



MELROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Date: May 13, 2022
To: City Council
From: Linda C.W. Gardener, Library Director
Subject: FY2023 budget

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FY2022 began on an exciting note. On June 28, 2021 the library returned to its full hours for the first time since the COVID shut down, with no appointments or other restrictions. The year got really exciting with the announcement that MBLC had awarded Melrose a provisional grant, contingent upon attaining local funding and the approval of the City Council. In July, the Library Board of Trustees clearly expressed their support for the project by committing \$2 million towards the local funding needed. City Council members were diligent in assessing the merits of the project, and Denise Gaffey, Patrick Dello Russo, the Mayor's office and I worked to ensure that they had all the information they needed. In October, the members of the City Council voted unanimously to support the library project, ensuring an accessible, modern library for future generations.

The library's roof reached a point of crisis, causing a leak directly into the local history room which caused damage to a photo album from 1884, which is currently being professionally preserved as much as is possible. After significant discussion on how to best proceed forward to protect the building while not putting extensive funds into a roof slated for replacement, a stopgap repair was implemented by DPW staff, which has held thus far. The heat in part of the building was not working in January. DPW was able to revive the system long enough to get through to warmer weather.

In September the library resumed service to community groups needing meeting space. Some part-time staff had made the decision to leave during the shut down, and some staff left during the year; those staff hours were replaced. In some cases, a single part time position was broken up to allow for more scheduling flexibility. One full-time staff member, our Head of Children's Services, left her position, and was replaced this Spring.

The entire staff took part in training on unconscious/implicit bias, provided the Human Resources department. The Assistant Director and I attended the Public Library Association Conference virtually.

Work on the library construction and design plans has been ongoing since the project was approved, and meetings have been had with the Building Committee. A meeting was also held with the Fire Chief, Police Chief, Building Commissioner, City Engineer and Facilities Manager

Melrose Public Library's staff, building and collections provide a portal for all to explore, imagine and engage. The library is where literacy, local history and community connect!



where they had the opportunity to review the plans, ask questions and express any concerns. The architects, Owner's Project Manager, City Planner and I have been working together very closely, receiving approvals from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners' building specialists at regular intervals.

The Library was very happy to be approached by members of the community and the schools regarding a community-wide read, and is partnering in MelroseReads, a city-wide book read. Books have been provided in multiple formats by the library, and book discussions, storytelling programs and other thematically related events are happening all over Melrose.

The library department's salaries all come from the same budget.

The library department's FY2023 expense budget submission reflects the request for level funding outside of contractual obligations. The submitted budget will cover our contractual increases. Trustee, State Aid, Donation and Friends funds will be used to cover other anticipated costs not covered by the budget. Because we are required to maintain our normal hours open in our temporary space, and maintain spending on new material for patrons, there are no significant changes to the budget.

Naturally, the big change in the library in FY23 will be the move into our temporary space at the Beebe School. We anticipate moving in mid-August and being closed for services for about a month while we move and set up operations in the Beebe. We will then be open our regular hours until we are ready to move back into the new/renovated space. Due to the limited publicly accessible space in the temporary location, we are working on finding satellite locations for our book groups and children's programs. We will work to ensure that the public knows where we are located, and also that they are aware of our wealth of online resources during this time when some of our physical resources will be less available.