

## Contacting Electeds Spring 2022

Objective – meet with your Council Member (CM) in March or April, ahead of the upcoming Ballot Measure election (June 7, 2022)

- Request meeting via email, with suggested times.
- Include purpose of meeting → try to link to something councilmember will care about (what's in it for them)
- (if in person – remember your badge and business cards!)

Summary of message

- Thank them for their support of the library / Highlight some of the library achievements.
- Measure Q, which provides over 40% of the OPL budget, is expiring. A new ballot measure will come up for election on June 7, 2022. The City Council unanimously voted to put this Measure before the voters in June, so please thank them for their support.
- Ongoing maintenance issues, driven by unfilled positions and a poor track record by the City of Oakland of quickly and fairly filling these roles, are creating poor patron experiences – which in turn jeopardize the Measure Q renewal.
- Our ask of you and the Oakland City Council: continue to support Measure Q renewal and dedicate attention to the maintenance staffing challenge, working with the unions and all other applicable parties to more quickly fill vacancies in the Public Works Department.

### **Talking points - Benefits of Library.**

We're all grateful to Jamie and Kere and all of the OPL team who have gone above and beyond during the pandemic to help all Oakland residents, especially those that are most vulnerable. Highlights of Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021 include:

- Users: OPL saw an increase of almost 14,000 new users since the beginning of the shelter-in-place orders (March 2020).
- Programming: Programming since COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders has included virtual book clubs, curb-side pick-up, expanded digital offerings, and virtual multilingual Storytime via the OPL YouTube channel. In February 2021 OPL reopened for limited in-person services, and by June 2021 had resumed most pre-pandemic hours.
- Legal and Tax: A virtual edition of "lawyers in the library" provided free legal help to Oaklanders and the OPL partnered with AARP to provide virtual tax preparation assistance.
- Education: OPL staff coordinated the donation of 500 Wi-Fi Hotspots to support OUSD schools; enabled use of Wi-Fi outside library locations, launched Tutor.com, a free on-line tutoring program; and created educational resources with the school kids to provide kids and families help while learning from home
- Public health: Early in the pandemic, about 30% of OPL staff were called on to provide Disaster Services to the city of Oakland, including coordinating COVID testing; phone-banking for senior citizens and signing them up for the Great Plates Delivered program; and delivering meals and take-home grocery bags at multiple locations across the city.
- OPL Mixer which was again held virtually in December, had good turnout and engagement

Net: OPL is a lot more than books!

### **Talking points - Maintenance Issues.**

Our libraries are not getting basic maintenance resources, driven primarily by vacancies in Oakland Public Works, and exacerbated by limitations on overtime and maximum annual hours for temporary part-time custodians.

- Maintenance and custodial includes things like not getting janitorial service on many days, so garbage cans fill up and smell, bathrooms are dirty and floors are sticky, toilets are broken causing people to relieve themselves outside. There's also a lot of illegal dumping which makes the library spaces unattractive and uninviting.
- Vacancies
  - ⇒ Oakland Public Works (OPW) continues to have very high numbers of custodian vacancies
  - ⇒ As of November 22, 2021, the two full time vacancies allocated to the library have not been filled. On multiple occasions, The Dept. of Human Resources has cancelled the testing that is required to fill these roles.
  - ⇒ Two custodians were recommended to fill these positions, their names were given to HR, OPW is still waiting for HR to make job offers. Why does this process take so long?
  - ⇒ The failure to fill positions forces OPW to use TPT (temporary part time) staff to cover the vacancies. Once the TPT positions hit their maximum allotted hours (990 per year), and they are not allowed to work again until the new fiscal year-
- Net, we are asking you and the entire City Council to dedicate attention to the maintenance staffing challenge, and work with the unions and all other applicable parties to more quickly fill vacancies in the Public Works Department.

### **Talking Points - Library Funding (for reference only – no need to cover in Spring 2022 meetings)**

- Library funding comes from three sources:
  - General Purpose Fund (GPF) = Fund 1010: The unrestricted revenue from miscellaneous taxes, fees and service charges
  - Measure Q Fund = Fund 2241: Approved in 2004, the restricted parcel tax revenue from the Library Services Retention and Enhancement Act, levied on real property in Oakland. The revenue may only be used in support of Library Services in Oakland. Measure Q sunsets in 2024
  - Measure D Fund = Fund 2243: Approved in 2018, the restricted parcel tax revenue from the Oakland Public Library Preservation Act, levied on real property in Oakland. The revenue may only be used in support of Library Services in Oakland.
  - These measures require a minimum appropriation from the general fund which can only be reduced by the same % as any non-safety budget cuts that are required in an extreme fiscal emergency. For more detail, see <https://oaklandlibrary.org/sites/default/files/lac/2020-07-27/LAC%20Attachment%20B%20-%20July%2027%2C%202020.pdf>
- Oakland taxpayers have regularly supported libraries – the public is enthusiastic for library measures:
  - Measure O (parcel tax) passed in 1994
  - It was renewed and extended as Measure Q in 2004 (which will sunset in 2024)
  - In 2018 Measure D also passed with a very strong 76%
  - We will need a new ballot measure in 2022 → to be successful, library patrons MUST have a good experience with the library, which means we need to maintain funding
- The percentage of the General Fund allocated to the library has been decline over the past two years. Taxpayers intended Measures Q and D to SUPPLEMENT general fund funding, not replace it.
  - From Fiscal Year 2000 through Fiscal Year 2018, the % of general fund funding allocated to OPL was 2.4%.

- In Fiscal Year 2019, the % of general fund funding allocated to OPL dropped below 2% for the first time, and has stayed below 2% - and well below historical averages – ever since
- We are very grateful that the City Council raised the General Fund allocation to \$14.5 million in the legislation that will go before the voters on June 7, 2022.