

# FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE on 2022-10-14 9:00 AM - 2023 BUDGET PUBLIC INPUT HEARING

This is also a virtual meeting. Those wishing to view the proceedings are able to do so via the City Channel - Channel 25 on Spectrum Cable - or on the Internet at [htt](http://)

Meeting Time: 10-14-22 09:00

## eComments Report

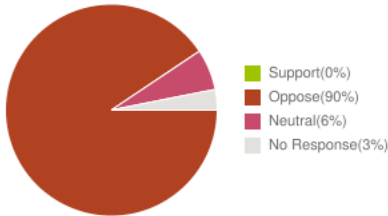
Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE on 2022-10-14 9:00 AM - 2023 BUDGET PUBLIC INPUT HEARING	10-14-22 09:00	8	32	0	29	2

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### Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

#### Overall Sentiment



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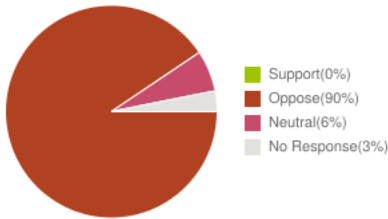
10-14-22 09:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
220778 Communication relating to public comments on the Mayor's Proposed Executive Budget for 2023.	32	0	29	2

## Sentiments for All Agenda Items

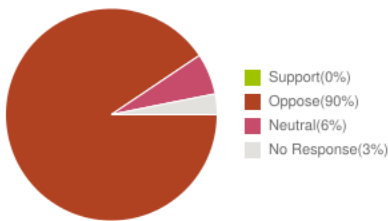
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### Overall Sentiment



### Agenda Item: eComments for 220778 Communication relating to public comments on the Mayor's Proposed Executive Budget for 2023.

### Overall Sentiment



### Aurelia Ceja

Location:

Submitted At: 7:01am 10-14-22

This budget is a willful decision to bankrupt our city through police funding. We continuously take away necessary resources for people such as libraries, and instead you all choose to give the police 50% of our budget. I urge everyone to say no to this budget, as it clearly doesn't reflect the needs or wants of residents of Milwaukee

### Rory Donovan

Location:

Submitted At: 1:28am 10-14-22

The budget allocates way too much to the police department. There are needs that will not be met if this proposal goes through. At least half of the MPD budget should be reallocated to libraries, mental health services, schools, parks, and other public services - things that actually support people's health and livelihood. City employees should also not be laid off in order to give more money to the police!

**Rubin Fletcher**

Location:

Submitted At: 11:21pm 10-13-22

As a former employee of the Department of Neighborhood Services, I am opposition of this budget. All members of this committee need to read Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article dated 10-6-2022 "Milwaukee's Department of Neighborhood Services plagued by vacancies, delays and safety concerns". DNS cannot even afford a licensed architect or professional engineer that is required by the State to maintain a first class city status. Contractors, building owners, and designers know the inspection staff is overwhelmed, overworked, and underpaid resulting in cutting corners in the construction and maintenance to buildings throughout the City that affects future generations to come. We needs to clamp down overtime given to MPD. Overwork and its accompanying stress and exhaustion result in more police misconduct civil lawsuit payouts to the tune of 40 million in the last ten years. We cannot punish our way out of poverty and as best said: "A budget is a moral document." We need to put value back into our community & not fork over half the budget to an occupying force that does not even live in or care about the our City. We need to change the direction of this budget before we are insolvent!

**Amanda Simon**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:25pm 10-13-22

I'm writing to oppose cuts to the Milwaukee Public Library budget. The library is one of the few places people can count on visiting for no charge and access ample books from many different branches, events, tutoring, employment & tax resources, computers, and so much more. Our libraries & amazing parks system are the main reason my family chooses to stay in Milwaukee- these are valuable assets you can't find in every city. They are essential and should be a priority in the city budget, not at risk for reduced staff & hours. Please reconsider decreasing funding for MPL as it would negatively impact many residents.

**Bryna Goeckner**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:50pm 10-13-22

I am writing to you today in support of Milwaukee Public Library.

At a time when the demand for library services is increasing as a result of the growing need for educational programming, and larger numbers of residents are flocking to utilize critical library resources, Milwaukee Public Library faces the prospect of staggering reductions in the city's proposed budget. The \$1.9 million in cuts to an already depressed library budget will result in reduced hours, limited services, and branch closures.

Please don't let that happen.

As a longtime supporter and user of the Milwaukee Public Library, I am asking you to restore funding for this treasured institution. Our neighborhoods depend on the amazing staff serving Central Library and 12 branches that provide education and enrichment in our lives. Free access to technology, workforce development, early literacy skill-building, summer reading, makerspaces, teen connected learning, senior citizen programming, and much, much more is taking place each and every day at Milwaukee Public Library. It would be a tragedy to take these much-needed services and safe spaces away from the citizens – especially those who rely on them the most.

**Victoria Gillet**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:07pm 10-13-22

I am aware that Milwaukee is having to make some difficult budgeting decisions – including cuts to programs and services that are important to me and other residents. At the same time, we have a golden opportunity to access new federal funds from ARPA and the Inflation Reduction Act. As a physician, I know that securing funds from these sources to implement the Climate and Equity Plan is the most important thing we can do for the ongoing

health of my patients and my family.

As tempting as it may be to allocate one-time funding for immediate and pressing needs, we must act strategically. The city's forthcoming Climate and Equity Plan has laid out proposals that will simultaneously address climate change, and create greater economic opportunities for low-income households and people of color. Many of these proposals can be supported by funding from ARPA and the IRA – but we will need staff to research, apply for, and report on new grants from federal sources. Let's leverage the money we do have in our city's budget, to hire grant writers and fund development experts for the ECO office and other city departments so they can access these federal dollars.

**Dean Stefanczyk**

Location:

Submitted At: 8:22pm 10-13-22

I work for the Milwaukee Water Works. The city needs to make difficult financial and administrative decisions. One being, deciding which positions in the city are critical and require institutional knowledge, then prioritizing those positions in the budget. Making the correct decisions by maintaining staff at critical positions will build institutional knowledge, paying dividends in the future. I respectfully suggest senior water treatment plant operator (SWTPO) is one of those positions. The SWTPO is responsible for the safety of the city's drinking water.

**Shelia Payton**

Location:

Submitted At: 5:57pm 10-13-22

I'm writing to oppose cuts to MPL's budget. I understand how difficult this decision is. However MPL gives children in some of the most challenged neighborhoods access to resources that can be the difference between continuation of a cycle that makes it exceptionally difficult for them to break free from poverty, develop the talents they were gifted with, and grow up to make a difference in their communities. The library is where kids have access to the internet that helps them do their homework and learn things they otherwise would likely never know about; a peaceful environment that is a refuge from what too often is chaos in their lives that convinces them things cannot be better; activities that can expand their understanding of what's possible in life--including a broader understanding of the many things people who look like them have accomplished. It's difficult for people, especially children, to be what they can't see. MPL helps them see a bigger world and more possibilities. Instead of cutting the budget seek funding from non-profit and private sources using the long term benefits as a rationale for support.

**William Schroeder**

Location:

Submitted At: 5:47pm 10-13-22

Hello, I'm writing to oppose the budget proposal. I cannot believe that Mayor Johnson wants to increase police spending yet again. If we let this trend continue it will lead to insolvency for our city. I work on the North Side of Milwaukee as a letter carrier and it's readily apparent what taking away public resources and lack of investment away from the people in this city does. People are in poverty and need help and investing this much in the police signals that the city could care less about us and would rather throw people in jail than solve these issues.

We need to keep our libraries, we need to re-allocate at least 50% of police spending and allocate this into accessible healthcare/welfare programs, invest more in our public schools/after school youth programs, and increase wages for all city workers--definitely more than the meager 2% currently proposed. Fund our people! Not the police!

**Alan Chavoya**

Location:

Submitted At: 5:26pm 10-13-22

I am writing to oppose the budget proposal. It's absurd that Mayor Johnson, knowing that the city is heading towards insolvency, continues to give into the demands of the police for an even larger budget. The city cannot afford to continue spending so much money on the police. Increased spending on police gets justified by talking points about crime rates going up in Milwaukee. How exactly is spending more money going to drive crime rates down? Over the last decades, Milwaukee has increased the police budget to take up half of the city's budget while

crime rates have also skyrocketed. Increased spending on police has not and will not lower crime.

Instead of an increase to police funding, we should take at least 50% of their budget and reinvest it into services that actually lower crime rates, such as strong, well-funded public schools and extracurricular programs for our youth and their families, public services with staff paid what they deserve (not the low wages that cause them to leave in record numbers), accessible and affordable quality health services, especially mental health, and more healthy cultural and recreational opportunities. Fund the people, no the police.

### **Ann Stanton**

Location:

Submitted At: 4:09pm 10-13-22

-Please increase funding for street repair in the most economically disadvantage ZIP Codes like 53205. This is a racial equity issue as the people in those ZIP Codes largely have less means to repair their cars that are damaged by the poor condition of the streets.

- also, please add additional barriers in the right lanes of streets with high reckless driving/reckless driving related accidents. The planters/barriers are the only thing that I have seen help with reducing running red lights/passing aggressively in the right lane through intersections/"baselining." streets that I've noticed with serious issues are Capital Drive, Center Street, Atkinson, Fond du Lac, and Silver Spring.

-lastly, please make sure the street lights stay on consistently in the ZIP Codes with higher rates of attempted/completed carjackings, car thefts, car break-ins. I've noticed that many street lights go out randomly and have been the victim of a carjacking at gunpoint where the street lights were out at midnight for some reason. I have talked to teens/young adults who have targeted areas where the street lights go out to steal cars.

### **Kyle Crum**

Location:

Submitted At: 3:13pm 10-13-22

I am writing to you in support of Milwaukee Public Library.

At a time when the demand for library services is increasing as a result of the growing need for educational programming, and larger numbers of residents are flocking to utilize critical library resources, Milwaukee Public Library faces the prospect of staggering reductions in the city's proposed budget. The \$1.9 million in cuts to an already depressed library budget will result in reduced hours, limited services, and branch closures.

Please don't let that happen.

As a longtime supporter and user of the Milwaukee Public Library, I am asking you to restore funding for this treasured institution. Our neighborhoods depend on the amazing staff serving Central Library and 12 branches that provide education and enrichment in our lives. Free access to technology, workforce development, early literacy skill-building, summer reading, makerspaces, teen connected learning, senior citizen programming, and much, much more is taking place each and every day at Milwaukee Public Library. It would be a tragedy to take these much-needed services and safe spaces away from the citizens – especially those who rely on them the most.

### **Rodney Sanchez**

Location:

Submitted At: 3:10pm 10-13-22

I write to oppose the cuts to the Public Library System in Milwaukee. It is vital to continue access to this valuable resource - for all citizens of Milwaukee, and especially those with limited financial resources. Not only does it provide access to those who cannot afford it any other way, it also provides a safe and quiet environment where kids and hang out when the neighborhoods they live in don't provide such opportunities.

### **Kathy Wallace**

Location:

Submitted At: 3:04pm 10-13-22

I am writing to oppose the \$1.9M budget cut for our city libraries. The library is such a life line to so many in our community that it seems like there has to be another alternative than restricting library access or even closing

branches down. With inflation and rising gas and food prices (just to name a few) hitting all of our communities pretty hard, why take aim at our libraries? Certainly there is another way!

### **Sandra Melcher**

Location:

Submitted At: 2:41pm 10-13-22

Now is not the time to reduce the Milwaukee Public Library's budget by \$1.9 million. Doing so compromises democracy in our community. The public library is the foundation of democracy in society. Now is not the time to reduce access to jobs, literacy, and educational resources. We cannot afford to diminish democracy in our community more.

### **Sylvia Dawson**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:58am 10-13-22

I am writing to urge you not to cut funding to the Milwaukee Public Library. The library has always been an important and vital part of the the community, especially during the pandemic. It has not only served as an educational resource, but a safe haven to so many disadvantaged residents. I understand that difficult decisions must be made to the city's budget, but cutting library funding is detrimental to our community. Please don't let that happen. Who else is going to step up and provide the same abundance of resources that the library provides to ALL for FREE???

Thank you for reconsidering!!!

### **Norma Mortimer**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:50am 10-13-22

I grew up going to the library every few days to gather a new stack of books. When I left Milwaukee, I lived in a place that had no library. It was a sad place to be. When I returned 30+ years ago, the library was a regular stop for myself and my child. Now, retired, I visit the library daily to use the computers and take home materials. The interactions with the helpful staff provides important social interaction and helps with materials searches I cannot do myself. I see the library has as many regulars as any local bar or eatery. We all support each other. Curtailing hours and services works to the detriment not only of us elders, but also to the little ones who come regularly. I see students of all ages here as well. Want to have a city of readers? Support the local library!

Norma Mortimer

Retired MPS teacher

### **Cameron Williamson**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:36am 10-13-22

I am writing in support of the public library. The Milwaukee Public Library is an amazing resource for everybody. It's not just a place to store books and be quiet, the many services offered are invaluable to our community. They provide spaces for people to create and learn. Necessary things for living a fulfilling life. It would be shameful to make the library reduce hours and services.

I understand that hard choices need to be made in regards to our city's budget, but cutting library funding is not it. If anything, the library needs more funding. Maybe the bloated police budget should be reduced instead.

### **Ryan Daniels**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:35am 10-13-22

I urge the Committee not to make cuts to the Milwaukee Public Library's budget. Now more than ever, this community needs all the support the library and its staff can provide to our children, teens and adults. Curtailing hours and locations will have an adverse impact on access to programming, computers, WiFi, books and so many other critical resources currently offered. Please restore the \$1.9M.

### **Paris Miller**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:35am 10-13-22

I am writing in opposition to the mayor's budget.

Throwing more money at the police is not going to solve any of the problems that Milwaukee. People are suffering in this city and funding the police will only make matters worse and lead to insolvency. Money needs to go into areas that actually help the community, not the oppress them

The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and AFSCME demand the following:

- No layoffs for general city employees
- Give general city employees the raises they were promised
- Reinvest money from MPD to fund public sector jobs, culture, recreation, and mental health services

On a personal note, I stand in solidarity with Milwaukee Public Libraries and the workers running them

### **Kate Raab**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:20am 10-13-22

As a former (retired) City Librarian, I urge the Committee not to make cuts to the Milwaukee Public Library's budget. Now more than ever, this community needs all the support the library and its staff can provide to our children, teens and adults. Curtailing hours and locations will have an adverse impact on access to programming, computers, WiFi, books and so many other critical resources currently offered.

After dedicating 37 years working with staff and patrons of the Milwaukee Public Library, I'm fully aware of the transformative effect our libraries have on the lives of our citizens—particularly our children. Please don't let them down.

Kate Huston Raab  
Retired City Librarian

### **Eric Flores**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:44am 10-13-22

I am writing in opposition to the mayor's budget.

For many years, management and the politicians are always wondering "Why does no one want to work for the City?" and I'll tell you why - the pay rate general city workers, /the workers that make sure the roads are okay to drive on, the ones that make sure there is clean drinking water, operate the libraries, and much more/, is not a living wage and the cost of living keeps going up and up.

Because of the reckless allocation of our City's budget has gone to the police for so many years, the City is facing insolvency. Do you want to see Milwaukee go into insolvency because the mayor and the Common Council continuously give the police nearly half the budget? Or do you want Milwaukee to be a prosperous place to live and raise a family?

The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and AFSCME demand the following:

- No layoffs for general city employees
- Give general city employees the raises they were promised
- Reinvest money from MPD to fund public sector jobs, culture, recreation, and mental health services

On a personal note, I stand in solidarity with Milwaukee Public Libraries and the workers running them

### **Meghan Engsberg Cunningham**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:37am 10-13-22

I am writing to urge you to consider more monetary support of the Milwaukee Public Library. I appreciate all the challenges of a budget but respectfully disagree that the Milwaukee Public Library should face the budgetary cuts you are recommending. The library has always been an important and vital part of the Milwaukee community, and no time more than that throughout the pandemic. The library serves as a place to check out books, but also a place to obtain internet access, learn, and come together as a community. It is a vital resource for so many in the community and the effects of reduced hours, services will be detrimental to the Milwaukee community. Very sincerely, Meghan Cunningham, Friend of the Milwaukee Public Library

**Ian Buchanan**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:00am 10-13-22

I am writing to you today in support of Milwaukee Public Library.

At a time when the demand for library services is increasing as a result of the growing need for educational programming, and larger numbers of residents are flocking to utilize critical library resources, Milwaukee Public Library faces the prospect of staggering reductions in the city's proposed budget. The \$1.9 million in cuts to an already depressed library budget will result in reduced hours, limited services, and branch closures.

Please don't let that happen.

As a longtime supporter on user of the Milwaukee Public Library, I am asking you to restore funding for this treasured institution. Our neighborhoods depend on the amazing staff serving Central Library and 12 branches that provide education and enrichment in our lives. Free access to technology, workforce development, early literacy skill-building, summer reading, makerspaces, teen connected learning, senior citizen programming, and much, much more is taking place each and every day at Milwaukee Public Library. It would be a tragedy to take these much-needed services and safe spaces away from the citizens – especially those who rely on them the most.

**Andrew Schreier**

Location:

Submitted At: 8:25am 10-13-22

A library is a vital part of any community. It becomes a hub for anyone and everyone to join for various, yet similar purposes to enhance overall well-being. Proposing budget cuts would be like removing a major road in the city or even an artery to the heart. At a time when we should be allocating more resources to the library, the idea of making budget cuts is deeply disturbing. What other community establishment is going to provide the services and availability the library does

**John Goggin**

Location:

Submitted At: 8:01am 10-13-22

Please, do not cut Milwaukee Public Library funding. It is penny-wise and pound-foolish. In addition to serving their traditional function of supplying media at no cost to the public, libraries have evolved into community centers that especially benefit the young and the disadvantaged. Demand for its services is only increasing, and budget cuts which will entail the curtailment of hours and/or branch closures is surely heading in the wrong direction. Yours are difficult decisions, but I hope you will reconsider, and at least mitigate, if not remove, the proposed budget cuts for this essential government service.

**Caitlin Heirbaut**

Location:

Submitted At: 10:59pm 10-12-22

The Milwaukee Public Library is a fundamental resource in our community. Milwaukee is recognized as one of the most segregated cities in the United States; yet, the library works tirelessly to provide programs to bridge the gap amongst race, socioeconomic status, and age. Their efforts support literacy, technology education, and small business support, just to name a few. All things mentioned are necessary for a successful and thriving city. Libraries provide a free, safe place for adults, children, and teens. The very fact the cuts are considered is appalling and undervalues their efforts from the government perspective. Yea, resources are limited, and there



must be cuts, but how can you consider cutting the single most effective asset to the community?

### **Alejandro Zamora Jr**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:38pm 10-12-22

Dear Finance & Personnel Committee Members, I too am writing to ask you to reconsider the budget cuts currently proposed for the Milwaukee Public Library. I urge you to visit our libraries to get a real sense of the range of programs and resources that are available. Don't relegate your decision to a spreadsheet. I am aware of the fiscal challenges that we face as a city. I am a proud resident of the south side and a board member of the Friends of Milwaukee Public Library. The Library is no longer just a place you borrow a book, but rather somewhere where you can get internet access by borrowing a hotspot, get help starting a business, learn to code, find a new job, connect with your community and yes, learn how to read. The shifts that the Library made during the pandemic illustrate it's progressiveness. It has also made improvements to it's facilities from an environmental perspective, demonstrating it's commitment to being good stewards of not only the public funds it receives, but also of the private funds it receives. Again, please reconsider the cuts and help protect the momentum that the Library has built so they can continue to serve all that need of them. Thank you.

### **Jessica Liebau**

Location:

Submitted At: 7:48pm 10-12-22

I am writing to you today in support of Milwaukee Public Library.

Milwaukee Public Library faces the prospect of staggering reductions in the city's proposed budget. The \$1.9 million in cuts to an already depressed library budget will result in reduced hours, limited services, and branch closures. It is unfathomable to me that when some of the biggest issues facing our city are crime and education, that we would cut funding to an institution that addresses both of those problems in a fundamental way. This demonstrates a lack of appropriate priorities by city leadership.

As a longtime supporter and user of the Milwaukee Public Library, I implore you to restore full funding. Free access to technology, workforce development, early literacy skill-building, summer reading, makerspaces, teen connected learning, senior citizen programming, and more is taking place each and every day at Milwaukee Public Library. It would be a tragedy to take these much-needed services and safe spaces away from the citizens – especially those who rely on them the most. The results of this ill-advised decision will be felt the most by people who have the least.

### **Kate Freed**

Location:

Submitted At: 4:39pm 10-12-22

I feel for you decision makers. Budget cuts are never easy. But please, please reconsider the proposed cuts to the library services. The library is the heart of the community, providing services and programs that support individuals and bring neighbors together. Cutting hours will cut off a rich resource that the community relies on.

Libraries are an essential service. Its reputation as a book- and research-centered institution, where silence was golden, has evolved -- here in Milwaukee and in communities across the country -- to a valuable resource with wide-ranging programs and services. Today, voices are heard in libraries and they're saying: "Please keep us funded!!"

When I moved to Milwaukee two years ago, I got a library card before a driver's license. That's how important the library is to me. Please reconsider the proposed budget cuts to library services. Your neighbors thank you.

### **Heather Hurley**

Location:

Submitted At: 4:12pm 10-12-22

At a time when the demand for library services is increasing as a result of the growing need for educational programming, and larger numbers of residents are flocking to utilize critical library resources, Milwaukee Public Library faces the prospect of staggering reductions in the city's proposed budget. The \$1.9 million in cuts to an

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**Shannon Sweek**

Location:

Submitted At: 9:22pm 10-03-22

Dear City of Milwaukee Finance & Personnel Committee,

While I appreciate we must balance many priorities within the Milwaukee City Budget, on behalf of Friends of Milwaukee Public Library, I urge the City to reconsider planned cuts to the Library branch services. The current plan, which calls for drastic reductions to library hours of operations, community programming and available branch services is a step backwards for our community. Libraries provide an essential service to our neighborhoods and are a key link in helping those still recovering from pandemic impacts of missed school, job elimination or long term health consequences. Thank you for reconsidering.

Sincerely,

Shannon Sweek

Friends of Milwaukee Public Library Board President