

Meeting Minutes

Multnomah County Library Bond Oversight Committee
October 23, 2023
4:00 - 6:00 pm | Virtual Meeting

Committee Members Present

Cheryl Russell, Jason Green, Jeffrey Scherer, Nicole Pexton, Randall Edwards, Rob Edmiston, and Sophia Suhu were present. Ana Brophy, Karl Dinkelspiel, and Kourtney Strong were 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; and Tracey Massey, Director, Multnomah County Department of County Assets (DCA)

Welcome + Introductions

Director of Multnomah County Department of County Assets Tracey Massey welcomed attendees, sharing a land acknowledgement and reviewing the meeting agenda. Massey called attention to the library's updated organizational values and goals, which were developed during a recent strategic planning effort.

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

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

Committee liaison Maddelyn High announced plans for the coming year, including committee leadership (Randall Edwards and Jeffrey Scherer will stay on as chair and co-chair, respectively); and a proposed meeting schedule. Committee members agreed to continue meeting quarterly on last Mondays from 4:00-6:00, and interest was expressed in holding some meetings in person (with a hybrid option available).

High also encouraged committee members to share the recruitment notice for new Bond Oversight Committee members (which opened 10/13 and runs until 12/1), noting that, due to attrition, the committee needs to add at least one new member to meet its minimum membership requirement of eight members for 2024.

Committee member Sophia Suhu disclosed that she has a new position in which she subcontracts for Lever, the firm working on Albina Library. Randall Edwards disclosed that his partner, Julia Brim-Edwards, was recently elected to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners. Per review by the library and County Attorney's Office, no conflicts of interest are present.

High encouraged committee members to continue to share any relevant disclosures for the sake of transparency.

Annual Report

The committee discussed the draft of its first annual report, and Edwards solicited feedback. The following edits were suggested:

- Add additional context to the audit summary section
- In the section assessing bond progress, add more context to color-coded ratings (red/yellow/green)
- In the section on financial stewardship, add more context about the bond reserve fund
- Add a “schedule” subsection to the body of the report, to match the format of the Executive Summary

Edwards made a motion to approve the annual report end June 30, 2023 with the agreed-upon changes, and Jason Green seconded the motion. The report was unanimously approved. Edwards, Jeffrey Scherer, Nicole Pexton, and Sophia Suhu volunteered to hold a worksession to implement these changes, and to present a summary of the report to the board of county commissioners at the board’s November 30 meeting.

Bond Implementation Update

Bond Program Management Office (PMO) Director Mike Day gave an overview of the overall bond program budget, spending, contingency, and progress on required spend-down, noting that the budget is growing mostly due to interest income. Day highlighted notable budget changes during the last quarter, including contingency funds approved for use for Northwest Library to cover seismic structural improvements, electrical and mechanical upgrades, and design improvements; additional expenses for wayfinding/signage; as well as an estimated future Bond Premium Reserve transfer for Belmont Library based on an initial site development cost model that was completed after a recent community engagement effort.

Day also shared that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts are continuing as planned based on the bond program’s holistic approach centering community engagement and COBID certification metrics.

PMO Deputy Director-DCA Kate Vance shared that there are now 16 active bond projects in various phases. Vance shared major milestones and relevant changes, noting that more detailed information on all projects is included in the appendix shared with committee members ahead of the meeting via email.

The new *Library Operations Center* is now operations, and furniture and art by Portland Street Alliance is being installed. Vance shared images of exterior and interior building progress, reminding that this project is the heart of the library’s effort to improve operations systemwide. This new building will bring together outreach and materials movement staff (130 in total), who previously worked across the county, in a centralized location for easier travel and better technology for materials movement.

Moving on to *Albina Library*, Vance shared that mass demolition is completed and excavation is underway. Unforeseen soil contamination, in addition to a lengthy historic land use permitting and review process, and additional engineering for seismic upgrades, are all contributing to a schedule delay. This extended schedule has been forecasted for some time, and PMO leadership is actively engaged with the project manager and project team to tighten the schedule however possible. Scheduling sessions with subcontractors are happening weekly.

Shifting focus to the new *East County Library* in Gresham, Vance shared that the design team is close to building permit issuance (expected in December). The project delivery team has worked closely with the City of Gresham on a phased permit process, allowing construction to begin while the final detailed design is being finalized. This approach has allowed the team to take advantage of the good weather and fast track the front end of the project by several months. Vance shared updated renderings and site progress images. Library Bond Deputy Director Katie O'Dell provided an update on community engagement efforts for the East County Library, noting a busy summer filled with engagement events and a forthcoming online accessibility survey and final fall focus group with Community Library Champions (who've been involved for a year now).

For *Belmont Library*, schematic design work continues. Community Design Advocates (CDAs) for the project are being onboarded now and a sustainability charrette was recently held. Community input on three different design options was evenly split, and the project team will move forward with a second story addition and a footprint that retains the historic building and some parking. The sustainability target for Belmont Library is LEED Gold.

Northwest Library is about halfway through the schematic design phase, and an eco-charrette was held earlier this month. Community engagement and user group meetings continue. LEED Silver is the target for this building, as it's a tenant improvement of a historic building rather than a complete rebuild.

Vance also shared an update on IT components, including AMH installation at Capitol Hill Library, A/V installation at the new Operations Center (which is in full swing for 25 rooms), and technology planning for new teen spaces, makerspaces, and the East County Library recording studio.

In terms of bond program risks and mitigations, Vance shared that inflationary headwinds continue in the Northwest region, but have decreased compared to 2022. The Portland area continues to experience inflation of ~8.4 to 9.1%. Costs are being closely monitored and managed with set-aside contingencies. Other risks include permitting delays with local jurisdictions, and open engagement and communications with permitting offices is happening in an effort to mitigate effects. Ongoing workforce labor shortages were also noted.

Action Items + Closing

High encouraged committee members to spread the word about the recruitment for additional committee members, which is open now through early December. High also reminded folks of an upcoming opportunity to tour the new Operations Center on November 7.

The meeting adjourned at 6:19pm.