



Department of Administration
Budget and Management Division

Cavalier Johnson
Mayor

Preston Cole
Administration Director

Nik Kovac
Budget and Management Director

October 15, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Finance and Personnel Committee Members

From: Joan Johnson, Director of Milwaukee Public Library and Nathaniel Haack, Budget and Management Division

Subject: Sunday Hour Options

Dear Finance and Personnel Committee Members,

The Milwaukee Public Library and the Budget and Management Division would like to provide you with cost estimates for a few different options for maintaining and/or expanding Sunday hours at the Milwaukee Public Library. Below are the cost estimates and supporting information on operational impacts.

Option 1 – Status quo

Description: This reverses the 10 positions cut in the Mayor's proposed budget and keeps Sunday hours open at Central, Tippecanoe, and Good Hope using the existing staffing model.

Amendment cost in 2026: \$755,088

Cost estimate in 2027 and subsequent years: \$800,000

Operational impacts: None

Option 2 – Status quo plus add Sunday hours at 2 more branches starting Mid-2026

Description: This reverses the 10 positions cut in the Mayor's proposed budget and keeps Sunday hours open at Central, Tippecanoe, and Good Hope using the existing staffing model. This option anticipates opening 2 additional branches ~ July 1st, 2026 utilizing the existing staffing model.

Amendment cost in 2026: \$1,160,402

Cost estimate in 2027 and subsequent years: \$1.7 million

Operational impacts: Would require MPL to increase staffing quickly to ensure a seamless impact on patron services and would increase the usage of overtime, risking staff burnout.

Option 3 – New staffing model at Central only, hopefully bring back Sunday hours at Good Hope and Tippecanoe mid-year

Description: Milwaukee Public Library is exploring utilizing a new staffing model which would allow for more flexibility and nimbleness by utilizing all patron-serving staff on a rotating basis at all Sunday locations. This



option would pilot this new model at Central and then, assuming the model is successful, expand Sunday hours to Good Hope and Tippecanoe mid-year 2026. The intention is to increase some staffing in 2027 and subsequent years instead of using AUX positions indefinitely.

Amendment cost in 2026: \$11,928

Cost estimate in 2027 and subsequent years: \$340,000

Operational impacts: This option allows MPL to experiment with staffing without a significant threat of library closures due to lack of staff availability using floating staff as the number of Sunday branches increases. If the model works and MPL is able to reopen Good Hope and Tippecanoe on Sunday, the department will likely need to use AUX employees, potentially exceeding the budgeted personnel cost adjustment and having salary overruns.

Option 4 – New staffing model at Central, Good Hope, and Tippecanoe

Description: Milwaukee Public Library is exploring utilizing a new staffing model which would allow for more flexibility and nimbleness by utilizing all patron-serving staff on a rotating basis at all Sunday locations. This option would implement the new model at Central, Good Hope, and Tippecanoe effective January 1st.

Amendment cost in 2026: \$318,730

Cost estimate in 2027 and subsequent years: \$340,000

Operational impacts: Adding positions for this option helps to mitigate the potential strain on staffing levels and lowers the risk that locations may need to close due to high vacancies, PTO, staff illness, etc.

Option 5 – New staffing model plus add Sunday hours at 1 more branch starting Mid-2026

Description: Milwaukee Public Library is exploring utilizing a new staffing model which would allow for more flexibility and nimbleness by utilizing all patron-serving staff on a rotating basis at all Sunday locations. This option would implement the new model at Central, Good Hope, and Tippecanoe effective January 1st. This option anticipates opening 1 additional branch ~ July 1st, 2026 utilizing the new staffing model.

Amendment cost in 2026: \$438,699

Cost estimate in 2027 and subsequent years: \$670,000

Operational impacts: Would require MPL to increase staffing quickly to ensure a seamless impact on patron services and would increase the usage of overtime, risking staff burnout. This option could strain staffing levels and presents a high level of risk that locations may need to close due to high vacancies, PTO, staff illness, etc. The additional positions help mitigate that risk as the number of Sunday branches increases.

Option 6 – New staffing model plus add Sunday hours at 2 more branches starting Mid-2026

Description: Milwaukee Public Library is exploring utilizing a new staffing model which would allow for more flexibility and nimbleness by utilizing all patron-serving staff on a rotating basis at all Sunday locations. This option would implement the new model at Central, Good Hope, and Tippecanoe effective January 1st. This option anticipates opening 2 additional branches ~ July 1st, 2026 utilizing the new staffing model.

Amendment cost in 2026: \$578,878

Cost estimate in 2027 and subsequent years: \$900,000



Department of Administration
Budget and Management Division

Cavalier Johnson
Mayor

Preston Cole
Administration Director

Nik Kovac
Budget and Management Director

Operational impacts: Would require MPL to increase staffing quickly to ensure a seamless impact on patron services and would increase the usage of overtime, risking staff burnout. This option could strain staffing levels and presents a high level of risk that locations may need to close due to high vacancies, PTO, staff illness, etc. The additional positions help mitigate that risk as the number of Sunday branches increases.

Thank you for your continued support of Milwaukee Public Library and the patrons they serve. We look forward to learning which option the council prefers to implement.

NH

Budget/2026budget/F&P questions/Sunday Hour Options