

The Seattle Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
11:00 a.m. Thursday, February 27, 2025

Washington Mutual Foundation Meeting Room 1, Level 4
1000 Fourth Ave., Seattle, WA 98104

Remote Listen Line:

Dial: 213-282-4570 / Phone conference ID: 147 867 044#

Watch Live:

<https://www.microsoft.com/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting>

Meeting ID: 259 736 999 248 / Passcode: Rh99rt37

- To provide public comment in person at the Central Library, sign up in the meeting room.
 - To provide public comment remotely, join meeting with link above and enter your full name in Q&A.
 - To submit public comment in writing, email 24-hours in advance of the meeting: library.board@spl.org.
-

Agenda

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

D. CONSENT

1. Minutes of December 12, 2024 Regular Library Board Meeting
2. 2024 Year End Financial Report

E. CHIEF LIBRARIAN REPORT

1. Chief Librarian Report
2. System Report
 - a. Strategic Planning Implementation Groups – Jessica Smith, Strategy & Policy Advisor to Chief Librarian’s Office
 - b. 2025 Seattle Reads Program: “You Are Here: Poetry in the Natural World,” edited by U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón – Stesha Brandon, Literature & Humanities Program Manager

F. OLD BUSINESS

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. Software Acquisition and Artificial Intelligence
2. Union Report
3. Updates from Library Board Members

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

I. ADJOURN

J. NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING: March 27, 2025

(For more information, call Laura Gentry, head of the Communications Office, at 206-915-9028.)

Unapproved Board Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

The Seattle Public Library

December 12, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of The Seattle Public Library (SPL) Board of Trustees was held on December 12, 2024. Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Trustees Carmen Bendixen, Faith Pettis, and Ron Chew were in attendance. Library Board President W. Tali Hairston was unable to attend. The meeting was conducted with a remote attendance option via video conference.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda as published; the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was accepted via email, in person at the Central Library, and online in the remote meeting. There was no public comment.

CONSENT

It was moved and seconded to approve the consent agenda as published; the motion carried unanimously.

CHIEF LIBRARIAN REPORT

Chief Librarian Report

Mr. Fay acknowledged that it was the last meeting of the year. He thanked the Board for their hard work in 2024 and thanked Trustee Faith Pettis for joining the Board this year.

Mr. Fay said the Library has finalized its data mining investigation into the ransomware attack and is in the process of notifying individuals whose data was exposed. He said, since the Memorial Day ransomware attack, the Library has undertaken significant efforts to investigate the data impact during the incident. He said, with the help of digital forensic specialists and law enforcement, the Library has determined which files were impacted during the attack. He said the nature of the personal information affected varies considerably from person to person due to the nature of impacted files which resided on a file drive shared by Library staff. He said data residing in other library systems, such as the Horizon patron database, Bibliocommons catalog, Better Impact volunteer database, AskUs customer service platform, and others were not taken or exposed during the attack. Mr. Fay said, at this time, the Library has not seen indication that affected data has been shared on the dark web or otherwise misused. He said SPL has begun the process of notifying individual patrons, employees, and others whose personal information was affected, and has provided supportive resources, including a call center for getting questions answered, as well as a free two-year membership to a credit and identity monitoring service.

Mr. Fay said the Library has learned a lot from the cybersecurity incident and is committed to further improving its digital security. He said the Library has taken a number of steps to improve its security posture and data management practices, including migrating communication systems to more secure platforms, and deploying additional safeguards onto its systems such as multi-factor authentication and stronger passwords on all accounts. He said the Library is hiring a new permanent position focused on cybersecurity, and has worked with a third party to get to conduct an after-action review of the attack and response, so the Library can continue to learn from what occurred and share that information with others. He said the culminating report is expected to be

available in the coming weeks. Mr. Fay thanked Library patrons, staff, and community for their patience throughout the investigation. He said the process took longer than expected, but SPL wanted to be very diligent in the approach. He offered appreciation to the Library's IT team, Administrative Director Rob Gannon, the Communications Office, and many others who worked tirelessly on the issue over the past several months.

Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi said it is disappointing that data was taken, and it is shocking that SPL would be the target of that kind of attack. She said she was glad to hear of the safeguards being put in place against this type of attack in the future. Library Board Trustee Faith Pettis asked if the Library is offering a couple of years of credit monitoring to people that were impacted, and Mr. Fay confirmed it is. Mr. Fay said the monitoring service is a pretty comprehensive package, and he hopes that people will avail themselves of it to make sure that they are protecting themselves.

Mr. Fay said he and Library Technology Officer Charles Wesley took City of Seattle Chief Technology Officer Rob Lloyd and City of Seattle IT Department's Director of Security and Infrastructure Division Greg Smith out to lunch to thank Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Smith for their support during the cybersecurity event, as well as the Crowd Strike event that closely followed. Mr. Fay said City of Seattle IT sent staff to help the Library reload systems and computers, saving the Library a month to six weeks in recovery. He said the work and efforts of the entire IT team at the City of Seattle on the Library's behalf are greatly appreciated. He said the Library is thankful for their willingness to spend extra hours to come help during that time.

Mr. Fay said earlier in the day, he gave a presentation to the City Council's Committee on Libraries, Education and Neighborhoods to provide an overview of the Library's new 10-year Strategic Plan. He said the Committee was engaged, had read the full plan, and had really good questions. He said the meeting recording can be found on the Seattle Channel.

NEW BUSINESS

2025 Operations Plan

Director of Administrative Services Rob Gannon said the Operations Plan, once approved, is the Library's adopted budget going into the biennium and fiscal year ahead. Mr. Gannon said, on November 21, the City Council approved its 2025-2026 biennial budget, which includes \$100.3 million in operating and \$8.375 million in capital budget appropriations for the Library. He said capital appropriations also include \$28.9 million in operating support and \$8 million in capital funding provided by the 2019 Library Levy. He said these funds are fully incorporated into this Operations Plan. He said the Library is also very grateful for and dependent on the support of The Seattle Public Library Foundation, which is providing support of \$5.2 million. Mr. Gannon said the overall budget presented today totals \$115.8 million.

Mr. Gannon said the \$115.8 million budget represents a 13% increase of \$13.6 million, which is largely accounted for by the annual wage increase allocation associated with the collective bargaining agreement and modest adjustments in the capital budget consistent with SPL's six-year capital plan. He said the Board had previously reviewed reductions and adjustments to the Library's budget owing to City's overall fiscal condition, which are again represented in the final Operations Plan. He said the only notable adjustment to the document from the previous version is that it now incorporates \$30,000 of additional funds provided in the City's final budget action, thanks to an amendment by Council Member Tonya Woo, which is a one-time adjustment and modest offset to the planned \$350,000 reduction to the collections budget.

Mr. Gannon said SPL is moving to align the Operations Plan with the newly approved Strategic Plan. He said future Operations Plans will fully incorporate the Strategic Plan into the imperative of operations, while continuing to honor the structure of the Levy. He said the Strategic Plan will be incorporated in a future levy effort.

Mr. Gannon referred to sections 4 and 5, beginning on page 7 of the Operations Plan. He said the Operations Plan overview shows a breakdown of how a dollar is spent and apportioned over different funding types. He said there have been no notable changes to this area which has been fairly consistent year over year. He said in Figure 2 and the table below, a small percentage adjustment upward is seen in personnel costs, with a slight downward tick in collections, consistent with detail provided in the plan. He said there continues to be a shifting trend in the balance between the general fund and levy funds, with the levy providing 32% of the Library's 2025 overall operating resource, which is up from 30% in 2024.

Mr. Gannon referred to page 9, Section B. He said there is a sentence at the bottom of the page that says the levy will provide \$36.9 million in 2024. Mr. Gannon said the dollar figure of \$36.9 million is correct, but there is an error in the date which should read 2025. He said the correction will be made and noted the change for acknowledgement in the Board's motion for approval.

Mr. Gannon said the last section of the Operations Plan, on page 14, represents information that was not presented in the November Library Board meeting. He said this information identifies some of the possible risks the Library takes going into 2025. He said while these are representative risks, and not comprehensive, the Library believes these are the major risks SPL will continue to manage in this Operations Plan period and beyond. Mr. Gannon said Item C in this area refers to the health of the General Fund in the City of Seattle and why there is no indication of mid-year cuts. He said the environment is fiscally constrained, and the budget will require careful management.

Mr. Gannon said Section 8 attempts to convey that the Library is in a pivotal year. He said SPL has completed a good portion of its work in the 2019 Levy which will continue through the balance of the levy period. He said SPL is pleased to have a largely stable Operations Plan with reliable resources that allow a continuance of Library service. He said the Library is especially pleased to have the new Strategic Plan in place to guide future work structuring of resources to meet the Library's goals of providing the best possible service to patrons, community, employees and the city as a whole.

Mr. Fay said the Board receives updates throughout the year through the budgeting process, and the Operations Plan represents many, many hours of work in an extremely challenging year. He said Head of Finance and Accounting Nick Merkner and his team worked for many months without access to the City's financial data and still delivered this document on time for the Board. Mr. Fay gave kudos to Mr. Merkner and his team, and to Mr. Gannon for his leadership of the entire Administrative Services team.

Ms. Mehdi said former Library Board Trustee Jay Reich often said how well the Operations Plan and quarterly Levy Reports tell the story of what the Library does, how it spends its dollars, and where its focuses lie. She said, having worked in the City Budget Office, she knows that a budget can be not fun to read, but this does actually tell a story. She said at the top of Page 3, under Strategic Plan, the document acknowledges many challenges the Library faces now and in the coming years, including constrained fiscal resources, rapid technological change, and stress on systems critical to supporting Community health; however, she said this orients the Library to navigate those obstacles, rather than succumb to them. She said this is a great goal, especially because they are obstacles the Library cannot control. Ms. Mehdi said the Library has done a great job of trying, at the very beginning of the Strategic Plan implementation, to weave together the differing sources of information. She said she wanted to note that in all the places where there are changes to the budget, Mr. Gannon and Mr. Merkner have created crosswalks relating to the empowerment goal or the enrichment goal in the Strategic Plan, which is very helpful.

Library Board Trustee Carmen Bendixen said she also noticed the Strategic Plan crosswalk in Section 3, and she very much appreciates that effort taken to remind the reader of connections and telling the Library's story. She said the document is the Library's budget, but is also a policy

and a policy decision. Ms. Bendixen commented about a section containing information about retirements and other separations which carry liability for potentially large payouts that are not sustainable to pay year over year, and she noted that they were not included in the section on risks. She asked, separate from the financial side, whether retirements and separations pose risks on the operational side in terms of staffing and open hours. Mr. Fay said if everyone eligible retired at once, it would create a bow wave of hiring and other challenges. He said Mr. Merkner's team has done a good job of planning a buffer to deal with challenges to staffing and recruitment. He said when staff members inform the Library several months out of their intended retirement, it allows the Library to create a recruitment strategy. He said the Library has also done a lot of work to try to minimize single points of failure, though losing a 30-year employee with historical and operational knowledge is impactful and can't be replaced overnight.

Library Board Trustee Faith Pettis said the Operations Plan is extremely well written, and she appreciates having the budget translated into words describing how the budget is carried out over the year, which is a good exercise and good discipline to go through. She said she also likes the tie to the Strategic Plan, and every milestone and marker that can be included is important. She called out and thanked the Friends of the Library and the Library Foundation for their contributions, and for the significant part of the budget the Foundation's support covers. Ms. Pettis said she was troubled by the Library's dependence on the Levy, the size of which seems to keep creeping up. She said it is critical for the Library to pass a new levy, but she would also like to stabilize how much the Library depends on it as much as possible. She thanked the team for their work, which she said was extremely well done. Library Board Trustee Ron Chew said he shares the concern about the Library's reliance on the levy. He said it is a wonderfully written Operations Plan, and he appreciates the tweaks that have been done to make it stronger. Mr. Chew echoed appreciation for the Foundation's role in supporting the Library.

Referring to a cut to Collections that will be realized by beginning to phase out CDs, DVDs, and Blu-ray, Ms. Mehdi said she knows many people who rely on these physical forms of entertainment and do not have access to streaming services. She asked if there is a way the Library can backfill this service in a different way, aside from tangible disks. Mr. Fay said the answer is, yes, possibly. He said the Library does offer some streaming services. He said as the Library looks at this issue, it may decide that it may have options to continue some of those collection areas, depending on how the budget goes. He said there is not a final determination on that, but the Library does know that these formats are going to be dying out. He said it is becoming harder to get these items, and over the next decade, many of the physical formats will go away as subscription services become the norm in terms of delivery platform. He said the Library knows that some people are only consuming physical formats, and SPL is trying to keep some of those formats as long as possible; however, at some point, those formats are also just not going to be available. Ms. Mehdi asked if the Library offers Kanopy as a format for people to access video content, and Mr. Fay confirmed.

It was moved and seconded to approve the 2025 Operations Plan
with a date correction on Page 9 as noted by Administrative
Director Rob Gannon; the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Mehdi congratulated the Library on the remarkable amount of work that went into the Operations Plan, particularly in light of the ransomware attack, while the Library's Finance team did not have access to many layers of information.

Election of 2025 Library Board Officers

Ms. Mehdi said that each year in the December meeting, the Library Board elects officers for the coming year. She said the current practice is to rotate offices for two-year terms based on seniority, with the Chief Librarian traditionally nominated as secretary to fulfill the administrative duties of the Board. Ms. Mehdi said that she and Library Board President Tali Hairston are

willing to continue for a second year as president and vice president. Ms. Pettis, Ms. Bendixen, and Mr. Chew thanked Ms. Mehdi and Mr. Hairston for their willingness to serve.

It was moved and seconded to nominate W. Tali Hairston to serve as board president, Yazmin Mehdi to serve as board vice president, and the chief librarian to serve as secretary in 2025; the motion carried unanimously.

Union Report

President of AFSCME Local 2083 Jessica Lucas said, in addition to her report contained in the meeting packet, she wanted to say that the Union is happy to see positive movement in general communication with staff around critical events like branch closures due to low staffing or incidents, and elevator outages or floor closures at the Central Library. She said fixed scheduling is moving forward positively with collaboration and success, and the Fixed Schedule Committee meetings have finally restarted this month. Ms. Lucas thanked the Communications Office and administrators who have made better communication possible. She said staff appreciate the changes happening and appreciate the recognition of challenges faced by staff. She gave kudos to all who have worked on fixed scheduling, including the Committee, the Public Services Scheduling Office, and everyone in between. She said she is grateful for this work going into the new year and is hopeful for better times in 2025.

Ms. Mehdi thanked Ms. Lucas for her report. Ms. Mehdi said she understands the impact of elevator outages on staff and empathizes. Ms. Mehdi said she takes Ms. Lucas' concerns to heart and appreciates the written reports as well as Ms. Lucas' personal attendance at the Library Board meetings. Ms. Lucas said she was not able to attend the November Board meeting, as her branch was one of a few affected by a power outage, and staff were trying to offer a level of service despite the lack of power. She said she was glad to be back at this month's meeting. Mr. Fay thanked Ms. Lucas for her report. He said the elevator outages at the Central Library are cause for great distress. He said Mr. Gannon and his team are working with the elevator manufacturers on work-around solutions. He said the elevator maintenance company has not been as responsive as needed, and the Library is working to determine alternate solutions to lessen the stress and challenges to staff and patrons. Ms. Mehdi said she is aware of elevator companies that have been going out of business, which necessitates elevator technicians having to find workarounds. She said it also means that some of the technology hasn't been getting upgraded, so technicians have to pull out and rewire motherboards. She said this is another example of the challenges created by a 20-year-old Central Library in need of maintenance.

Updates from Library Board Members

Ms. Mehdi said last Friday she and Ms. Pettis attended the City of Seattle's Boards and Commissions Appreciation Reception, which was a very nice event. She said there are 1,000 board and commission members who serve in volunteer roles for the City, at least 10% of whom attended the reception. She said she and two other representatives spoke. Ms. Mehdi said she related a story at the reception, about her friend Carrie, that she learned a couple of days before the event. Ms. Mehdi said Carrie grew up in Wisconsin and has a friend who is the only librarian in a very small town in Wisconsin. Ms. Mehdi said this friend came to Seattle to visit Carrie and said she needed to make a pilgrimage to SPL's Central Library. She said when asked why, the friend said the Central Library is a beautiful building, but in addition, her small town has banned a number of books, and the only way she can get access to them is through SPL's Books Unbanned program, and she wanted to make a pilgrimage to the institution that made that possible. Ms. Mehdi said the story warmed her heart. She said the Books Unbanned program, which is funded by the Library Foundation, has given people hope and access across the country, and this story is just one more example of that.

Ms. Pettis said she was also hoping to share about attending the appreciation reception. She gave kudos to Ms. Mehdi for her speech at the event, and said Ms. Mehdi and the other speakers were

fabulous. She said Ms. Mehdi's speech knocked it out of the park in describing why she serves in a moving and inspiring speech. She asked Ms. Mehdi to share her remarks with the other Board members. She said she was proud to be associated with Ms. Mehdi and with the Library Board at that event. Ms. Pettis said in the past week she also attended her firm's holiday party where she saw former Library Board Trustee Jay Reich. She said the first thing Mr. Reich said to her was to ask how the Library was doing. She said he misses the Library Board.

Ms. Bendixen said she wasn't able to attend the Green Lake Branch re-opening, so later in the month, Northwest Regional Manager Dawn Rutherford and Green Lake Branch Operations Supervisor Alan Chan gave her a fantastic tour of the branch. Ms. Bendixen thanked Ms. Rutherford and Mr. Chan for their time and for scheduling the tour on a day that worked best for her. She said Green Lake is her neighborhood branch, and the improvements are great. She said at least half of the branch is a whole new building.

Mr. Chew said while he was attending the Green Lake Branch reopening, he spent some time talking with the videographer from the Seattle Channel, and subsequently had lunch with his good friend, Seattle Channel Video Specialist Randy Eng, and Seattle Channel General Manager Shannon Gee. Mr. Chew said Mr. Eng and Ms. Gee are interested in exploring uses and partnership opportunities with the Library. Mr. Fay said he has been involved in early discussions with the City about potential opportunities. Mr. Chew also said he has taken on a new role as President of AARP for Washington State and has been doing a lot of onboarding and statewide meetings. He said in the course of this work, the Library is often brought up without prompting. He said colleagues have wonderful things to say about libraries as a third space for seniors, and he didn't previously realize the extent of the connection of AARP with libraries. He said it is a wonderful affirmation of the purpose of libraries and of SPL's work in particular.

ADJOURN

Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi adjourned the meeting at 12:47 p.m.



The Seattle Public Library

Memorandum

Date: February 27, 2025

To: The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees

From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Rob Gannon, Director of Administrative Services
Nicholas Merkner, Head of Finance and Accounting

Subject: **Year-End 2024 Financial Reporting**

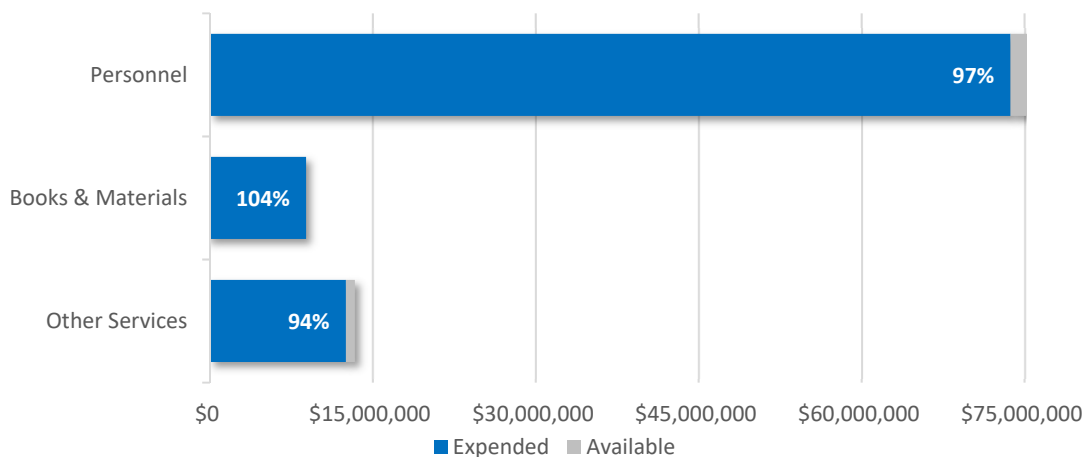
Overview

As of the close of fiscal year 2024, the Library expended **97%** of its operating budget—which is in line with the prior year period (FY 2023) when the Library expended **96%** of the operating budget. Of the unexpended authority, approximately **\$1,230,000** is associated with ongoing bodies of work to be carried forward into and completed in 2025. When factoring this carry-forward into total spending for FY2024 it places the Library at 98% committed overall.

Total Library expenditures at the end of 2024 were **\$95 million**. This includes notable unplanned expenditures related to recovery from the cybersecurity event. However, owing to vacancy savings accrued as a result of extended recruitment and hiring timelines associated with the hiring freeze, these costs could be managed within existing budget authority. We anticipate some ongoing costs associated with additional cybersecurity enhancements as we move into the coming year.

The chart below provides a high-level overview of year-end spending by budget group, and helps illustrate relative sizes within the operating budget.

Chart 1: YTD Spending vs. Budget (% Spent)



Personnel Services

Personnel costs represent the largest category of expenditures at the Library and make up 78% of the revised operating budget. Despite a number of issues associated with the Citywide Workday payroll transition, all pay periods were successfully processed by central payroll and are represented in our year-end reporting. Spending for personnel ended the year at **97%**.

Hiring Freeze

As noted in the March 2024 Board Financial Report, the Mayor’s Office provided guidance to all City departments relating to a hiring freeze. The guidance limited any new hiring efforts and required that a specific hiring freeze exception be granted. The Library Board of Trustees maintains control over positions at the Library and has the authority to institute its own hiring policies. Even so, to address budget challenges facing the Library system, we implemented a hiring freeze in tandem with the City’s hiring freeze mandated for executive branch departments. Chief Librarian Tom Fay approved numerous exemptions to the hiring freeze to help with our service levels and to support in-branch staffing. Careful review and consideration of vacant positions is ongoing, and expected to continue through FY2025.

Non-Personnel Services

The largest individual category of expenditures within the non-personnel budget is to library books and materials which represents 9% of the revised operating budget. The books and materials team closely manages and tracks spending within this area and ended the year at **104%** spent.

Other services, which represent 13% of the adopted budget—and include equipment, services, and supplies—are **94%** expended. As noted above, there is approximately **\$1,230,000** associated with ongoing bodies of work to be completed in 2025—the Library will collaborate with the City Budget Office to ensure this budget authority carries over into 2025.

Revenues

The Library ended the year with total revenue collections of **\$696,000**, a decrease of \$73,000 when compared against 2023. Revenue-generating activities were curtailed by the ransomware event and their restoration occurred on a staggered schedule from the rest of the system. This resulted in extended periods where no revenue could be collected for Library services. To date, most areas of enterprise revenues have returned to pre-breach operating status with the Library IT team continuing to work diligently toward full restoration. Once this work has concluded full Library revenue collection rates are expected to return.

Action Requested: Library Board consideration of Year-End 2024 Operating Budget financial reporting for approval at February 27, 2025 meeting. Comments or feedback is welcome.

Expenditure Control for December 2024

Amounts in \$1,000s	Revised Budget*	Current Month Expenditures	Year to Date Expenditures	% Expend	Balance of Budget
Personnel Services					
Salaries & Wages	48,916	5,515	46,683	95%	2,233
Benefits	22,432	(150)	22,062	98%	370
2023-2024 Retro	4,970	9	4,970	100%	-
Personnel Services Sub-Total	\$76,317	\$5,374	\$73,714	97%	\$2,603
Books and Library Materials					
Books & Materials	8,513	1,538	8,862	104%	(349)
Books and Library Materials Sub-Total	\$8,513	\$1,538	\$8,862	104%	(\$349)
Other Services and Charges					
Central Costs	3,027	253	3,039	100%	(12)
Equipment - IT & Facilities	1,886	196	1,474	78%	411
Office Supplies, Printing & Postage	308	62	332	108%	(24)
Operating Supplies	550	85	490	89%	60
Other Expenses	661	160	1,017	154% (A)	(355)
Other Maintenance	927	126	415	45%	511
Phone, Wireless & Internet	484	51	385	79%	99
Professional Services	481	488	1,111	231% (A)	(629)
Software	842	101	1,052	125% (A)	(210)
Staff Training & Travel	293	16	115	39%	178
Vehicle Costs	319	4	287	90%	32
Facilities - Space Rental & Utilities	1,977	153	1,857	94%	120
Facilities - Building & Grounds Maint	1,197	45	567	47%	630
Facilities - Garage Debt Service	403	-	384	95%	18
Other Services and Charges Sub-Total	\$13,355	\$1,741	\$12,524	94%	\$831
TOTAL LIBRARY OPERATING BUDGET					
	\$98,186	\$8,653	\$95,100	97%	\$3,085

Footnotes:

* Includes \$1M related to prior year encumbrances and grant carry-forward

(A) The Library has begun paying expenditures related to cyberattack recovery. These costs are unbudgeted and appear as part of our "Other Expenses", "Professional Services", and "Software" line items.

Revenue Control for December 2024

	Revenue Budget	Current Month Revenue	Year to Date Revenue Collected	% Collected
Operations Plan Other Library Revenue				
Lost Material Fees	115,000	5,458	64,811	56% (A)
Central Library Parking Garage Fees	345,000	27,718	314,159	91%
Copy Services/Pay for Print	95,000	12,665	93,979	99%
Space Rental (Private & Inter-Departmental)	162,000	27,840	150,680	93%
Book Sale Consignment	85,000	3,618	56,413	66%
Coffee Cart & Miscellaneous (vending machines, etc.)	3,000	305	16,240	541% (B)
TOTAL LIBRARY GENERATED REVENUES				
	\$805,000	\$77,604	\$696,282	86%

Footnotes:

(A) Library lost material fees have not been collectible via electronic payment since the cybersecurity breach in May 2024

(B) Insurance proceeds check received to offset portion of repair cost related to Ballard Library vehicle strike



The Seattle Public Library

Date: February 27, 2025
To: Library Board of Trustees
From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Re: January - February 2025 Chief Librarian's Report

1. 2025 marks the fifth anniversary of no late fines at The Seattle Public Library. Library staff and patrons are appreciative of this change that has helped to make the Library more welcoming and accessible to our community. We are celebrating this milestone throughout the first quarter.
2. On January 29, the Library expanded open hours at nine branches. With this increase, all Library locations, with the exception of the University Branch, which is now closed for renovations, are open at least six days a week. Thirteen locations are open seven days a week. The schedule is expected to stay the same through 2025, with the goal of providing stable and consistent operations.
3. Also on January 29, the University Branch closed until late 2026 for a major seismic retrofit and modernization project. When the branch reopens in late 2026, patrons will be able to enjoy several significant improvements, including a new electric HVAC system and air conditioning, new study rooms, a music room, remodeled restrooms, a new elevator, new furniture, lighting, carpeting and more.
4. Our Museum Pass program is temporarily suspended following an unexpected shutdown of the vendor. Library staff have identified a new system and are doing the back-end work to be sure it is functional for patrons. We hope to have the new system up and running in the next few weeks.
5. On February 1, I attended the Friends Board retreat and provided a short presentation on the Friends' impact on the Library and its levies. The Library is grateful for the Friends' grassroots support of the Library and greatly appreciates the work of the Friends to further access to books and reading in Seattle's schools and community.
6. On February 5, I attended Library Legislative Day in Olympia, along with members of the Library Foundation, the Friends, and colleagues from library systems around the State of Washington. During a full day of activities, we had the opportunity to meet with multiple representatives and advocate for support of library services.

7. February 6-7, I attended the winter meeting of the Public Library Directors of Washington. The two-day meeting was held in Tumwater, where leaders from libraries around the state came together to discuss shared successes and challenges in the current landscape.
8. On February 8, I attended the Foundation Board retreat at the Central Library. Director of Library Programs and Services Kai Tang, Director of Administrative Services Rob Gannon, and I gave a presentation on the Library's Strategic Planning design process and implementation plan for insight as the Foundation begins their own strategic planning process in 2025. The Library is grateful for the Foundation's deep engagement and continued generous support to the Library.
9. Also on February 8, I attended the 20th anniversary celebration of the Greenwood Branch. It was great to see staff and patrons coming together to celebrate the work of the Library and the important role it plays in supporting community, connection, and a love of reading in the Greenwood neighborhood.
10. On February 17-18, I attended the Knight Foundation Library Directors Conference in Miami, FL. This annual conference brings together leaders from across the country to share challenges, successes, and best practices and work toward shared goals in the library and information science field.

Meetings and events during this reporting period:

- a. Board Meetings: Monthly Library Board of Trustees meeting; monthly meeting of Library and Friends leadership; Friends Board December and January meetings and retreat; Foundation Board January meeting and retreat.
- b. Standing Meetings: Compensation Committee; Senior Management Team; E-Team; Monthly Managers meeting; Union/Leadership meetings; Foundation CEO/Chief Librarian bi-monthly meetings.
- c. Library Meetings, Talks, Interviews and Visits: Metro area library director meetings; ULC Director/CEO weekly meetings; Library Legislative Day, Public Library Directors of Washington winter meeting; Knight Foundation Library Directors Conference.
- d. City Meetings, Events and Programs: Deputy Mayor bi-weekly meeting; Councilmember Rivera monthly meeting; Mayor's Cabinet meeting.

LIBRARY AT A GLANCE



IN FOCUS: Worry-Free Borrowing

Five years ago, the Library eliminated daily late fines and introduced other changes to enhance the borrowing experience.

Overview: Worry-Free Borrowing

In January 2020, the Library eliminated daily late fines for overdue items as part of the 2019 Library Levy. This decision aligned with nationwide research showing that fine-free policies do not negatively affect return rates and help reduce financial barriers for patrons.

Along with eliminating late fines, the Library has introduced automatic renewals, enhanced account notifications, and made other customer service improvements to create a worry-free borrowing experience. Following these changes, our data indicates that patrons keep books longer while still returning most on time.

A Growing National Trend



Dozens of other libraries across the nation have also created fine-free borrowing policies in recent years. The Urban Libraries Council says no member library systems have reversed these policy changes.

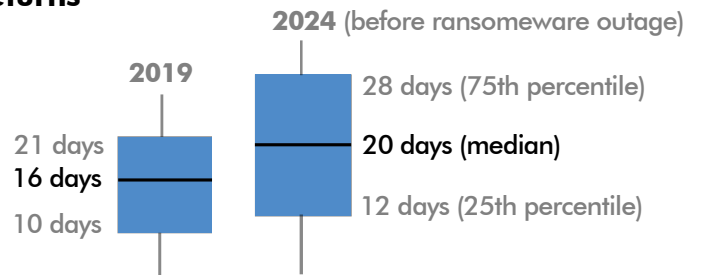
Most Print Materials Still Returned On-time

91% Juvenile print books returned on time, (2019 baseline 89%)

82% Adult print books returned on time (2019 baseline 85%)

Juvenile and adult print books are returned on time at rates comparable to the 2019 baseline.

Picture Books Kept Longer Among On-Time Returns



Auto-renewals have extended the borrowing period. Picture books are now kept four extra days on average, allowing for extended enjoyment of favorite bedtime stories.

Patrons Hold on to Peak Picks Longer

53% Peak Picks returned on time, (2023, with 2019 baseline of 74%)

Peak Picks, our no-holds no-wait collection, offers a two-week checkout and no renewals, ensuring high-demand titles are widely available. Although fewer Peak Picks books are returned on time compared to other collections, 80% are checked in by one week after the due date.

What Patrons Say

"It's like a weight lifted off my shoulders."

"Not having late fines for almost five years is a testament to SPL's commitment to encouraging lifelong learning. Great job!"

"No more waiting for 'Amnesty Day,' our mother's favorite day of the year."

LIBRARY AT A GLANCE



IN FOCUS: Kaleidoscope Play and Learn

The Library offers Kaleidoscope Play and Learn to promote early learning and community connections.

Overview: Kaleidoscope Play and Learn

Through funding from the 2019 Levy, the Library offers Kaleidoscope Play and Learn — an early learning program where contracted community-based organizations use evidence-based practices to promote early literacy, fine motor skills, and social development.

These weekly, 90-minute sessions for caregivers, parents, and young children feature guided play at learning stations, and storytime at seven branch locations in several languages. The program emphasizes developmental benefits, cultural responsiveness, and community connections.

What Happens at Play and Learn Stations



During station time, children choose between activities such as sensory tables, number games, and coloring.

Survey Shows Gains in Early Learning

83% report increased understanding that play helps children develop school-readiness skills

85% report increased talk with their child about numbers, shapes, and sizes

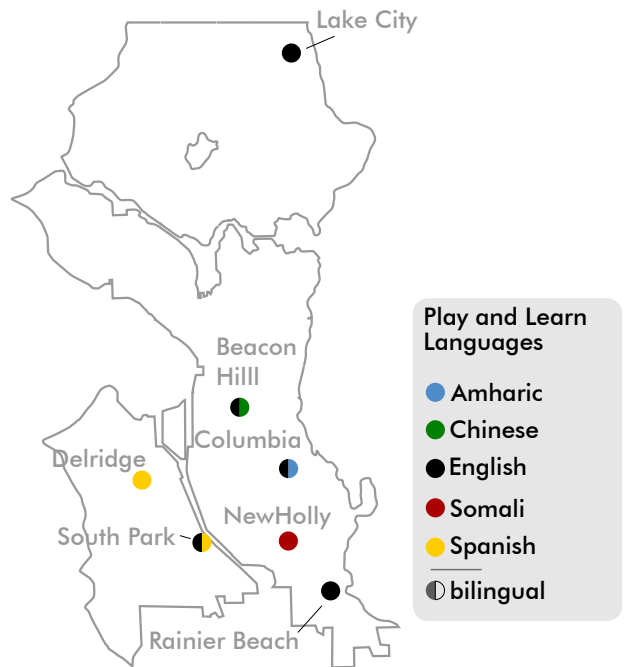
Results from the Play and Learn post-participation survey conducted annually by BrightSpark show positive changes in adult caregivers' understanding of how to integrate early learning into daily life.

What Participants Say

"Since participating in Kaleidoscope Play & Learn, I've learned how to ask for help and support as a parent when I'm needing it."

"My daughter has grown so much in her language development from being around other kids."

Program Locations and Languages



The Library offers Play and Learn programs primarily at branch locations in South Seattle. The program is bilingual at some locations, with language selection based on local needs.

Public Program Proposal Form
February 13, 2025

Kristina Darnell, Community Engagement and Economic Development Services Manager
 Elisa Murray, Digital Communications Strategist
New Programming/Partnership Inquiries Form for the Public



The Seattle Public Library receives a high number of unsolicited inquiries for new Library programs, partnerships, and services on a regular basis. These inquiries arrive in several different methods and formats, including questions through our Ask Us email and chat service, phone calls, or emails to individual staff members. It is often not initially clear if the suggestions posed are in alignment with the library’s strategic priorities and equity goals, or if they are operationally feasible. This regularly results in several communications with the patron and between SPL staff who are hoping to identify the best internal point of contact to address the inquiry. Without a platform that provides basic informational guidelines or visibility into who at SPL has already seen the question, the original inquiry is sometimes passed between multiple divisional teams before a point person with the information needed to respond is identified.

In response to these pain points, Equity, Learning and Engagement Services (ELES) Service Managers and the Communications Office worked together to develop a new [“Suggest a Library Program, Partnership or Event”](#) form on the SPL Public website that all staff can use to direct unsolicited public inquiries about potential events, programs or partnerships at the Library. The responses are monitored through the LibApps queue (the backend of the public-facing [“Ask Us”](#) service) by ELES staff members.

Similar to the [“Suggest a Title”](#) form, the [“Suggest a Library Program, Partnership or Event”](#) form is designed to save staff time by collecting important information about a proposed program or partnership without a lot of back and forth, and to share the Library’s priorities and criteria that we use to evaluate program or partnership requests. It is a replacement for the Programming Queries email address that’s been used for unsolicited inquiries for many years as well as streamlining requests that come from various staff in the organization.

Describe Your Idea

Describe the type of program, event or partnership you are proposing. Please check all that apply. *

- Library sponsorship of an event or program
- Library participation in an event or program in a non-Library space
- Library participation in an event or program hosted in a Library space
- Ongoing partnership
- Suggestion for event or program
- Other

People proposing an event, program and partnership will be directed to the form through our [Contact Us](#) page, through our Ask us email and chat service, and by staff members. Kiersten Nelson, our Government and Partnerships Program Manager, will also use the form to collect information about unsolicited partnership inquiries.

This form is designed for people outside the organization who don't have an existing relationship with the library. It is **not** an internal planning form or a form intended to interact with other SPL data collection forms.

Since the form was published on the website in late December 2024, there have been 36 inquiries submitted.

Below are a few FAQs about the form that might be helpful:

Who was involved in creating the program inquiries form?

Here is our new [Strategic Plan](#). Our community impact areas are:

- Literacy
- Empowerment
- Enrichment

How does this program, event or partnership align with our community impact areas? *

It was developed by ELES Service Managers Kristina Darnell and Soraya Silverman-Montano with Digital Communications Strategist Elisa Murray because ELES has been responsible for the Programming Inquiries queue, and wanted a more streamlined way of responding to

the many unsolicited inquiries that we receive, which are often not aligned with our capacity and strategic/equity priorities. Staff in ELES, the Quick Information Center (QIC), and Library leadership provided input, including Kiersten Nelson, Kreg Hasegawa, Laura Gentry, Darth Nielsen, and Kai Tang. We will evaluate and improve this process as we see how it's being used and what questions arise.

How will Library staff use it?

It was designed to help us respond efficiently to the wide variety of unsolicited inquiries that the Library receives from people and organizations who do not have an existing relationship with the Library. Examples include an author who wants the Library to hold a reading for them; an organization we haven't worked with before that wants us to sponsor or attend their event; an individual, group, or organization wanting to collaborate on a program, etc. Any requests from the public asking the Library to collaborate, support, sponsor a program, event, or partnership can be directed to this form for further information gathering.

However, it's important to note that if an inquiry presents itself that strongly aligns with the Library's strategic priorities and equity goals, this form can be bypassed so relevant staff may engage directly with the person asking to learn more. There is also not an expectation to use this for already established partnerships or programs. This is primarily for new potential bodies of work, collaborations, or partnerships.

Who will monitor/evaluate the form responses?

As with the programming inquiries email queue, ELES staff will monitor the responses that we receive from the form and direct them to relevant staff as necessary. We do make it clear that we won't be able to respond to all inquiries, only that we will send a response if we're wanting to learn more and/or follow up on the request.

Our hope is that by streamlining how we handle unsolicited inquiries, we can provide better customer service, educate potential partners on the Library's strategic priorities and equity goals, and identify proposed programs that align with those priorities more quickly and efficiently.

GATEWAY TO HISTORY

February, 2025

John LaMont, Genealogy Librarian and Sean Lanksbury, Services Manager; Special Collections.

Marine Digest: Preservation and Metadata to Enhance Digital Maritime Resources



Over the course of 2024, Special Collections (SPC) has added metadata and subject headings to scanned issues of *Marine Digest* and made them available via our [Seattle Room Digital Collections](#). Coverage to date spans 1922 through 1954 with an additional later span of 1980-1989. This effort was accomplished with funds from the Gustave J. Snelling fund alongside the generosity of Northwest Publishing Center and its CEO Mike Daigle, who donated a physical set of back issues and provided permission to digitize the collection. The release of this earliest portion of the publication run online constitutes a major contribution to digital resources on early 20th century maritime industry growth and activity in the Pacific Northwest and Northeast Pacific Ocean.

Marine Digest was founded in 1922 by Jackson B. Corbet as a local source for maritime industry news. In the first issue, Corbet states that the publication was "solely to serve the maritime interests of Seattle and other Pacific Northwest ports now well launched on a new and greater epoch of growth and activity." It was at various times the "official publication of the Transportation Club of Seattle, Northwest Marine Industries, Inc., the World Trade Club of Seattle, the Seattle Boat Builders' Association, the Yukon Club, the Japanese Trade Fair, and the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society, Inc." Each issue included



Yamashita Co., Inc. Advertisement, Marine Digest, v.3, no.22, Jan. 24, 1925, p. 2

a cover photo of a ship or maritime scene that often connected to an article or news item within. News coverage varies over time but often includes biographies, domestic and international trade, editorials, industries that rely on shipping (lumber, fruit, fishing, etc.), marine intelligence, maritime history, obituaries, photographs, portraits, regional news from around the sound (Tacoma, Bellingham, Everett, Anacortes, Portland, Vancouver, B.C., Victoria, etc.), Seattle Boat Show (with supplements), serialized articles on maritime topics, ship history, shipbuilding, shipping companies, shipwrecks and accidents, strikes, war related news, and more.

The creation of this digital collection was initiated with a donation of duplicate copies from [Northwest Publishing Center's](#) back issue archive after the publication ceased in 2016. We offer special thanks to CEO Mike Daigle, who granted permission to digitize the collection.

Utilizing gift funds from the Gustave J. Snelling fund, specifically assigned for the acquisition of maritime or navigation resources, Special Collections contracted Crowley Company in 2022 to digitize all issues utilizing high-capacity digital scanning processes. This work for hire did not include descriptive metadata or subject analysis. This instead has been provided by Special Collections Librarian John LaMont with assistance from other Special Collections and Library staff as needed.

Staff regularly communicated with the vendor on processing progress, accompanied by periodic batches of digital work product files for review. Upon completion and approval of the digital work product, hard drives with the digital archive files were delivered to Special Collections. Duplicate print copies were recycled by the vendor at our request. Once the digitized materials arrived, Special Collections prepared metadata for each scanned issue for ingest into our digital content management system. Cover photos and captions are noted in the description and included as subject headings (ship name, ship type, ship owner, and related topics). All issues have the outside covers provided in color, with special issues and issues starting with volume 75 (1996) forward provided completely in color.



Cover, *Marine Digest*, v.25, no.33, Mar. 22, 1947. Note the Boat Show Supplement.

Content was uploaded into Seattle Room Digital Collections throughout 2024.

The collection has averaged an average of 1,080 hits a month since being made available online.

The *Marine Digest* and *Cargo Business News* Collection currently covers 1922 through 1954 (volumes 1-34) but will eventually include the full back-run of this Seattle-based publication. It was published weekly through August 1989 and monthly in later years. Following are title changes for the publication:

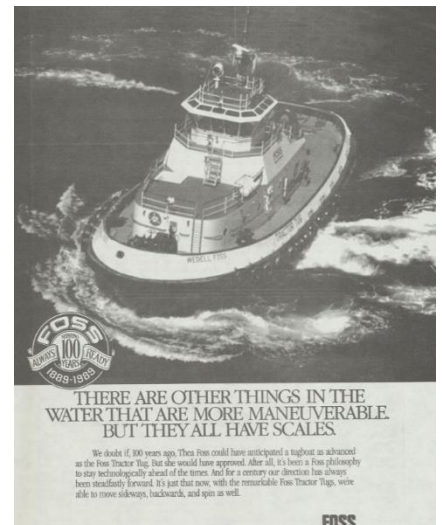
- *Marine Digest* (1922-1987)
- *Marine Digest and Transportation News* (1987-1999)
- *Marine Digest* (1999-2002)
- *Marine Digest and Cargo Business News* (2002-2008)
- *Cargo Business News* (2008-2016)

As of January 2025, SPC has uploaded 30,310 digital items (pages), organized into 1,684 compound digital objects (issues). Offering this earliest portion of the publication run online constitutes a major contribution to digital resources on Pacific Northwest maritime topics in the early 20th century.

Weekly issues spanning 1960-1979 and issues following the switch to a monthly publication timeline spanning 1990 until closure in 2016, will continue to be added in batches. When complete, Seattle Public Library's *Marine Digest* digital holdings will have expanded to an estimated total of 103,784 pages spanning nearly 100 years of Maritime activity in the Pacific Northwest and Northeast Pacific Ocean.

Additional information on the magazine's origin, excerpted from R. H. Calkins "High Tide, the Big Stories of the Seattle Waterfront," is included in the following blog post:

[1922. The Birth of the Marine Digest. Saltwater People Historical Society](#)



Foss Maritime Co. Centennial Advertisement, Marine Digest and Transportation News, v.68, no.2, Aug. 19, 1989 p.19. Thea Foss, a Norwegian immigrant to Tacoma, founded what became Seattle's Foss Maritime Company in 1889. She was the real-life person on which the fictional character "Tugboat Annie" was partly based upon.

Materials Distribution Services

Strength in Adversity: The 2024 Experience of the Materials Distribution Services Team

January 16, 2025

Charles Wesley, Library Technology Officer

Jason Hayes, Materials Distribution Services Manager

In 2024, the Materials Distribution Services (MDS) department faced significant challenges due to a hiring freeze and a cyber-attack. These events impacted staffing levels and disrupted operations, leading to a backlog of returned materials. Despite these challenges, the department has made substantial progress in addressing these issues and is poised for a successful 2025.

Staffing Challenges:

The hiring freeze significantly impacted the staffing levels within the MDS department, affecting several key positions, including AMHS Operators and Delivery Drivers. Some positions were filled through temporary staff assignments and hiring freeze exceptions, while others became vacant over the course of the year due to normal staff attrition. As a result, MDS was generally shorter staffed in 2024 than in normal years. However, as of January 2025, the department has authorization to fill all vacancies and has several new team members already on board, with three more positions currently open for recruitment.

Operational Disruptions:

The cyber-attack on the Library over the Memorial Day weekend of 2024 took all systems offline, including the automated materials handling system (AMHS), generating a large backlog of returned materials.

During the network and systems outage, the MDS group prioritized organizing and storing the backlog of returned materials, anticipating a significant volume based on the experience of other systems that were also victims of cyberattacks. The team procured large numbers of gaylord boxes for storage and planned for additional storage capacity through semi-trailers, although these trailers were ultimately not needed.



While the systems were offline, the focus of the AMHS team shifted from running the machine to packing and organizing materials in gaylords using hand-written paper logs. Delivery operations continued across all routes with other operational materials being delivered to locations and returned items transported to the MOC for processing and storage. Mobile services operations resumed in an offline mode within several weeks after the attack, giving mobile services patrons access to Library materials.



The cyber-attack had a profound impact on the department's operations. The sudden loss of system functionality created an unprecedented challenge, with staff having to quickly adapt to manual processes. The use of paper logs and hand-packing of materials into gaylords was a labor-intensive process that required significant coordination and effort.

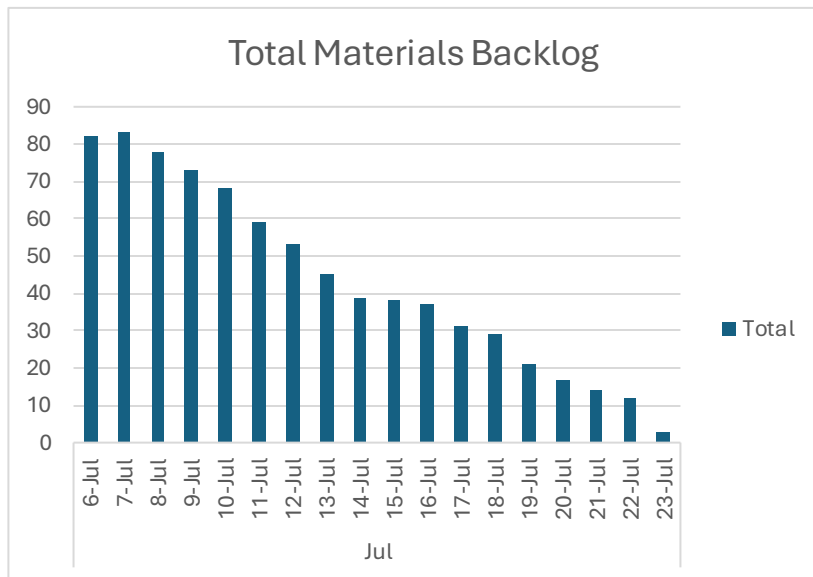
Despite these challenges, the team demonstrated resilience and adaptability, ensuring that the backlog was managed effectively.

Recovery Efforts:

The Library’s recovery efforts focused on restoring core network connectivity and critical systems such as the Integrated Library System (ILS) and the AMHS. Once these systems were online, backlog processing started, initially focusing exclusively on processing materials.

The team processed approximately 3,000 items a day, and enough materials were processed to resume deliveries, branches started receiving materials to be checked in shelved. The backlog of roughly 70,000 was completely processed between week of July 6th and July 23rd

The successful completion of backlog processing was a significant milestone, demonstrating the department's ability to recover from a disruption.



once
and
items
the
the
major

Priorities for 2025:

The priorities for 2025 include a focus on optimizing processes and workflows to enhance efficiency and productivity. The department will leverage data to identify areas for improvement and implement changes that will streamline operations. The lessons learned from the backlog processing will be applied to daily operations, ensuring that the department is better prepared to handle future challenges. The recruitment of new team members will also be a key focus, as the department aims to return to fully staffed levels and enhance its operational capacity.

Facility Maintenance, Custodial, and Capital Improvement Program Events and Accomplishments in 2024

Both the Facility Maintenance and Custodial groups were very busy this past year. Between their daily job duties, they also responded to thousands of work orders that were requested by various staff among the 27 branches. Both teams did a tremendous job keeping our facilities clean and running throughout 2024 while being short of staff.

For Facility Maintenance, the following were completed at all branches:

- Pressure washed
- Replaced and/or retrofit lights
- Assisted gardeners with mulching, mowing, trimming
- Patching, painting rooms, and walls
- Scheduling for Fire & Life System repairs, inspections
- Cleaned roofs and cleared gutters
- Replaced HVAC filters

Some branches like Ballard required more attention. Multiple repairs were performed on the garage door due to damage of cars running into the gate, regular scheduled pressure washing to the entry plaza due to the increase of unhoused persons using the area for overnight camping, and troubleshooting resolving the source of a gas odor. A large iconic sequoia tree that had died was removed at our Broadview branch and another tree had to be removed at our Lake City branch due to it falling across neighboring property from the recent storm. Fire pumps were replaced at the Central branch and a three-year long project of coordinating the custom glass replacement along the North side of the building due to vandalism was completed. In total, there were 4066 work orders requested and completed for graffiti removal, replacement of broken windows due to vandalism, replacing and moving and reconfiguring of furniture (desk systems, tables, and chairs), and supporting Capital Improvement and the Custodians with various projects and work orders. That number is not including the scheduled preventative maintenance work orders, which totaled 5034.

For Custodial/Janitorial, they completed weekly pressure washing at the Central Library / 5th Ave plaza. They were responsible for set up for 368 events. The Central library exterior windows were cleaned and branch libraries interior and exterior window cleaning were done twice. There were a total of 61 incident of pest control responses. Floor care and deep carpet cleaning were completed twice. We have seen an increase in the need for spot cleaning to carpet and furniture due to the change in policy allowing patrons to eat and drink in the library. We tracked 45 incidents accounting for this cleaning. These spot cleaning tasks were based on nightly inspections and that were not requested and/or recorded in our system. Finally, from the staffing side, we hired two full-time permanent janitor positions and one temporary custodian position. Despite a deficit of 17% of our workforce every given night, we were able to provide cleaning services to all branches at almost normal cleaning expectations. In total, there were 1773 work orders requested and completed for various cleaning throughout the SPL system.

Combined both teams work order requests were very high;

- 573 Clogged toilets
- 263 Bio Hazard cleanups
- 183 Graffiti removals
- 166 Floor repairs, cleanups (incl food, drinks)
- 21 Window repairs, replacements, cleanups due to vandalism

Safety and Security Services

November 27, 2024

Rob Gannon, Administrative Services Director

Impact Areas

Safety and Security: *Staff and public feel safe and secure at all 27 library locations and the Maintenance and Operations Center.*

Security at The Seattle Public Library

The Security Team is responsible for the safety and security of staff, patrons, and vendors of The Seattle Public Library. The team provides security staffing at all locations, conducts staff training and education on Rules of Conduct, de-escalation, evacuation and safety procedures, and are responsible for system access controls.

Approach

In alignment with Library values, Security staff go to great lengths to promote access to our spaces and resources, and to uplift patron privacy and dignity. Officers are committed to de-escalation and model those strategies for staff. They engage patrons actively and remind those who are struggling with Rules of Conduct that the Library wants them to be here. When there is a need to ask someone to leave for the day or longer, Security officers give patrons space and dignity – often delivering the message with compassion, and then stepping away so the patron has time to collect their things and leave on their own terms. The security team shares these strategies with library staff through a mandatory online Safe Environment Training (SET) as well as an in-person de-escalation training. In 2024 Security offered 5 de-escalation trainings to staff across the system and plans to expand this number in 2025. While de-escalation is not new to our Security Team and staff, the commitment to practicing it has become the standard in recent years. Since the pandemic exclusions have decreased as officers and staff go above and beyond to keep patrons successful in our spaces. Officers have also taken part in community events, such as the Central Library's weekly Coffee & Conversations, designed to build community and trust between unhoused patrons and staff.

Coverage

The Security team supports staff and patrons across Seattle. While Security staff are on site at the Central Library during all open hours and many more, branch coverage varies. On well-staffed days, Security is able to assign several officers to patrol neighborhood regions, and schedule one or more Emphasis Patrol Officers (EPOs). Officers in the field generally stop by 4-5 branches daily to do safety checks, establish and maintain relationships with staff, and get to know regular patrons. When possible, we schedule EPOs for several hours or entire days at branches that tend to have high rates of security incidents, or at branches that have recently experienced a particularly challenging security event.

In 2024, security officers visited library branches approximately 5,300 times from January to mid-November with an average of 500 times per month which is up 100 visits on average from 2023. While the workforce has grown to 18 uniformed officers and two lead officers thanks to the investment of levy funding in recent years, we are often unable to keep pace with the requests and needs of branches. With sick calls and other leaves it is not uncommon to have just one or two officers available for branch coverage in the evenings and on weekends. To help remedy the needs of our staff and patron needs across the library system, we are currently recruiting 3 additional officers to join the team in early 2025.

Reporting

To support branches and Central even when an officer is not in the immediate vicinity, the Security team monitors Central Radios and takes calls from Branches on a daily basis. Since January to mid-November, the Central security call tracker has received 11,800 calls for security-related services. Incident reports are completed whenever a significant Rule of Conduct violation occurs, and also to report accidents, medical emergencies, or other notable events. Unfortunately,

due to the cyberattack that the Library experienced, the Security Team's report writing system lost the majority of its data and have worked with IT staff to help recoup previous files. Currently, we are using a manual reporting system shared within the Security group using Microsoft Teams.

Morning patrols

Throughout the year, the Security team began scheduling staff for early morning patrols of high-incident branches to ensure our buildings are clean and safe before opening. Two officers leave Central at 6:45 a.m. to visit between three and eight branches. To date officers have conducted 1300 branch visits during morning patrols, during which 1900 patrons were contacted this is an increase from 850 from the previous year. Stops often involve humanely encouraging those sleeping on library or adjacent properties to move on so that library operations can commence, and sometimes helping excluded patrons to move from property to avoid further repercussions. Officers often provide water and kind words to regulars with whom they have developed a rapport. Officers generally return to the Central Library by 9:30 a.m. to provide support for opening the building. Zero use-of-force incidents occurred during those patrols, illustrating how well officers manage what can be high-stress interactions for all involved.

Challenges

Security concerns at SPL mirror those found in the city as a whole. Since 2019, Seattle has experienced a significant increase in the number of drug-related issues including fentanyl and meth-related overdoses. While substance abuse among patrons is not new, the rise of fentanyl in the region and nation has resulted in more overdoses among users and air quality issues for staff and other patrons. The Security team also began distributing narcan to branches and Central locations and tracking usage. From November 2022-2023 SPL staff administered narcan 4 times. This does not include the cases of medics administering narcan or taking other measures to address overdoses. We do not have a reliable count for that, but work is being done to improve data collection around drug incidents.

Appreciation

Here are a few highlights of successfully planned and executed security operations for high vis events:

- *Holocaust Remembrance – May 2024*
- *Mayor Bruce Harrell – June 2024*
- *Women's Declaration International – November 2024*

*Security officers are scheduled 6am-9:30pm Monday through Friday and 7am-7:30pm Saturday and Sunday.



The Seattle Public Library

Date: February 27, 2025

To: Library Board of Trustees

From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Rob Gannon, Director of Administrative Services
Charles Wesley, Library Technology Officer

Re: **Technology Acquisition and Artificial Intelligence**

The City of Seattle published [POL-209](#), which “sets forth requirements City departments will observe when acquiring and using software that meets the definition of ‘generative artificial intelligence.’” The Seattle Public Library has been working to develop its own policies and procedures to be compliant with the City’s overarching policy while also attending to the needs of the library environment, its professional staff, and patrons.

As an overview, POL-209 is a clear and actionable policy setting forth guiding principles around how to evaluate, select, and utilize generative artificial intelligence. However, POL-209 is written to tie into [STA-209](#), the City’s Acquisition of Technology Resources standard. As a non-executive department, The Seattle Public Library is not expressly bound by this standard. To comply with POL-209, The Seattle Public Library must first establish a policy and accompanying procedures to serve as guidelines when considering or acquiring new technology that makes use of generative artificial intelligence. The Library is working to understand how the organization’s use of generative AI as a non-executive department would differ from other city departments, and how the Library should organize itself operationally to fulfill the guiding principles outlined in POL-209.

Additionally, as The Seattle Public Library continues to recover and apply lessons learned from the 2024 ransomware attack, an improved technology acquisition process will create a mechanism for intentional review supporting other critical interests including cybersecurity, privacy, and budgetary constraints.

Once a policy is in place to govern the acquisition of generative AI-enabled products and services, the Library must have a procedural structure to support appropriate practices and the means to evaluate the use of these tools. The administrative guidelines will also serve to address potential ethical and legal dilemmas that may result from introducing this technology into the public library environment. The Library has begun to draft best-practices and other safeguards to address this essential need.

Next Steps

The Seattle Public Library is developing draft policies and procedures to implement a new technology acquisition process which will include an additional review step if that technology

includes Generative AI. Policies defining the high-level principles, goals, and expectations of the organization will be brought to the Board for review and action. Administrative procedures detailing the steps outlining how to request technology, and how these requests will be reviewed and acted upon will follow.

Additionally, the Library will form a standing Generative AI Governance Committee, which will be tasked with reviewing requests, understanding how the practical use of these approved tools is in keeping within the guardrails defined by policy, and making regular recommendations on how the organization should adjust its practices in this space.

Action required/requested:

Informational only, no action requested at this time. Comments welcome.



The Seattle Public Library

Date: February 27, 2025
To: Library Board of Trustees
From: Jessica Lucas, President, AFSCME Local 2083
Re: **February Union Board Report**

Fixed scheduling has officially been implemented, and we are excited to see the results of the hard work done by fixed scheduling implementation committee, which is a cross section of Frontline staff, PSO, and admin. This will be an iterative process as we learn what works well and what doesn't, but we hope the outcome will be that staff have more control over their lives outside of the library, including elder and childcare, hobbies, school, etc.

Workday is still causing issues, and we want to thank our HR department for their hard work there but hope that these issues are resolved soon by the city.

We look forward to the hiring of more floating and regular staff to help our staffing levels and capacity to put on programs.

Generally, staff morale needs to be improved. This has been an ongoing theme that we want to work on with Administrators. Hopefully, this year will have fewer catastrophic issues, and we can focus on making SPL an employer of choice.

Action required/requested: Informational only.



The Seattle Public Library

Date: January 30, 2025
To: Library Board of Trustees
From: Jessica Lucas, President, AFSCME Local 2083
Re: **January Union Report**

The Union would like to thank the Human Resources department for their continued hard work and dedication to making sure that all staff are getting paid at the right rate and from the correct leaves. Their patience working with the City has been phenomenal, as has the patience of our members waiting for resolutions to their payroll issues. Every day Library HR representatives are closer to positive outcomes for all affected staff.

Fixed scheduling has almost begun, and we are hopeful that the outcome will be stability for our members and increased satisfaction for our patrons. The Fixed Schedule Committee is working to identify misunderstandings and create a streamlined and thoughtful schedule creation process when it is repeated next year. The Union and Library Leadership share common interests in doing the best we can to bring a work life balance Public Services Staff and providing sustainable and high-quality Library services to the Public. We will continue to work towards these goals in the coming year.

The Public Scheduling Office has worked very hard to get Fixed Scheduling off the ground; creating new template schedules, working with Regional Managers to identify programming, outreach, and committee priorities, and making 91 out of 105 trade requests possible in the finalization of the schedules. A truly stellar commitment to their internal customers.

The Union continues to work with Library Leadership to recover or recreate up to date labor practices since the cybersecurity event. Recovery can be slow due to loss of current and historical documents and breaks in institutional knowledge. We find these discrepancies as situations come up or after a policy has been posted and it can create confusion, especially as it often takes several weeks to correct. It can be frustrating to navigate but it this is important work that is worth the time taken to do it right. We appreciate our partnership with Library Leaders that allows us to work collaboratively on this effort.

Action required/requested: Informational only.



The Seattle Public Library

NEWS RELEASES

Date	Title
12-20-2024	Winter Break Family Activities at The Seattle Public Library
12-19-2024	Apply to be a Writers' Room resident at the Central Library
12-16-2024	The Seattle Public Library's University Branch to close for renovations on January 29, 2025
12-02-2024	December 2024 Author Readings and Community Events with The Seattle Public Library
11-01-2024	November and December 2024 Author Readings and Community Events with The Seattle Public Library



The Seattle Public Library

MEDIA COVERAGE – November & December 2024

Date	Organization	Headline	Details	Link
30-Dec-2024	KUOW	KUOW's Year in Review Live	The Seattle Public Library, SeaTac Airport, and the Highline school district all got cyber attacked.	https://www.kuow.org/stories/kuows-year-in-review-live
24-Dec-2024	KUOW	2024 recap: Readers' top KUOW stories from this year	"The E-book problem hits Seattle" Seattle-area readers love digital books. In fact, the Seattle Public Library ranks at number eight worldwide, and the King County Library ranks third, when it comes to digital checkouts. But the growing popularity of e-books has created issues for local libraries, which have to pay for these digital titles. The costs have been adding up ... and up again. This year, Seattle Public Library reduced the number of digital holds a person can make, dropping the limit from 25 to 10.	https://www.kuow.org/stories/kuow-s-top-stories-of-2024

20-Dec-2024	King County Employees	“Read to Me” program allows incarcerated parents to read books to children through jail-library partnership	Every quarter, DAJD staff teams up with Seattle Public Library (SPL) to host a “Read to Me” workshop with people housed at King County Correctional Facility. Through this reoccurring program, residents attend three sessions with SPL’s librarians, ultimately resulting in a recorded story that is sent home to children, grandchildren, or other young relatives as a special keepsake.	https://kcemployees.com/2024/12/20/read-to-me-program-allows-incarcerated-parents-to-read-books-to-children-through-jail-library-partnership/
19-Dec-2024	Seattle Magazine	Seattle Public Library: A Blizzard of Fun During Winter Break	The Seattle Public Library system has an impressive array of activities designed to keep kids and families busy and engaged. Libraries across the system are holding museum events, winter crafts, parties and more.	https://seattlemag.com/seattle-culture/king-county-library-a-blizzard-of-fun-during-winter-break/
17-Dec-2024	The Seattle Times	2 uplifting updates: Progress on a Seattle library and totem poles	After a 20-month renovation, the library branch, on East Green Lake Drive North, reopened Oct. 28. Thanks to a 2019 voter-approved levy, this historic building is re-imagined for future generations.	https://www.seattletimes.com/pacific-nw-magazine/2-uplifting-updates-progress-on-a-seattle-library-and-totem-poles/
17-Dec-2024	The Seattle Times	The most popular books of 2024, according to The Seattle Public Library	The Seattle Public Library loves to promote books and reading. This column was submitted by the library to highlight local checkout trends. Find out more at spl.org.	https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/the-most-popular-books-of-2024-according-to-seattle-public-library/

16-Dec-2024	Seattle's Child	SPL's University Branch soon to close until late 2026	Last day for library visits before major renovations begin is January 28	https://www.seattlechild.com/spls-university-branch-closes-for-renovation-until-late-2026/
15-Dec-2024	The Seattle Times	Rant & Rave: Reader shares appreciation for ferry workers The Seattle Times	Rave to the remodeled Green Lake library. The many beautiful, old features were kept while the building was made safer, more comfortable, more accessible, more flexible and more toileted.	https://www.seattletimes.com/life/lifestyle/rant-rave-161/
10-Dec-2024	Secret Seattle	The Seattle Library's Museum Pass Program Will Pause At The End Of This Year	Unfortunately, the Museum Pass program is temporarily pausing as of December 31, 2024. The library needs to find a new vendor for managing the online reservation system on short notice. Existing reservations will be honored but you won't be able to make new reservations or download passes after December 31	https://secretseattle.com/seattle-library-museum-pass/
4-Dec-2024	The Seattle Times	4 books to accompany long, cold nights	The Seattle Public Library loves to promote books and reading. This column, submitted by the Library, is a space to share reading and book trends from a librarian's perspective. You can find these titles at the library by visiting spl.org and searching their catalog.	https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/4-books-to-accompany-long-cold-nights/

27-Nov-2024	The Seattle Medium	History Matters: Acclaimed Historian Talks Reconstruction At The Central Library On Dec. 5	On Thursday, Dec. 5, award-winning historian Dr. Manisha Sinha will come to the Central Library to give The Seattle Public Library's annual Bullitt Lecture in American History, based on her book "The Rise and the Fall of the Second American Republic."	https://seattlemedium.com/seattle-public-library-reconstruction-lecture/
26-Nov-2024	KING 5	Data breaches surge to record levels in Washington state, attorney general calls for policy changes	Other notable incidents included a cyberattack that caused delays at SEA airport and a ransomware attack on Seattle's Public Library, which disrupted online services for months. A library representative described the impact, saying, "Our staff were hand writing those checkouts and eventually we got sophisticated enough to have spreadsheets."	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/data-breaches-surge-record-levels-washington-attorney-general-policy-changes/281-aec77ae8-5443-42d3-b241-335af93c4180
25-Nov-2024	MSN	The most beautiful and iconic libraries in the United States	Designed by Rem Koolhaas and Joshua Prince-Ramas, this striking facility is the city's flagship library.	https://www.msn.com/en-us/travel/news/the-most-beautiful-and-iconic-libraries-in-the-united-states/ss-AA1nV5YC?ocid=nlb12#image=3

21-Nov-2024	South Seattle Emerald	Homework Help: Seattle Public Library's Tutoring Program Free for All Students in Need	"We provide a snack at every location, and [the reason why we do that is] to center the needs of the families, to make sure that our program is impactful," said Adem. "Pre-pandemic, we offered [Homework Help] at 12 locations and we wanted to really think about where we can have the biggest impact. And so we have shifted down to nine to [maximize] impact with youth and families furthest away from justice."	https://southseattleemerald.org/news/2024/11/21/homework-help-seattle-public-librarys-tutoring-program-free-for-all-students-in-need
20-Nov-2024	South Seattle Emerald	Party With a Purpose: Legendary Children 2024	Co-hosted by Aleksa Manila, CarLarans, and Goddess Briq House, Legendary Children is an event organized by C. Davida Ingram in collaboration with The Seattle Public Library (SPL) and the Seattle Art Museum. The event celebrates the Indigenous, Black, and Brown queer and trans communities in Seattle.	https://southseattleemerald.org/community/2024/11/20/party-with-a-purpose-legendary-children-2024

17-Nov-2024	Seattle Gay News	Seattle Library staff condemn hosting anti-Queer groups, call for protest	The Seattle Public Library staff issued a public letter on Saturday directed at library leadership and calls for a protest and rally on November 17th at 6 p.m. at the Central Library Plaza. The letter notes that it is the third time in five years that SPL has hosted an anti-Queer group, which they see as a failure to prioritize the safety and well-being of Queer communities over fears of legal challenges.	https://www.sgn.org/story.php?ch=news&c=seattle&id=336505
17-Nov-2024	PubliCola	This Week on PubliCola: November 17, 2024	And the Seattle Public Library is once again renting its facilities to an anti-trans group, saying it can't refuse to rent to any person or organization unless they explicitly threaten violence.	https://publicola.com/2024/11/17/this-week-on-publicola-november-17-2024/
17-Nov-2024	West Seattle Blog	West Seattle Sunday: 14 options, including special book-club event, bonus music, clothing drive!	West Seattle Book Club invites you to a special event 10:30 am to 12:30 pm today, either at West Seattle (Admiral) Library (2306 42nd SW) or High Point Library (3411 SW Raymond) – bring your own book or borrow one at the library of your choice. Ladies Musical Club: 3 pm concert at West Seattle (Admiral) Library (2306 42nd SW).	https://westseattleblog.com/2024/11/west-seattle-sunday-14-options-including-special-reading-event-bonus-music-clothing-drive/

15-Nov-2024	The Stranger	Slog AM: TERFs at the Library, Bird Flu Suspected at Woodland Park Zoo, Anti-Vaxx RfK Jr. Selected to Helm Department of Health and Human Services	Like all TERF groups, WDI works under an outdated feminist framework to limit the civil rights of trans people and portray transgender identity as ideology. The Southern Poverty Law Center considers WDI to be part of a anti-queer pseudoscience network, whose “Declaration on Women’s Sex-Based Rights” has become a model for anti-trans legislation. The WDI panel is the third anti-queer event at the library in three years, and the second hosted by a TERF group.	https://www.thestranger.com/slog-am/2024/11/15/79783985/slog-am-terfs-at-the-library-bird-flu-suspected-at-woodland-park-zoo-anti-vaxx-rfk-jr-selected-to-helm-department-of-health-and-human-serv
14-Nov-2024	South Seattle Emerald	LGBTQ Community Concerned About Upcoming Event at Seattle Public Library	The directors of Capitol Hill Pride and Lynwood Pride, Charlette LeFevre and Philip Lipson, sent an email on Nov. 6 to SPL, Mayor Bruce Harrell, and the Seattle City Council calling for the cancellation of the meeting.	https://southseattleemerald.org/news/2024/11/15/lgbtq-community-concerned-about-upcoming-event-at-seattle-public-library
13-Nov-2024	PubliCola	Burien City Manager Filed Complaint Against Public Commenter; Seattle Library Hosts Another Anti-Trans Event	The Seattle Public Library is, once again, renting out public space to an organization dedicated to eliminating the rights of trans people—this time, a trans eliminationist group called Women’s Declaration USA	https://publicola.com/2024/11/13/burien-city-manager-filed-complaint-against-public-commenter-seattle-library-hosts-another-anti-trans-event/

13-Nov-2024	Broadband Breakfast	FCC Gets \$3.7 Billion in Funding Requests for Cybersecurity Pilot Program	The pilot program will disburse up to \$200 million in funding to eligible anchor institutions to assist in the purchase and operation of cybersecurity services and equipment. The FCC will also use the program to gather data about how to bolster the defenses of libraries and schools against future cyber attacks like the offshore May attack on the Seattle Public Library system, which left much of its critical infrastructure offline.	https://broadbandbreakfast.com/fcc-gets-3-7-billion-in-funding-requests-for-cybersecurity-pilot-program/
13-Nov-2024	Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce	Green Lake library branch reopens following 20-month renovation	Seattle Public Library (SPL) reopened its Green Lake branch on Oct. 28 following the completion of a 20-month renovation project.	https://www.djc.com/news/ae/12166880.html
5-Nov-2024	The Seattle Times	Have a laugh with these 4 funny books	The Seattle Public Library loves to promote books and reading. This column, submitted by the library, is a space to share reading and book trends from a librarian's perspective. You can find these titles at the library by visiting spl.org and searching the catalog.	https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/have-a-laugh-with-these-4-funny-books/