

Date: May 6, 2024
To: City Council
From: Linda C.W. Gardener, Library Director
Subject: FY2025 budget

1. Please identify any noteworthy changes or events that took place during FY24 in your department (staffing changes, technology upgrades, new regulations or procedures, etc.)

In FY24 library staff experienced some turnover. No positions have been added, but we have welcomed a new library assistant, part-time Reference librarian and Teen librarian to our staff to fill vacancies left by previous employees.

2. Do all of your department's salaries come from the same budget? If not, please identify the split among multiple budgets.

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

3. Are there any significant changes to your FY25 budget compared to previous years? Please explain.

The library department's FY2025 budget submission covers contractual increases, except for any negotiated increases for union staff in their upcoming contract. Non-union staff salaries will remain frozen at the FY2024 levels. Book purchasing will be reduced, reflecting the cut to that budget line combined with an increase in the cost of books. Audio and Visual material lines are reduced and Downloadable increased to reflect changing format usage. Trustee, State Aid, Fine, Donation and Friends funds will be used to help cover other anticipated costs not covered by the budget.

4. Any noteworthy events or changes you anticipate in your department for FY25?

The Library will begin FY2025 by continuing our services to the public in the Beebe, with the assistance of partner locations for some of our programming. We anticipate moving back to West Emerson in the Fall and opening the new/renovated library to the public.

5. Priorities, impacts and changes reflected in the budget.

The budget reflects our continued mission to provide the residents of Melrose with excellent library services. Unfortunately, there are negative impacts to this budget. The level funding of non-union salaries will have a direct impact on employees. In particular, the library's Assistant Director and our part time staff who have worked with dedication and good will throughout a year of transitions deserve better. Additional staffing will be required to fully utilize the new/renovated building at West Emerson. I am deeply concerned about how we can achieve this when we are not even fully funded in our current budget. Updated library buildings generally experience an increase in usage. It will be difficult to ensure that patrons receive the materials they need in a timely manner, with a decrease in the books & periodicals budget.