



Office of Community Involvement



Library CBAC

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners (2) pages

FROM: Library Advisory Board

DATE: April 29, 2023

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 2024 (FY24) budget. This budget reflects ongoing work related to the capital bond; continues investment in security and safety measures; and continues alignment of staffing to meet our ongoing equity, diversity and inclusion goals to center community members in MCL's programs and services. The proposed changes and additions to the budget are well considered and align with MCL's pillars and priorities. We recommend adoption of the FY24 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 projections, facilities management and planning, 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 the LAB at regularly scheduled meetings throughout the process. Based on these discussions, the LAB approved this report on April 11, 2023.

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES

The FY 2024 budget is structured to ensure that MCL can continue to revise services to meet community needs while ensuring that the library's mission "to empower the community to learn and create" continues to be met. This is a particular challenge given that many of the library's physical facilities are temporarily offline due to renovations made possible by the passage of the library's bond.

LAB would like to highlight the following developments in the FY 2024 Budget:

- The FY 2024 budget is the 11th of the library district, and the library is at a natural point of reflection. With a known structural operating deficit on the horizon, it is critical to continue evaluating fund balance and developing plans to address this structural deficit going forward. With approximately two thirds of the library's budget driven by personnel costs, recent inflation

Library CBAC

is putting increased pressure on the library's operating budget. To this end, LAB applauds the library's updated fund balance priorities and policies, which will help maintain a strong fund balance while continuing, and indeed improving on, the library's top class services.

- Safety and security remain a thorny issue, especially as staff look to balance security with maintaining access to library locations. LAB applauds library staff for trying multiple different approaches to balance these factors.
- LAB strongly supports the creation of the new "Library Special Projects" Program Offer, which will help provide continuing services over the next several years during library closures related to the Library Capital Bond Program.
- LAB also strongly supports the creation of the new Community Partnerships Manager position, which will help center the community as the library develops a partnership-based model in MCL's new spaces.

BUDGET FEEDBACK

We recommend that the Library District Board adopt the proposed budget of \$108.1 million and 547.25 FTE. The LAB recommends adopting all Library Department program offers as proposed.

LAB's recommendations for the future are:

- LAB is supportive and appreciative of the ongoing work at the county level to review internal service rates, particularly as it relates to library facilities, as the library expands its footprint with newer and larger spaces.
- That the library continues its focus on equity-based budgeting, as the community the library serves continues to change, and the budget supports new spaces and programs to address that. LAB also continues its work to elevate the voices of communities who face the greatest barriers to library services, with a focus on diverse representation among its members.
- Unlike most other CBACs, the LAB is a year round entity that constantly monitors and supports the library's programs and has existed prior to the creation of the independent library district. Going forward, and as we said in our FY 23 submittal letter, we recommend that LAB members and library finance staff continue to work with Central CBAC staff to investigate LAB's involvement in the Central CBAC process to better reflect LAB's year-round operations and the library's funding timeline and structure as an independent district, while still meeting CBAC requirements.

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, Location Services Director Kirby McCurtis and Library Operations Executive Specialist Ellar Cooper for their information sharing and support.

Members: Clare Wilkinson, Cassie Duprey, David Jarvis, Megan Parrott, Lizzie Martinez, Rob Edmiston, Kate Fleming, Mabel Reed, Hazel Burke

Staff: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Katie Shifley, Director of Finance & Facilities; and Maddelyn High, Director's Assistant