



Office of Community Involvement



Sheriff's Office CBAC

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Multnomah County Sheriff's Office CBAC

DATE: March 14, 2025

SUBJECT: MCSO Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MCSO CBAC appreciates the opportunity to share its views on MCSO budget priorities and the direction of the County more broadly. All four committee members are new to the CBAC process and look forward to learning more about County operations in the years to come. This letter includes a brief description of this year's process, committee-identified key opportunities for the County, and a comment on one specific program offer from MCSO.

PROCESS

The MCSO CBAC met five times between December and March. With all four CBAC members being new to the role, initial meetings were spent learning about the CBAC process, the work of MCSO, and the process by which the County budget is created.

MCSO Chief of Business Services Jon Harms Mahlandt was the primary staff point of contact and scheduled and attended each meeting. Member Erica Gregg was voted committee Chair at meeting #2.

In preparing this letter, MCSO's CBAC focused on several issues that represent significant opportunities for the County to improve its service to the public.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Public Safety Standards

The MCSO CBAC was concerned to learn more about the critical failure of County public safety systems, including the dire state of County jail facilities and their emergent staffing crisis. MCSO is in many ways the County's first line of defense across multiple crises, and any failure of MCSO

Sheriff's Office CBAC

has significant downstream impacts on the community. The County must provide adequate investment to ensure its jails can both accommodate law enforcement efforts and ensure highest possible quality of life for those in custody. To that end, the MCSO CBAC was encouraged to see investments in hiring and recruiting to support the County jails but is adamant that those investments grow and continue into the future.

Homeless Services

Homelessness is at the center of so many of the challenges facing Multnomah County. MCSO members offer critical services to unhoused residents of Multnomah County through the Homeless Outreach Programs Engagement (HOPE) Team. This committee recommends additional investment in the HOPE team and similar programs that provide proactive outreach to unhoused persons.

Community Mental Health

County jails have become a flashpoint for mental health care in Oregon. Multnomah County Jails in particular provide housing for numerous high-acuity persons with significant mental health needs. While Multnomah County has reduced the size of its jail population over the last decade, the needs of the typical person in custody have grown substantially. The County must meet this need with significant and ongoing investment.

Attracting and Retaining Talent

Addressing MCSO's staffing challenges through expanded hiring efforts is not a comprehensive solution. The committee was troubled to learn that, despite hiring 60 corrections deputies in 2023, 58 corrections deputies separated from MCSO in the same period. Clearly, MCSO must address its staffing challenges from both the hiring side *and* the retention side. To that end, many area public safety agencies have committed dollars and positions to wellness and retention programs. The committee would love to see comparable investments from Multnomah County.

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

60215B Human Resources Expansion \$1,766,315

As noted above, the committee was encouraged to see the County's mid-year investment in MCSO hiring and recruiting. Continuing this funding through FY2026 is absolutely critical to

Sheriff's Office CBAC

restoring core staffing at the MCSO and ensuring County jails can continue to serve the community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The CBAC would like to thank the Sheriff's Office and the Office of Community Involvement for the opportunity to participate in this year's budget process. The committee would also like to thank MCSO Chief of Business Services Jon Harms Mahlandt for coordinating committee meetings.

Respectfully,

Erica Gregg
Justin Hobson
Fay Reynolds
Rachelle Ross