

Meeting Minutes

Multnomah County Library Bond Oversight Committee
January 29, 2024
4:00 - 6:00 pm | Operations Center (hybrid meeting)

Committee Members Present

Ana Brophy, Jeffrey Scherer, Kourtney Strong, Nicole Pexton, Randall Edwards, and Sophia Suhu were present. Jason Green was not available.

Staff Present

Judith Moses, Bond Program Administrative Assistant; Kate Vance, PMO Deputy Director-DCA; Katie O'Dell, Library Bond Deputy Director; Maddelyn High, Library Director's Assistant / Committee Staff Support; Mike Day, Bond Program Management Office (PMO) Director; Tracey Massey, Director, Multnomah County Department of County Assets (DCA); and Vailey Oehlke, Library Director.

Two prospective new members were also in attendance: Rosie McGown and Shelley Denison

Welcome

Director of Multnomah County Department of County Assets (DCA) Tracey Massey welcomed attendees, sharing a land acknowledgement. Director of Libraries Vailey Oehlke shared revised goals from the library's new strategic plan, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Public Comment

Public comment was requested for submission via email ahead of the meeting. No known emails came in for public comment, and no members of the public were in attendance.

Committee Business

Committee members, prospective committee members, and staff introduced themselves. Committee liaison Maddelyn High gave an update on committee membership, noting that three new committee members (Maralea Lutino, Rosie McGown, and Shelley Denison) have been recommended to the Board of County Commissioners for appointment. After approval, their terms will begin. The addition of three new members will bring total committee membership to ten members.

Minutes for the October 24, 2023 meeting were approved with no edits.

Committee Chair Randall Edwards led a discussion of the committee's presentation of its first annual report on November 30, 2023, thanking the committee for the extra work involved to create the report, noting that the Board was appreciative of the committee's time and effort. Edwards and Oehlke extended special thanks to the committee members who presented the report at the board meeting. Feedback was positive, and folks agreed the presentation went well. Edwards encouraged committee members who were not able to attend the meeting to watch the recording (see [recorded meeting link](#)).

For the committee's next report, the plan will be to present during a Tuesday board briefing rather than during a Thursday meeting; and Committee Co-Chair Jefferey Scherer recommended that the committee's next report include more graphics if possible.

Bond Implementation Update

Bond Program Management Office (PMO) Director Mike Day gave an overview of bond project sequencing, noting that each project now has a more detailed schedule. Day shared that the first bond project, the Operations Center, is complete (in post-occupancy phase); and that the project was a success on every front (on time and on budget).

Day shared a bond budget summary (an overview of the whole portfolio of projects), which is updated on both a monthly and a quarterly basis; and highlighted the receipt of some external funds (grants, donations, and interest income) that are now reflected in revenue and budget forecasting. Energy Trust credits are also now coming in and posted as revenue (~\$100k received so far related to the solar energy system and electric charging stations for the Operations Center). This income source will continue to grow as projects are complete and credits are realized. Day noted that the team expects to meet 95% of targeted bond spend-down by the end of January (more invoices are still coming in). Reaching this milestone has been an incredible team effort, and no material penalties are expected.

Day highlighted some budget changes since last quarter, including transfer of savings from the Operations Center to support other bond portfolio projects, including *East County Library* (ECL), *Belmont Library*, and *St. Johns Library*. The team is working now to finalize the GMP for the East County Library, and the project is now in the bidding phase .

Sharing an update on DEI, Day noted that overall, progress toward targeted goals is good. Four major CMCG partners are covering the full portfolio of bond projects, and the portfolio has a great supplier diversity team. There is still strain in terms of finding contracts to meet all of the local demand. The bond team continues to work with CMCG partners and to invest in COBID-certified firms to build the workforce pipeline, and to work with equity partners to help firms compete.

Library Bond Deputy Director Katie O'Dell shared updates on public communications and community engagement, including a successful opening celebration and positive media coverage for the *Operations Center*; and the reopening of *Gregory Heights* and *Capitol Hill* libraries after completed refresh work. In addition, a recent accessibility survey for the *East County Library* received over 1,500 responses, and themes are currently being analyzed to test further with smaller focus groups. Planning is also underway for a youth vote on design themes for the ECL's teen space. Oehlke added that Holst has been particularly involved in community engagement for ECL, and shared appreciation for members of that team for dedicating their time (often weekends and evenings) to this important work.

Moving on to individual project updates for calendar year 2024, PMO Deputy Director-DCA Kate Vance noted that three major openings are planned for this summer/fall (*Holgate*, *Midland*, and *North Portland* libraries); as well as two closures (*Belmont* and *St. Johns* libraries); and construction will start at *Northwest Library*.

The first big bond media event for a project opening was in January for the *Operations Center*. Vance shared that the friends and family event was very well-attended, and folks are excited about this space, including the artwork and the reuse of an existing building (a former Safeway). There has also been a lot of interest in automated materials handling (AMH) and how that works. Beyond book distribution efficiencies, the *Operations Center* also brings outreach staff closer to the communities in which they do their work. Oehlke added that this space exceeds expectations and sets a regional standard.

Vance then gave an update on progress with *Holgate Library*, which will be the first public library building to reopen after a major rebuild. This space will be an all new mass timber building featuring a large play space, dedicated teen space, multiple meeting rooms, and updated tech and internet. Vance previewed some other new features this space will include based on community input. Opening is planned for summer 2024.

Another opening planned for summer 2024 is *Midland Library*, which is a full renovation of an existing building with an addition. The renovated library will also feature new outdoor spaces and spaces for kids, teens, and families. Vance shared visuals of the community-inspired RACC canopy art, and an interior gathering circle (a community design feature) that will also showcase local art.

Transitioning to fall openings, Vance shared progress on *North Portland Library* (renovation and addition). This new space will have renovated interiors and seismic upgrades in the historic portion of the building; a new outdoor space; art and new technology; and an addition that will be the home of the new Black Cultural Center (temporary name).

Upcoming closures in 2024 include:

- *St. Johns Library*, which will be renovated and expanded, is slated to close in fall 2024. This project will include seismic upgrades to the historic structure. Vance shared a sample site plan.
- *Belmont Library*, which is expected to close in late 2024 for renovation of the existing building and a large addition. This project is currently in the design development phase.
- *Northwest Library*, a renovation of a new existing building, is also in the design phase and construction is slated to begin in summer 2024. This library location is transitioning from its current leased space to a new library-owned property.

Vance shared updates on bond refresh projects, including:

- *Gregory Heights Library*, which opened earlier in January;
- *Capitol Hill Library*, which had a soft opening today (the public opening was slightly delayed due to downed trees and other winter storm-related issues);
- *Central Library*, which will open to the public in February;
- *Fairview Library*, which just closed for refresh work;
- *Hillsdale Library*, which will close in the spring for summer reopening;
- *Troutdale Library*, which will close later in spring and reopen in the winter;
- *Woodstock Library*, which is in the active design phase (construction will start in 2025); and
- *Rockwood, Sellwood, and Hollywood* libraries, for which design will begin later this year.

Day closed by sharing risks the bond team continues to evaluate, along with mitigation strategies (no new major risks identified since the last committee meeting).

Action Items + Closing

High shared the schedule of upcoming committee meetings for 2024, and the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm for a building tour of the new Operations Center.