

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.

Sheriff's Office CBAC

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.

Sheriff's Office CBAC

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.**

Sheriff's Office CBAC

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 Morrissey-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.