despite the lack of County support, our meetings during this period attracted notable attendees, including County Commissioner Sharon Meieran, County Auditor Jennifer McGuirk, City of Portland Auditor Simone Rede, as well as representatives from the office of County Commissioner Julia Brim Edwards and the leadership of the Bybee Lakes Hope Center.

Shortly after our committee sent an unanswered letter to JOHS Director Field asking for the re-establishment of a productive relationship, we learned from a County press release that the proposed JOHS IGA extension & Homelessness Response Action Plan (HRAP) would abolish our committee. Given our committee's critical stance regarding the capacity of JOHS to address the homelessness crisis, the proposed HRAP could be interpreted as a measure partially intended to mute a critical community body.

In January 2024, our committee resumed meetings with JOHS. We received an equity training from JOHS Equity Manager Emily Nelson and presentations on the JOHS Budget from JOHS Business & Operations Manager Antoinette Payne. We also met with JOHS Director Dan Field and former (interim) HRAP director Chris Fick to discuss the HRAP. During this period, the committee reviewed the JOHS program offers, submitted questions, and received timely answers to the majority of inquiries. The information that we received supported and informed the recommendations of the committee provided in this report.

Despite these challenges and the proposed dissolution of our committee in the HRAP, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing informed recommendations and ensuring accountability in the County's homelessness response efforts. We strongly believe that the insights gained from our committee's work, as well as the lessons learned from the procedural issues encountered, should be carefully considered and addressed in any future advisory structures. By doing so, the County can build upon the foundation we have laid, foster genuine collaboration between the administration and the community, and work towards a more effective and transparent approach to addressing the homelessness crisis. As we move forward, it is crucial that the County prioritizes open communication, adherence to established codes and procedures, and the inclusion of diverse perspectives in shaping its homelessness response strategies. Only through such a commitment can we hope to make meaningful progress in addressing this complex and pressing issue.

Emerging Issues & Changes

Our committee's role is to carefully consider and suggest ways to improve the use of public funds for supporting people experiencing homelessness in our area. However, this has been challenging due to a lack of timely collaboration from JOHS. As JOHS has received increased funding recently, the residents of Multnomah County have growing concerns about how effectively these funds are being allocated and used. To rebuild public trust in our institutions, we must confront these challenges head-on and demand greater accountability from JOHS.

A prime example of this issue can be found in the budget documents provided to our committee, which present an overly simplistic YES/NO report on some matters of equity. Program Offer #30100, titled "System Access, Assessment, & Navigation," includes an outcome stating, "BIPOC assessed at a rate as high or higher than percent of HUD homeless population." While it is heartening to see that this program expects to maintain this outcome in the upcoming year, our committee has repeatedly sought access to the specific data used to arrive at this binary result. By obscuring these figures behind a YES/NO outcome, any potential fluctuations, whether positive or negative, in the rate of BIPOC assessment may be hidden from view. Our committee remains puzzled as to why JOHS has been unable to furnish this data or why it cannot be incorporated into the budget offer. A brief analysis conducted by our representative to the Central CBAC of program offers from other County departments reveals that few to no other outcomes are reported in such a boolean manner. This kind of opaqueness does a disservice not only to the work of our committee but to the community at large.

The impending expiration of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds presents a significant challenge for JOHS and the communities it serves. These funds have been crucial in supporting various programs and initiatives aimed at addressing homelessness in Multnomah County. As this source of funding expires, it is imperative that JOHS ensures the continuity of essential services and the smooth transition to alternative funding sources.

Furthermore, the issue of unspent Supportive Housing Services (SHS) funds – and the potential for Metro to clawback these funds to support affordable housing construction – raises serious questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of JOHS financial management. These unspent funds represent lost opportunities to provide much-needed support to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Our committee strongly believes that JOHS must address its internal infrastructure and capacity issues to ensure that all available resources are utilized to their fullest potential. This includes investing in additional capacity, streamlining processes, and fostering a culture of accountability and transparency.

The ongoing fentanyl crisis, which has prompted a 90-day emergency declaration, underscores the urgent need for a coordinated and comprehensive response to the intersecting challenges of homelessness and substance abuse. JOHS must work closely with public health officials, law enforcement, and community partners to develop innovative strategies that prioritize housing, harm reduction, treatment, and support services. Our committee recognizes the complexity of this issue and stands ready to provide input and recommendations to ensure that the needs of those most vulnerable are met with compassion and effectiveness.

As Multnomah County and the City of Portland welcome new leadership, including newly elected County Commissioners and a new City government structure, it is crucial that County leadership engages proactively with these incoming officials. The proposed HRAP, while well-intentioned, risks boxing in these new governments and limiting their ability to develop and implement fresh approaches to addressing homelessness. Our committee strongly encourages County leadership to work collaboratively with the new leadership to ensure that the HRAP remains flexible and responsive to evolving needs and priorities. By fostering open communication and genuine partnership, County leadership can help build a foundation for lasting progress in the fight against homelessness.

Budget Feedback & Program Offer Recommendations

Our committee has come together to provide crucial feedback on the JOHS budget, with an emphasis on transparency, equity, and the effective allocation of resources. We acknowledge that without sufficient information, our ability to offer thorough public review and provide meaningful advice is limited. It is of utmost importance that JOHS share program expenditure and outcome data for the sake of accountability and informed decision-making.

Given the continued challenges we faced as a committee, we cannot confidently offer a thorough evaluation of each program offer. However, we have outlined specific recommendations to address the homelessness crisis:

Do Not Abolish This Committee

After dedicating two years and countless hours of unpaid labor to serving our communities, our CBAC questions the necessity of dissolving our committee altogether.

In recent correspondence with former JOHS Homelessness Response System interim Director Chris Fick, our Chair asked Fick “Were there specific shortcomings identified in the current configuration of the JOHS CBAC that prompted the proposed restructuring?” Fick answered “No.”

Given that no deficiencies motivated the proposal to change our current CBAC structure, and the HRAP plan fails to provide any outcomes or objectives to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed Advisory Committee set to supersede ours, it becomes evident that there are few conceivable rationales driving the suggested dissolution of our committee.

Even more alarming is the apparent lack of awareness among County administration regarding the procedural ramifications of abolishing our committee. County staff seemed unaware that replacing our committee would necessitate an amendment to the County Code and that dissolving our committee would require removing us from our positions, despite our appointment by the Board of Commissioners to three-year terms. This concern is further compounded by the fact that on April 4, 2024, nearly five months after the Chair and Portland Mayor released their proposal to eliminate our committee, the Board of Commissioners appointed two new members to our committee for three-year terms. Moreover, it calls into question whether County administration is moving forward with the necessary diligence and attention to matters of greater consequence than mere compliance with Multnomah County Code, such as saving the lives of our neighbors on the streets and building sufficient capacity to achieve a meaningful reduction in homelessness.

Nevertheless, if the County and City choose to replace the current JOHS CBAC with the newly proposed Community Advisory Committee we recommend the following adjustments at a minimum:

1. To maintain continuity and leverage valuable experience, the new Advisory Committee should include at least two members from our current CBAC.
2. In addition to the proposed representative categories (business, labor, HRS service providers, philanthropy, crisis response, etc.), the new Advisory Committee should include at least three members from the general public who are not actively engaged in or have a professional stake in the work of JOHS.
3. To effectively manage the broader scope of oversight and advice, the new Advisory Committee should establish a dedicated Budget Advisory Subcommittee. This subcommittee can focus on the time-intensive work of budget review, even with a year-round meeting schedule.
4. To ensure accountability and measure success, the HRAP should establish clear goals and metrics for assessing the performance of the Advisory Committee.
5. To foster balance and representation, a portion of the seats on the Advisory Committee should be appointed and confirmed by the Portland City Council.

Direct Cash Pilot

Multnomah County should design and facilitate (or otherwise fund and authorize) at least one pilot program for direct cash transfers to homeless individuals. With hundreds of millions of dollars levied and spent, and consistent underspending in recent years, there is a moral imperative to at least try a method of directly offering cash support to individuals experiencing extreme poverty. It is simply no longer tenable to look homeless community members in the eye and say “We don’t trust you to spend money we could give you. You are better served by us spending tens of thousands of dollars per person on your behalf.”

Pilot programs in Denver, Vancouver BC, and other communities have shown undeniable measurable benefit. Recipients of direct aid in these pilots experience lower rates of sleeping without shelter, higher employment, better health and fewer emergency room visits, and lower rates of food insecurity.

Plan For and Support Migrants & Asylum Seekers

We were disappointed to learn that JOHS and Multnomah County have no plans developed to support any potential or developing surge in asylum seekers and migrants.

The warning signs have been abundant. Since early 2022, cities like New York, Chicago, and Denver have witnessed the relocation of hundreds of thousands of migrants and asylum seekers to their communities. The failure to develop even a rudimentary plan despite a two-year forewarning is profoundly disheartening. This shortcoming not only reveals a lack of long-term strategic thinking but also does a grave disservice to the vulnerable individuals seeking a better life in our County. The absence of a comprehensive plan to address this unfolding crisis leaves these newcomers without the support and resources they desperately need.

The recent news about the potential eviction of 20 asylum-seeking families from an airport motel highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive plan to develop sufficient and efficient shelter capacity. It is imperative that we never find ourselves in a situation where distributing tarps and tents to homeless families is the only remaining option. Denver, a city-county of comparable size to Portland, has grappled with assisting 40,000 asylum seekers since 2022. Multnomah County has the ability and the moral obligation to prevent our much smaller number of asylum seekers, many of whom are children, from being forced to sleep on the streets. We must recognize that these individuals are navigating a foreign country, city, language, and legal system with which they are largely unfamiliar, and provide them with the support and resources they need to build a better life in our community.

Moreover, we firmly reject the unproven assumption that providing essential care, such as shelter, will serve as an incentive for a dramatically increased influx of asylum seekers. This rejection is based not only on the lack of merit in this claim but also on the fact that we have been presented with no data substantiating this alleged effect; it is crucial to make decisions based on evidence rather than unfounded speculations. If this purported effect were indeed genuine, it would call into question the very purpose and effectiveness of offering any homelessness services at all.

It is of utmost importance that Multnomah County provides a well-informed estimate of the number of asylum seekers and migrants expected to relocate to the County in FY2025. Our preliminary calculations based on threadbare data provided by the County suggest that the influx of these individuals could, on its own, overwhelm any additional shelter capacity developed during this fiscal year. Consequently, without a comprehensive plan and accurate projections, we may face a scenario where the County experiences a net increase in unsheltered homelessness, despite efforts to expand shelter resources. Failing to account for this potential surge in demand could lead to a crisis where the County is unable to provide adequate support and services to both the existing homeless population and the incoming asylum seekers and migrants. To effectively address this challenge and ensure that no one is left without shelter, it is imperative that the County conducts thorough research, engages in proactive planning, and allocates resources based on realistic and data-driven projections.

Commit to Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness

Currently, the FY2025 budget and the HRAP do not provide any estimates or commitments regarding the reduction of unsheltered homelessness. Although the HRAP pledges to shelter half of the individuals currently unsheltered by the end of 2025, JOHS staff have informed our committee that we may observe little to no change in the overall size of the unsheltered population.

JOHS staff have explained to our committee that the rationale behind this projection is the relative ease of planning for increased capacity in the homelessness response system – such as shelters and permanent supportive housing – compared to the difficulty in planning for and estimating the influx of newly homeless individuals. While we acknowledge the challenges associated with producing such an estimate, we find it difficult to accept that it is entirely impossible. It stands to reason that the number of newly homeless people in a future year will bear some resemblance to the preceding year, even if not an exact match.

It is crucial that the County and JOHS commit themselves in FY2025 and in the HRAP to reducing the size of Multnomah County's unsheltered homeless population *by at least one individual.* The rationale behind this commitment is clear:

1. FY2025 marks the midpoint for the SHS measure; if we fail to initiate a reduction in the size of the unsheltered homeless population with the substantial funds currently available, it is highly probable that Metro voters will not support the continuation of the measure in 2030. Consequently, we may lack the necessary resources to achieve any meaningful reductions in the future.
2. The County allocates significant funds to programs aimed at preventing individuals from becoming homeless (e.g. by providing rental assistance to those temporarily unable to pay rent). In such cases, it can be argued that the funds directly prevented a specific person from becoming homeless. However, this approach only addresses the immediate effects. It is conceivable (but not proven) that, by subsidizing rents for hundreds of low-income Multnomah County residents, these rental assistance programs inadvertently send a price signal indicating that people can afford higher rents. This, in turn, could lead to an increase in rents, ultimately resulting in either a rise in homelessness or a greater number of residents relying on rental assistance. Regrettably, when we inquired with JOHS about whether they had investigated or studied the potential second-order effects of these programs, they confirmed that they had not considered this aspect *(to be clear, we support these rental assistance programs, and will continue to do so until presented with evidence showing ineffectiveness)*. By reorienting overall outcomes to focus on reducing unsheltered homelessness, we incentivize the kind of research that

demonstrates the effectiveness of homelessness reduction programs in decreasing the actual number of homeless individuals, rather than merely reducing homelessness among the directly served population.

3. Out of our homeless populations, unsheltered homelessness is the most visible, directly measurable, and has the most profound impact on the people, neighborhoods, and businesses that materially support JOHS. Without a reduction in unsheltered homelessness, we may continue to witness disinvestment in our communities. This disinvestment will diminish the funding available to JOHS, making it essential that we maintain the community's confidence in the ability of JOHS to reduce unsheltered homelessness. This confidence is necessary to ensure that we have the material resources required to effectively address the issue. Making this commitment—and, of course, following through on it—is the first step towards ensuring that JOHS has the trust and support of the communities that fund its work.

While our strongest desire would be for JOHS to commit to ending unsheltered homelessness (or achieving a minimum 95% reduction) by a definitive date, we recognize the challenges associated with such long-term planning. However, at the very least, we demand that JOHS pledge to reduce unsheltered homelessness by at least one person by the end of 2025.

Through these recommendations, we aim to encourage a closer examination of the JOHS budget and promote transparency, equity, and effective resource allocation in addressing the homelessness crisis in Multnomah County.

We urge Multnomah County to more closely scrutinize JOHS spending and to prioritize the responsible use of funds.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of several JOHS staff, Multnomah County staff and others who have provided input during the development of this committee report and our work during this fiscal year. We would like to extend our gratitude to Bill Boyd, Chris Fick, Dan Field, Malka Geffen, Tabitha Jensen, Lori Kelley, Emily Nelson, Antoinette Payne, and Vikki Payne; County Commissioner Sharon Meieran; County Auditor Jennifer McGuirk and City of Portland Auditor Simone Rede; and Alan Evans, Mike Davis, and the Staff of the Bybee Lakes Hope Center.

Office of Community Involvement

Multnomah County

Library CBAC

TO:	Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners	(2) pages
FROM:	Library Advisory Board	
DATE:	March 12, 2024	
SUBJECT:	Library Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Library Advisory Board (LAB) fully supports the Multnomah County Library (MCL)'s proposed Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) budget. This budget reflects the progress of the bond work; continues to address security and safety; and supports the library's priority programs and services. The budget's priorities are sharpened by the vision and goals articulated in the 2023-2025 strategic plan, adopted by MCL in summer 2023. We recommend adoption of the FY25 budget as proposed.

PROCESS

In accordance with Chapter 19 of the County Code, LAB continues to serve as the Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) for MCL. The Library Advisory Board holds monthly meetings throughout the year and is kept up to date on library operations, programs, policies, priorities, and the budget. This year, the CBAC subcommittee of the Library Advisory Board met to explore specific budgetary issues including economic forecasts, internal service charge projections, staffing and personnel, and program offers. MCL Director of Finance & Facilities Katie Shifley led these sessions and provided information, reports, and budget briefings for the committee's review, supported by Maddelyn High, Management Analyst. The CBAC subcommittee updated LAB at regularly scheduled meetings throughout the process. Based on these discussions, LAB approved this report on March 12, 2024.

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES

The FY25 budget works to further MCL's mission "to empower the community to learn and create," providing funds for meeting community needs through existing services and supporting ongoing bond projects. This budget reflects the challenges facing the library in juxtaposing the moving parts of the bond project with the uncertainty of a looming deficit in FY26 and beyond.

LAB would like to highlight the following developments in the FY25 Budget:

- The FY25 budget marks the 12th budget of the library district. Library budget planning adjusts for projections of increasing costs and slowed revenue growth, while also examining how bond projects, such as the East County Library and Albina Library, will affect future resource needs. As the library works to understand cost implications of these new and expanded locations, increasing personnel costs and declining property tax growth rates complicate future budgets — when decisions on service levels and tradeoffs will need to be made. LAB appreciates proactive initiatives, such as a new staffing framework, that will help the library make difficult choices in order to serve the community. With the 2023-2025 strategic plan in place, LAB is confident that the library will meet the challenge to make these choices while keeping the level of excellence and equity the community expects from MCL.

- Safety remains a chief concern for staff, as highlighted in the 2023 audit. LAB applauds the judicious use of one-time-only funds in the FY25 budget to address safety by allocating resources towards limited-duration positions to explore alternative models to meet Person In Charge responsibilities at high-incident locations. LAB also appreciates partnerships to bring other county departments' resources into libraries to improve library services through the proposed use of Supportive Housing Services resources.

- LAB supports the budget maintaining, but not increasing, materials and services funding; and addressing the continued effects of inflation on personnel costs, which represent the majority of the FY25 budget.

- We support the investment in technology and staffing to support the implementation of Automated Materials Handling (AMH) systems, as well as increased technology for community and staff use in new and expanded bond locations.

- We also support other personnel changes (such as the reclassification of two positions to support language accessibility), which exemplify library efforts to ensure accessibility for the critical communities identified in the strategic plan.

BUDGET FEEDBACK
We recommend that the Library District Board adopt the proposed budget of $116.6 million and 537.5 FTE. LAB recommends adopting all Library Department program offers as proposed.

LAB's further comments and recommendations are as follows:
- LAB appreciates the more robust examination of internal services rates by the county that are currently underway — specifically relating to facilities and IT costs — as a more transparent process will help future budgeting be more accurate about expenditures

Finance Committee Members: David Jarvis, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Madison Riethman, Taryn Sauer
Staff: Katie Shifley, Director of Finance & Facilities; and Maddelyn High, Director's Assistant

needed for new and expanded library locations. This in turn allows the library to make more informed decisions about service levels in the future and needed trade-offs to account for bond project spaces.

- LAB supports the library’s efforts at increasing accessibility and encourages the library to balance advances in technology with accessibility for the communities the library has prioritized.

- LAB encourages the application of the 2023-2025 strategic plan to drive current and future prioritization of library services and programs, particularly in ways that maintain accountability to the communities the library serves, with equity at the center of its work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The Library Advisory Board wishes to give special thanks to Finance & Facilities Director Katie Shifley and LAB Staff Liaison Maddelyn High, who provided outstanding support for the work of the board. LAB also thanks County Economist Jeff Renfro for his time in aiding LAB’s understanding of the economic forecast implications. We thank the Library’s Executive Management Team for their support throughout the year.

Finance Committee Members: David Jarvis, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Madison Riethman, Taryn Sauer
Staff: Katie Shifley, Director of Finance & Facilities; and Maddelyn High, Director’s Assistant

Sheriff's Office CBAC

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Multnomah County Sheriff's Office CBAC

DATE: April 25, 2024

SUBJECT: MCSO Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MCSO CBAC believes that public safety is a paramount concern for the Multnomah County community. This report identifies lines of work that must be funded to meet the needs of Multnomah County residents, and specifically advocates for support for investigations, firearm dispossession, and jail staffing. The Sheriff's Office serves the very most vulnerable people in our County, and the Chair and Board of Commissioners must make investments accordingly.

PROCESS

The MCSO CBAC met seven times between January and April. To aid in decision making and report preparation, members were provided briefings from MCSO staff on the overall CBAC process and goals, the day-to-day work of MCSO, details on all out-of-target program offers for FY25, and current issues facing each agency division. Leadership from each division attended one or more meetings to share information and give members the opportunity to ask questions, and a staff liaison (MCSO's Chief of Business Services) was present at every meeting. Members were also given the opportunity to tour the Detention Center and attend a ride-along with an MCSO Deputy Sheriff.

In preparing this report, members focused on identifying common values and concerns and how the County might best invest to meet those concerns. While the CBAC focused largely on issues germane to the FY25 budget process, the group also discussed bigger-picture factors impacting MCSO and the County overall.

EMERGING THEMES/TRENDS

The MCSO CBAC has a general concern around public safety and livability in Multnomah County. The CBAC notes the lack of investigative capacity in the County, specifically around critical issues like child abuse and human trafficking.

Additionally, the CBAC has great interest in programming serving justice-involved people in jail custody, at booking, and at release and community reentry.

Finally, the CBAC notes the poor condition of the Detention Center and encourages County leadership to consider design and construction of a new facility rather than continuing to invest in an old one. The CBAC hopes that any discussion around a new facility will prioritize spaces that facilitate programming and resources for those in custody and transitioning back to the County community.

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

60215B Human Resources Expansion $903,488

Filling vacant corrections deputy positions is the most challenging aspect of MCSO leadership. It is critical that there is coverage for multiple locations, sites and operations activities (plus other mandatory activities e.g. training, family leave, sick and vacation coverage). Currently the Sheriff is using an unsustainable amount of mandatory overtime to meet these staffing requirements. Recruitment, screening, training activities will not decrease in the foreseeable future. **CBAC recommends funding for HR hiring positions.**

60520B Detectives $480,587

The loss of 2 detective positions (one focused on violent crime eliminated in the FY24 budget and one potentially eliminated in the FY25 budget) is unacceptable to the community. Detectives currently address 8 or 9% of outstanding cases, which deeply contradicts the community's will to protect our most vulnerable victims. Not funding these two FTE would be a further threat to our current public safety issues and the taxpayers have an expectation to see response and investigation on such severe crimes.

Members: Corinne Frechette, Glen Marshall, Patrick Pangburn

Staff: *Jon Harms Mahlandt*

60555B Gun Dispossession Deputies $436,722

Loss of two deputies would put an end to gun dispossessions. **CBAC recommends funding these two deputy positions.**

60330D & 60330E Restore and Backfill Jail Dorms $6, 684, 135

The loss of jail dorms and the loss of two counselors would force the correctional facility to matrix individuals out of the system, whom the community would legitimately expect to remain incarcerated due to the nature of their crimes. Our county taxpayers have deep concerns about the state of public safety, and releasing individuals from incarceration with no concrete plan on social re-entry is an extreme hazard to the community. The county leadership has a moral responsibility to protect its constituents, and that responsibility is not congruent with the defunding of those jail dorms. The CBAC is also deeply concerned with the impacts of any dorm closures on adults in custody, as such closures would eliminate least-restrictive housing options for multiple vulnerable populations including women and those with mental health needs.

60415B Restore Facility Security $2,092,708

Reducing this program offer by half would require having the functions they perform served EITHER by a mix of current (Multnomah County represented) staff and contract (non-Multnomah County employed) individuals OR completely replacing Court Facility Security staff with a contract service. Facility Security is the most public face of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office. Current staff know the operations, workflows, policies & procedures and customer service expectations. Current staff bring value added quality to this operation. **CBAC recommends fully funding the current Facility Security Unit.**

Members: Corinne Frechette, Glen Marshall, Patrick Pangburn Staff: Jon Harms *Mahlandt*

Thoughts on future budgetary needs

1. Multnomah County should pull together Community Justice, Law Enforcement, MCSO leaders and front-line workers, the State of Oregon, community resource partners, and community members with an interest in justice including formerly incarcerated individuals, to re-envision justice in 2025 or another non-election year. Create a vision on which to budget and build.

2. For the health and safety of our county employees and incarcerated individuals, fund facilities maintenance improvements for existing jails. **This is a high priority.**

3. Fund functioning protective gear and clothing for county employees. Assure a modern, maintained vehicle fleet.

4. Fund and staff a Traffic Safety division for MCSO, as they are uniquely responsible for high crash/speed areas and for the safety on our roads in East county.

Non-budget recommendation

We recommend an ongoing collaboration and problem solving task force between county and municipal front line employees (not just command) to identify issues and solutions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The CBAC thanks the many MCSO staff members who made themselves available throughout this year's process, including Sheriff Nicole Morrisey-O'Donnell, Chief Deputy Steve Reardon, Chief Deputy Carey Kaer, Deputy Nicole Buscher, Sergeant Josh Zwick, and Mark Gustafson.

The Committee offers special thanks to Jon Harms Mahlandt for his tireless support. Jon brought us together with the right people and provided the data we requested to form a real picture of the needs of Multnomah County Sheriff's Office in order to best serve all who live, work and/or are incarcerated in our county.

Members: Corinne Frechette, Glen Marshall, Patrick Pangburn Staff: Jon Harms *Mahlandt*

Office of Community Involvement

Multnomah County

Non-Departmental CBAC

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners (4) pages

FROM: Department of NAME Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

DATE: April 25, 2024

SUBJECT: Non-D Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – Our role as a committee is to review the Non-Departmental program offers and provide input to influence budgetary decisions according to the diverse perspectives and needs of communities within Multnomah County. We envision a County that is accountable, collaborates with other jurisdictions, protects our environment, provides for the safety and health of the public, and advances equity – especially for Black, Indigenous and other communities of color, as we know these communities are disproportionately impacted by County budget decisions.

At least in recent years, our CBAC has focused on out-of-target program offers. We chose to continue that approach this year, as we understand that out-of-target offers are the most likely to need community advocacy to be incorporated into the final budget. We considered all 9 out-of-target offers for FY25.

We also reviewed each offer with these priorities in mind:

- Advance equity by centering race, ability, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and other historically marginalized identities
- Decrease the number of houseless community members and address the housing crisis
- Strengthen and promote emergency preparedness
- Improve access to behavioral health services (mental health, addiction, rehabilitation services)
- Mitigate impacts of climate change by reducing emissions and strengthening resilience to extreme climate events
- To ensure that systems and processes are regularly updated and adjusted to meet the needs of all individuals who may require their use, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility.

PROCESS - To better educate ourselves to weigh in on budget offers, the Non-Departmental CBAC held two meetings after the Program Offers where publicly available. To prepare for the FY25 budget cycle, we reviewed all the Program Offers with a framework that compared the

FY25 Program with the FY24 Program Offer; learned about the revenue details connect with each Program Offer; and how well the Program Offer aligned with our values. With our group deciding to focus on the One Time Only Program Offers with did a deeper dive into those Program Offer details.

EMERGING THEMES/TRENDS - As we reviewed the different programs offers we acknowledge that our priority areas centered around the following:

- General/highlighting of Housing Needs
- Supporting BIPOC Community Members
- Systems Update (volunteers support/accessibility)

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK - Since we restricted our review to One-Time-Only Program Offers, we do not have much feedback on the County budget overall. Our committee's vision and priorities (included in the Executive Summary above) should serve as an overall statement on our desires for County budget priorities.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS - Using our priorities and assuming One-Time-Only Program Offers would benefit the most from our budget advocacy, the Committee chose to prioritize the following offers:

#10012D Countywide Severe Weather Shelter - SHS Operating $2,300,000
This directly tackles the priority of strengthening emergency preparedness by providing shelter to houseless community members during severe weather events. However, given that this program will be funded outside of the general fund, it may fall outside of the purview of this committee.

#10017C ADA Digital Accessibility Operating $366,000
By improving digital accessibility, this program promotes equity for people with disabilities, which can indirectly support access to information on housing, emergency preparedness, health services, and climate action.

#10010C Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) Stipends Operating $42,000
By providing stipends to CBAC members, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, this program directly advances equity. This initiative could impact all areas by ensuring diverse representation in budget decisions, including housing, emergency preparedness, access to behavioral health services, and climate action.

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Staff: *JR Lilly*

Our CBAC also wanted to highlight these Program Offers as they align with our priorities:

#10009C Transforming Justice - Cully Reimagining Justice Project Operating $818,848
While focused on the criminal justice system, this program can indirectly advance equity by increasing trust between law enforcement and residents and exploring non-law enforcement interventions, which may impact socioeconomic status and racial equity.

#10010B OCI - Policy & Training Coordinator Operating $132,500
This program can advance equity through developing community engagement policies and training, ensuring that community members from diverse backgrounds can participate in decision-making processes.

#10010D Civic Engagement Leadership Training Operating $130,000
This program aims to empower community members, especially those from marginalized groups, by providing them with tools and knowledge to engage effectively with county programs. By fostering informed and engaged communities, this initiative indirectly supports all priority areas.

Since the Committee focused our efforts on the 9 One-Time-Only Program Offers this year, we wanted to provide some feedback on the other Program Offers either not listed in our priorities above or other Non-Departmental Program Offers in the FY25 Budget:

#10007B Public Records Software Capital $300,000
Although this program does not directly address the listed priorities, better access to public records can support transparency and accountability across all areas.

#10030 Employee Retention Incentive Payments - Year 3 Operating $750,000
While the program may support a diverse workforce, it doesn't explicitly target equity issues based on race, ability, gender identity, or socioeconomic status unless there are explicit provisions for these within the incentive structure, which are not detailed in the program description. This program does not directly address housing or houselessness. There is no direct connection to emergency preparedness in this program. Unless the incentive payments indirectly support departments that provide these services, there is no direct connection to behavioral health services. This program does not directly address climate change impacts. The program could potentially have an indirect impact on the listed priorities, particularly if retaining skilled employees enables the county to better address those priorities. However, based on the directness of impact as defined by the scoring criteria, the program's primary goal is to incentivize current employees to remain at the county, rather than directly advancing equity or addressing the other stated priorities.

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If we were to consider potential indirect benefits—like maintaining a workforce that could contribute to various services, including emergency preparedness, behavioral health, and efforts to address houselessness and climate change—the scores might increase slightly. However, these would still be indirect impacts.
If the program includes targeted retention efforts that specifically aim to retain employees from underrepresented groups, that could justify a higher score for advancing equity. But without explicit details indicating that the retention incentives are designed with specific targets to advance equity or the other listed priorities, it would not be accurate to increase the score significantly based on the original metric.

#10031 Elected Official Office Transition Operating $100,000
We support the funding this program offer

#10017B Multnomah Youth Commission Support $280,838
We've supported funds like this in the past, and continuing this would have a huge impact on BIPOC youth and youth of other marginalizations.

#10027 - Library Go Bond $55,424,940
We support the funding this program offer. We support accessible materials and learning/growing of all ages/abilities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – The Committee would like to thank the many staff and department budget managers who created the many tools we use to analysis the Program Offers. We would also like to give thanks to JR Lilly, Director of the Office of Community Involvement, for helping facilitate Committee members’ input for this year’s report.

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