



Budget Office

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

May 10, 2022

The Honorable Darrell Clarke
City Council President
City Hall, Room 490
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clarke,

This letter is in response to questions raised by Councilmembers during the FY23 Council Budget Hearings scheduled for Free Library of Philadelphia. At the hearing, the following questions were asked:

- **Councilmember Gilmore-Richardson: Staffing around security personnel at certain branches - can you talk about that across the system.**

Each neighborhood library has a Municipal Guard that is responsible both for custodial duties and security. The staffing model for regional libraries is for 4 Municipal Guards per location, since these are multi-floor buildings.

- **Councilmember Gilmore-Richardson: LEAP program - will it be fully operational this year and will you be hiring TLAs in FY23. What does the program look like this FY and what it looks like next FY?**

In the FY23 budget, funding allows for FLP to hire 1 After School Leader and 1 Teen Leadership Assistant (TLA) for each library. Funding is available to hire a few additional TLAs and FLP will prioritize hiring the additional youth in neighborhoods with more need for youth jobs. FLP will share job descriptions with City Council members to help get the word out. Job Descriptions are expected to be available in June so that hiring can begin over the summer.

FLP plans to kick off LEAP on the first day of school for the School District of Philadelphia on August 29.

The hiring plan for FY23 is similar to this fiscal year, and the good news is that the FY23 budget allows for a raise for both ASLs and TLAs. ASLs will be paid \$22/hr. and TLAs will be paid \$11/hr. plus opportunities to earn additional money for attending training and completing workforce development activities like creating a resume (incentive based pay). While we tried to recruit and hire ASLs for each library, applications were down this year, so only 35 ASLs were able to be hired. We appreciate City Council's support in sharing the job descriptions for the upcoming year so we can fully staff the LEAP Program.

- **Councilmember Gym: Staffing - Are you looking at filling new positions; What other initiatives do you have trying to encourage hiring. I am interested in the \$1,000 bonus and issues surrounding staffing. Please speak on that.**

Yes, we are currently working on a strategy to fill new positions. We are using the remainder of FY22 vacancies as the test run where we are outlining all of the new hires vacancies along with



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outstanding internal promotion vacancies to determine how many vacancies HR professionals can process at the same time while incorporating within the schedule of each vacancy conditions out of the FLP HR Hiring teams control that we have to include in the schedule to estimate the start and finish dates for each hire and internal promotion. With the additional staff approved to be hired for the FLP HR office, we feel confident that we will be able to duplicate this model/process to demonstrate FLP HR hiring team's ability to get the job done.

As far as other initiatives, in addition to participating in the community based job fairs sponsored by the Free Library clusters, we will continue our annual participation in the American Library Association (ALA) job fair. For the first time in 2021, the Free Library participated in recruiting at the 11th National Conference of African American Librarians (NCAAL) and look forward to recruiting at future NCAAL conferences.

Lastly, we look forward to our continued partnership with the Office of Human Resources to continue conversations regarding ways to improve initiatives to continue to recruit candidates to add to the City of Philadelphia's existing workforce.

- **Councilmember Gym: What areas have the highest vacancies?**

The Librarian and Library Assistant positions have the highest vacancies. Please see the enclosed table for the number of vacancies and vacancy rate in our branches and regionals by area.

Cluster	FTE vacancies as of 4/18/22	Total FTE per model	Vacancy rate
West	17	57.1	30%
Northeast	23.5	80.2	29%
South	19.5	70.3	28%
North Central	17	64.9	26%
Northwest	10.5	50.3	21%
Southwest	10	49.4	20%



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North	9.5	69.1	14%
Far Northeast	5	46.5	11%

- **Councilmember Gym: What are the Pathways for library assistants to become full librarians?**

Library Assistant positions require education equivalent to the completion of the twelfth school grade. A Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS) is required for librarians in the state of Pennsylvania.

Currently, we have the Educational Assistance Fund - private funding to support staff in obtaining an associate’s or bachelor’s degree. As a complement to our internal Education Assistance Fund, members of DC33 and DC47 that they and their families have access to a free college benefit as well. Details are available here: <https://freecollege.afscme.org/>.

There are a number of scholarship and grant opportunities for obtaining MLIS degrees available from a variety of sources, including 5 full scholarships recently offered to attend Drexel University with funding from the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation.

- **Councilmember Quiñones Sánchez: How is private funding allowing you to work with equity issues?**

A key tenet of the Free Library’s DEI work is equitable access to career advancement for Library and Foundation staff members of color. Understanding that education/degrees are obstacles to advancement for many individuals, the Foundation’s Board of Directors established two funding opportunities:

- The Educational Assistance Fund provides financial support to City and Foundation staff who are enrolled in associates or bachelor’s degree programs.

- The Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation and Drexel University offered 5 full scholarships to library and foundation staff who were accepted to the Master of Science in Information with a major in Library and Information Science graduate program.

These financial assistance programs were funded by contributions from members of the Board of Directors and members of the Foundation’s donor community. The Foundation continues to prioritize fundraising for this purpose.

With assistance from the Foundation, The Library’s Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer secured a grant from the PA Office of Commonwealth Libraries (through PA Department of Education). This grant provided the opportunity to hold a workshop for the executive staff on the



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topic: *The role and responsibilities leaders have in advancing DEI within the organization.* Dr. Jamie Washington of the Washington Consulting Group served as the facilitator. This was an opportunity to discuss and strategize the advancement of equitable practices across the library system.

With private funding, the Foundation's development team held a ½ day retreat to explore DEI issues, followed by a series of follow up workshops that raised awareness and offered guidance for staff.

The Foundation's development effort continues to prioritize funding for a variety of programs and resources in every neighborhood of our city, ensuring our patrons have equitable access to resources and services. With the assistance of private funding, the Free Library serves a unique "gap-filling" role in the Philadelphia public service ecosystem, acting as an information provider, resource connector, and, frequently, as an onramp to more specialized programs and services that are not as immediately accessible to all. The Library partners with organizations and city departments on many of these programs and services, aligning goals, seeking expanded impact, and reducing service redundancies.

Youth literacy is a fundamental equity issue and a cornerstone Free Library public service. All of the Library's major youth literacy initiatives receive private funding and each has its own approach to equity.

For example, the unique dual-mentorship structure of Free Library's LEAP afterschool program seeks to address inequities in the out-of-school-time (OST) ecosystem in Philadelphia. LEAP is the city's largest free drop-in afterschool program, offering a safe, fun weekday OST environment across the entire Free Library system. In effect, LEAP has the lowest barrier to entry of any afterschool program in Philadelphia, and it ensures access to literacy support and enrichment activities to students who otherwise lack it. For the teens working as the program's Teen Leadership Assistants, LEAP provides a rich array of opportunities for personal and professional development as well as a paying job. Many LEAP TLAs are former LEAP participants, and most TLAs are from vulnerable communities. The mentoring, trauma-informed leadership training, and civic engagement opportunities TLAs receive as part of their jobs is often life-changing.

The Read by 4th campaign embeds equity into its key principles and processes. Read by 4th counts who is at the table and add seats until the table reflects the community. Read by 4th takes the lead from the parents and community members it serves and pays them for their leadership on the parent council and work as parent liaisons. Read by 4th advocates for disaggregating data whenever possible in order to identify who is being underserved and holds candid discussions about why. Read by 4th uses a minimum 10% of its book budget to purchase books from local Black-owned bookstores. Read by 4th communications reflect the communities it serves: Messages are written from community perspectives and framed using asset-based, not deficit-driven, language. Finally, Read by 4th makes equity everyone's responsibility by embedding it into the culture and structure of the campaign, to be felt and carried by every member of the team.

Other privately-funded library offerings that advance equity across multiple disciplines include:

- Digital equity:



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- Hotspot lending
- Long-term tablet and laptop lending through the Emergency Connectivity Fund
- Digital literacy workshops, classes, one-on-one support from Digital Resources Specialists
- The renovation of Paschalville Library to be a community-driven, tech-enabled 21st century library

Health equity:

- Culinary and nutrition literacy and mental and physical wellness programming at Parkway Central and in neighborhood libraries for all age groups; some programs are specifically targeted (e.g. Healthy Communities primarily serves BIPOC adults, Nourishing Literacy serves elementary school students)
- Social work services at Parkway Central and in the Northeast Cluster
- Hygiene kits
- Trauma-informed training for Library staff

Economic equity:

- Workforce development preparation for specialized workforce training programs
- Career and job fairs
- English language learning
- Basic adult literacy services and programs
- High-school completion services
- Adult education service placement

Council President Clarke: Can you provide more info on the Fishtown library, which is small and outdated? The preference for myself and the folks in the community was to build a new library, but please provide a status update on that.

Rebuild replaced the roof and modernized the elevator investing over \$500,000 into the library site. At present, the Capital Budget does not include funding to replace the library and/or combine it with the Rec Center, nor has private funding been secured. In the meantime, critical improvements have been made to both the rec center and the library to ensure patrons can use the facilities. At the Library, this includes



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elevator improvements to ensure ADA accessibility and roof improvements. At the Recreation Center building, completed work includes the roof improvements and HVAC improvements, and at the Rec Center site, a new playground and sprayground along Palmer Avenue, new hockey rink roof, and a new pool and sprayground, which is reopening this summer for the first time after six years, have been complete. Additional improvements to the outdoor hockey rink will be bid out later this year.

- **Council President Clarke: Library on Lehigh Ave - activating space in the rear of the Library. Please provide info on this.**

The Library and Water Department have begun planning for a rain garden project that includes programming space in the space to the rear of the Widener library. The Water Dept. will maintain the garden and the library staff will program it.

- **Council President Clarke: Cecil B Moore Rec Ctr. Capital improvement and Rebuild was engaged. Please provide more info on this.**

The Cecil B. Moore Library is a Rebuild Site. Rebuild has completed the site assessment and the Phase 1 Environmental Assessment to support the next step in prioritizing the scope within the allocated budget. The building's high priority needs exceed the current budget by about \$1-1.5M and requires additional fundraising.

Please contact my office for further information.

Thank you,

Kelly Richards
Free Library of Philadelphia



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May 10, 2022

The Honorable Darrell Clarke
City Council President
City Hall, Room 490
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clarke,

This letter is in response to questions received off-the-record by Councilmembers during the FY23 Council Budget Hearings for the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. The following questions were asked by Councilmember Gilmore-Richardson:

- 1. Can you detail what the multi-agency approach is?**
 - a. Will smoke shops be included on this list?**

The multi-agency approach to addressing nuisance is structured to create a joint and efficient response to the establishments within the City that are not operating in accordance with their City issued licenses and permits. The process is led by the Law Department's Code Compliance Division and includes PDPH, L&I, PPD, DA and Commerce from the City and LCB and LEO from the State. The committee meets monthly to identify and discuss best approaches to joint inspections for those establishments that have been reported via complaints and the inspection/investigation process from the various partners. Updates are provided by each partner and plans are initiated for joint inspections. The goal is to schedule a series of inspections, often in one section of the City to reduce travel time and increase efficiency. Each partner conducts their part of the inspection and appropriate legal action is taken as needed. There is also follow-up action from Law or the DA's office, as well as the LCB. By addressing the establishment, there are positive impacts within the community. These establishments are monitored by each partner during routine work.

Yes "smoke shops" are included.

- 2. Will this list of stop and gos be made public?**

All PDPH inspection reports are available on the City's website, including information about cease operations and closure. The City Code does not have a business designation for "stop and gos". These establishments are essentially places that are not operating in accordance with their City issued licenses and permits and they are allowed to correct the violations and operate correctly. Therefore, there is no "list" to make public.

- 3. Once you are made aware of nuisance businesses that are operating without the proper permits, how quickly are you sending inspectors out?**

All complaints are responded to within 5 business days. Complaints that pose an imminent health hazard- such as a foodborne illness- are prioritized.



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4. **Can you please provide updates on the following initiatives we have partnered on together?**
 - a. **Environmental Justice complaint process:** posted [here](#).
 - b. **Fact sheets/information sheets about air quality:** These are in the process of being finalized and then will be sent for translation. Message maps for general air quality concerns, preparedness, community organizations, healthcare providers, and vulnerable populations have been developed and they are being turned into fact sheets, in addition to being used for all response messaging. A flyer on which mask to use has already been developed. Specific message maps and talking points for tire fires and general chemical releases have been developed. As flyers are developed, they'll be submitted for translation. We are on track to have those completed in June [we experienced some delays due to COVID-19].
 - c. **Community organization/notification list:** We have a start on this list, but plan to use our facilitated conversations with the Office of Sustainability to help expand the list.
 - d. **Proactive process for air quality emergency notification:** Emergency notification messages have been drafted and approved for press release, blog post, social media posts, ReadyPhiladelphia message, and messages to community partners. These are ready to use today.
 - e. **Collaboration on citizen science projects:** We have met with Temple University, which is starting a citizen science initiative, and they plan to include us in their work going forward.

5. **When reviewing your budget detail there was only a \$46,000 increase for Class 100. Does this mean you did not receive additional funds to hire EJ staffers for this office?**

Yes, but we are working on identifying funds from other programs that we can use to hire an Environmental Justice Coordinator.

6. **On page 177 of your budget detail, it appears as if the federal funding for the Community Scale Monitoring Grant Program has ended. Is that correct?**
 - a. **If so, how are we working to ensure we continue these efforts in the interim while we look for additional federal funds?**

This is a grant that was awarded to AMS and extended due to COVID-19. It ends on 4/5/23. The total awarded was \$352,208 to purchase 5 air monitoring stations which have been purchased and placed in South and Southwest Philadelphia. AMS will use the remainder of the grant period to measure air toxics, and the monitors/monitoring will remain in place after the grant period.

7. **AMS currently has no metrics relating to community engagement or environmental justice. The only metrics they list are days with an air quality index of 100 or below and it states their objectives relate to the port and the now shuttered refinery.**
 - a. **Why is this department still not focusing on community health and the needs of our constituents?**



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- b. How were 357 days selected as the metric for air quality? Why does that number not change over the years?**

The number of days with an Air Quality Index of 100 or below is used because it is an EPA metric (**National Ambient Air Quality Standards or NAAQS**)- AMS measures 6 criteria air pollutants 365 days a year (every day) for which Philadelphia exceeds the national standard of 75% for completeness. Reporting this important outcome does not mean that the department is not focusing on community health and the needs of Philadelphians. As discussed above, we are working on multiple initiatives related to community outreach and engagement. This metric gives us an objective measure of the success of our efforts to improve air quality. We have currently set the goal at 357 days or 98% of days because we are not yet able to reach the goal 100% of the time, largely due to weather events and events outside of our control such as the wildfires out west that brought large amounts of particulates to Philadelphia.

- 8. The Air Pollution Control Board is currently undergoing review of amendments to Air Management Regulation VI to expand the list of toxic air contaminants and require a health risk assessment.**
 - a. What steps has the Board taken since the January meeting to move forward with this directive?**
 - b. Will additional materials be shared with the public in advance of the April 28th meeting, so any interested party has time for proper review and comment?**
 - c. I also noticed that there is still no plain language summary of the draft amendments posted on the website. When will this be posted?**

The Air Pollution Control Board (APCB) met on April 28th and approved the regulation changes unanimously. The regulation has been sent to the Record Department for the 30 day public comment period. The comment period will end in the beginning of June. The Plain Language Summary is posted here: <https://www.phila.gov/departments/air-pollution-control-board/air-management-notice/>.

- 9. Despite expanded engagement attempts from the City, there is still significant distrust between AMS/PDPH and our residents, especially in regard to the permitting process. I hear from communities who feel as if the processes are a box check, but there is no clarity on how their comments/engagement is used and therefore they do not feel inclined to engage with us or believe that we take their consideration into account.**
 - a. How are you looking to make changes to your team to elevate the issues of environmental justice and add additional staff within AMS and in other areas of the department to expand cultural competency and the intersectional issues facing these communities?**

We are setting up a meeting internally with in AMS to review the overall public involvement and community engagement process. We are also working on contacting community groups to establish neighborhood based “air monitoring groups”, that can take part in the discussion regarding the permit



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process. The goal is to finalize a review and community engagement process by August 2022, Therefore, the community can be involved as permit renewals and new permit applications are received.

Please contact my office for further information.

Thank you,

Cheryl Bettigole, MD, MPH
Philadelphia Department of Public Health