



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA
1901 Vine Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1189

April 30, 2019

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 at the April 15, 2019 hearing before the Committee of the Whole on the Fiscal Year 2020 proposed budget for the Free Library of Philadelphia. At this hearing, the following questions were asked:

Councilman Domb: *Provide a summary of the carryforward amounts of the Free Library.*

The capital budget for the Free Library of Philadelphia lists carryforward plus new FY20 capital of \$13,453,000. Of the total, approximately \$7.6 million represents appropriations for potential grants to be awarded by foundations and the state and approximately \$3.4 million is related to the Rebuild initiative. The remaining funds will be used on a variety of infrastructure, HVAC and interior and exterior renovations at various branch libraries including Paschalville, Greater Olney, Walnut West, Roxborough and Blackwell Regional library.

Councilman Domb: *Does the Free Library conduct a cost benefit analysis for Capital projects?*

Yes, on larger multi-year projects. For instance, the Library's \$450,000 energy efficiency project that is wrapping up in the summer of 2019 underwent a cost-benefit exercise resulting in a return on investment (ROI) of 1.6 years with ongoing energy savings. A cost-benefit analysis is not conducted for smaller, one-time projects that are typically of an emergency nature such as roof replacements.

Councilman Domb: *Provide a comparison of the Free Library's maintenance, security, and custodial cost per square foot compared to that of the Department of Public Property.*

Due to the significant differences in the facilities that the Department of Public Property (DPP) maintains, such as the Municipal Services Building and City Hall, versus the Free Library's facilities, there is no comparable data available for a square-foot (sf) maintenance cost for library facilities. The Library has a \$5.10 per-square-foot (psf) annual maintenance cost for all 54 facilities (approximately 920,000 sf). This cost includes all staff and operating expenses (\$4.7M in the Library's Property Management program) in the proposed FY20 budget but excludes utilities. For comparison, a Building Owners and Management

Association (BOMA) and Kingsley study in 2016 and 2018 provides ranges for office buildings of \$8.07 to \$10.22 psf. It is worth noting that 41% of the library facilities are 90 years or older and overall, 74% of the libraries are 50 years or older.

Councilman Domb: *Provide a proposal to expand financial literacy and entrepreneurship classes to all Councilmanic districts.*

The Free Library is prepared to further assess community need for financial education programs, building from programs in this area that have been offered in the past. Opportunities to explore could include financial literacy for teens, including instruction and mentoring support; entrepreneurship training for underserved individuals looking to start their own businesses; and credit counseling/repair for first-time homebuyers, delivered by community partner Entrepreneur Works, among other options. Additionally, we would like to explore further development of the financial education program offered at the Philadelphia Department of Prisons, which could be expanded to serve returning citizens. The Library's 50+ neighborhood locations and existing community partnerships position the organization for success in providing these resources. The scale of programming will depend on the level of private funding available, along with successful activation of partnerships with other financial literacy organizations. Generous support from Councilman Allan Domb allowed the Library to pilot a financial literacy course at the Philadelphia Department of Prisons in fall 2018, which will be offered again this spring.

Councilwoman Gym: *Please provide the Free Library's 5-year plan regarding facility repairs.*

The Library 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan is provided in Attachment 1.

Councilman Johnson: *What is the percentage of facilities closures that is due to facilities issues?*

In Fiscal Year 2018, the percentage was 16.3%. Through the first nine months of Fiscal Year 2019, the percentage is 13.9%. These percentages are based on closure incidents.

Councilman Taubenberger: *How many hours have been lost due to guards not being available to work?*

From October 2018 through April 15, 2019, there have been 132.5 hours lost due to guards not available to work, which accounts for 15% of staffing-related closures.

Councilman Taubenberger: *What would be the cost of running all libraries as the same hours as Parkway Central?*

The cost for additional staff in the Neighborhood Library Services Division to maintain the same number of hours as Parkway Central would be approximately \$9.3M per year. In addition, Property Management and Information Technology costs to support the additional hours would be approximately \$861K per year. The grand total would be about \$10.2M per year. Attachment 2 breaks down the costs in more detail.

Councilwoman Reynolds-Brown: *Provide the names, and demographic detail, of the individuals on the Diversity Committee.*

The Board members on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee are: Robert Heim (Male, Caucasian), Nicholas Torres (Male, Latinx), Folasade Olanipekun-Lewis (Female, African American), Suzanne Simons (Female, Caucasian), Jerome Maddox (Male, African American), and Pamela Dembe (Female, Caucasian).

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact my office.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Siobhan A. Reardon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Siobhan Reardon
President and Director