

Library Responses to AdComm Questions for 3/24/21 Meeting

Labor –

- **Can you explain the changes in labor costs?** – The changes in labor costs are directly related to the staff furlough and the retirement of a full-time Library Technician. The position was frozen for FY21, resulting in service cuts, most noticeably in hours. Currently, we are open to the public for 36 hours per week, with staff in the building for 42. Monies have been budgeted for FY22 to hire a part-time Library Assistant. In order to reestablish pre-COVID open hours (51 per week), we will be closely evaluating library usage over the next few months.
- **What is the total expended Labor costs so far in FY2021?** – Chelsea Stevens will be better able to address that question with current figures.

Expenses –

- **Can you generally explain the changes in expenses?** – Most important factor to remember: the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners – as part of the State Aid Program, which provides us with approximately \$20,000 every year – requires that 16% of the Municipal Appropriation be spent on circulating materials (no restriction is placed on the TYPE of material). The library always endeavors to estimate the growing costs of materials, along with changes in patron usage. Most noticeably, during the lockdown of the first few months of the pandemic, we increased our holdings in downloadable materials -- that was all patrons were able to access. Many who had never used these products before have become regular users, and demand for them has increased; additional funds for purchasing are reflected in the Electronic Databases line. Another item to note is that the line for Equipment Maintenance has been moved into the shared IT department budget.

- **Can you explain the \$25,000 Audio-Visual Supplies Line?** – Physical audio-visual materials (namely audiobooks and DVDs) are still immensely popular, despite streaming and downloadable platforms. We have requested an additional \$1,200 to support this collection.
- **Can you explain the \$30,000 Old Colony library Network Expense?** – Old Colony Library Network provides services to 28 local libraries, including a shared catalog, collaborative lending, electronic databases, and staff support. Each library contributes a 'license fee' to the network, based on a complicated formula of population, circulation, and database usage. Approximately 80% of the \$30,000 is our licensing fee; the remainder is shared costs of several databases, including the New York Times, OverDrive, and RB Digital, and others.