

HHS COMMITTEE #2
May 4, 2011
Worksession

MEMORANDUM

May 2, 2011

TO: Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Worksession – FY12 Operating Budget, Department of Public Libraries - deferred items and budget adjustments**

Those expected for this worksession include:

- Parker Hamilton, Director, Department of Public Libraries
- Eric Carzon, Business Manager, Department of Public Libraries
- Bruce Meier, Office of Management and Budget

SUMMARY OF THE COMMITTEE'S REVIEW

At the April 14 meeting, the Committee reviewed the County Executive's FY12 recommended adjustments for the Public Libraries. Committee members expressed concern over the budget proposal for the Public Libraries and continued reductions recommended for important services offered by the Department. As a result, **the Committee recommended adding the following items to the reconciliation list:**

- **\$500,000 for materials in two increments of \$250,000.**
- **\$1,222,230 added in two increments of \$611,115 to restore capacity to the Public Libraries as determined by priorities set by the Department.**
- **\$400,000 to restore four Librarian II positions, one to each Neighborhood branch. The positions would significantly restore each branch's capacity to manage its collection and provide information services.**
- **\$110,840 for one workyear staffing to the Aspen Hill Library to mitigate the impact on the branch as a result of the temporary closure of the Olney Library.**

Committee Chair Leventhal also questioned why the Literacy Council of Montgomery County (LCMC) receives County funding for adult literacy services through the Public Libraries and the Montgomery Coalition on Adult English Literacy (MCAEL), and whether MCAEL should administer all County funding. This issue will be explored in a joint meeting of the HHS and ED Committees, which is scheduled immediately following this item.

EXECUTIVE'S BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AND PRIORITIES

On April 25, the Executive forwarded adjustment to the FY12 Recommended Operating Budget. The following adjustments were recommended for the Public Libraries (©1):

- **Restore \$460,000 for Information staff at Neighborhood Libraries:** The restoration would provide for four Librarian II positions at the Neighborhood Libraries to provide a greater level of information service to County residents.
- **Restore \$1,000,000 for Materials:** This restoration for library collection materials would increase the budget for materials to \$4.04 million in FY12.

RECONCILIATION LIST

The following table provides a comparison of items recommended by the Committee and the Executive for restoration:

| | HHS Committee | Executive |
|---|---|-------------|
| Materials ¹ | \$500,000 (2 increments of \$250,000) | \$1,000,000 |
| Librarian II positions at Neighborhood Libraries | \$400,000 | \$460,000 |
| 1 WY Impact Staffing at Aspen Hill Library | \$110,840 | -- |
| Restore capacity based on Departmental priorities | \$1,222,230 (2 increments of \$611,115) | -- |

The Committee should clarify what Library items it wants to include on the reconciliation list including: (1) the Executive's Budget adjustments² and (2) any additional items related to the \$1,222,230 to restore capacity in the Department. Council staff understands that funding for one workyear of impact staffing at the Aspen Hill Library will continue on the reconciliation list unless the Committee decides otherwise at this meeting.

The Committee requested that the Libraries identify its priorities for restoring the \$1.2 million originally related to reductions to the Neighborhood Libraries. A request was made for a priority list for restoring \$1.2 million excluding items that the Committee added to the reconciliation list or the Executive's budget adjustments. Despite this request, the Executive Branch has stated that its priorities for restoration are simply the budget adjustment items. No further priorities were identified.

If the Committee is interested in placing specific items to be restored through the unspecified \$1.2 million amount on the reconciliation list, Council staff highlights the following items for the Committee's consideration:

¹ The discussion of the Libraries' materials budget from the April 14 packet is attached at ©7-8.

² In accordance with past practice, the Executive's budget adjustments, if accepted by the Committee, will also be placed on the reconciliation list.

- **An additional \$511,560 for library closure impact staffing:** The temporary closure of the Olney and Gaithersburg Libraries has placed burdens on neighboring libraries. Typically, when a library closes, staff is reassigned to neighboring branches to mitigate the impact of increased use as a result of the closures. Gaithersburg Library staff and Olney management staff were eliminated for fiscal reasons for FY11, and the rest of the Olney complement is proposed for reduction in FY12. The Committee recommended the restoration of 1 out of 7.5 workyears. Additional information about the impact of the closure of the Gaithersburg Library on local branches from the April 14 Committee packet is attached at ©6-7.
- **\$194,610 for Sunday service:** The Department reported that this item includes a reduction of 5.1 workyears, or a 40% reduction to staffing for service on Sundays. The budget submission indicates that the reduction will result in only the provision of virtual information services because of a reduction to substitute staff. However, MCPL representatives explained to the Committee that the Department is in the process of reassessing how to manage substitute staffing and service on Sundays. **The Committee may be interested in hearing if the Department has developed a plan for reducing Sunday Service and can explain what the impact of the reduction will be for patrons.**
- **An additional \$762,230 to restore Neighborhood Library services fully:** Both the Executive and the Council have recommended putting back Librarian II services at the four Neighborhood Libraries. The positions would provide a large portion of the information services originally proposed for reduction. An additional \$762,230 would restore services at the Neighborhood Libraries fully including circulation and management staffing and capacity. The description of the Executive's original proposal for Neighborhood Libraries from the April 14 packet is included at ©2-4.

Detail on Recommended Budget Adjustments

Tax Supported

Police

INCREASE COST: OLNEY POLICE SATELLITE FACILITY 11,030
The County Executive recommends increasing expenditures of \$11,030 will enable the Police Department to continue the use of the Olney Police Satellite Facility. The additional expenditures will cover the cost of telecom and utility costs. The Olney Civic Association will contribute \$4,500 to cover the cost of maintaining this Facility.

Public Libraries

RESTORE: INFORMATION STAFF AT NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARIES 460,000
The County Executive recommends restoration of four Librarian II positions at the Neighborhood libraries to provide a greater level of information service to County residents.

RESTORE: MATERIALS 1,000,000
The County Executive Recommends restoring \$1.0 million for library collection materials. This restoration will increase the budget for library materials to \$4.04 million in FY12.

Transportation

INCREASE COST: INCREASED STATE PAYMENT FOR SIGNAL MAINTENANCE 308,500
The State Highway Administration has agreed to increase the payment to Montgomery County for maintaining state traffic signals within the County. The payment will increase from \$1,100 per signal to \$1,500 per signal effective April 1, 2011. This will result in increased revenues in FY11 of \$61,700 and in FY12 of \$246,800. The Executive recommends using the additional resources as follows:

- Loop Detector Maintenance: \$152,300
- Traffic Signal Relamping: \$76,000
- Traffic Signal Materials: \$80,200

INCREASE COST: INCREASED HIGHWAY USER REVENUE 665,000
The General Assembly approved an additional allocation of Highway User Revenue to counties and municipalities resulting in an estimated increase of \$665,000 in FY12.

The County Executive recommends using these additional resources for the Residential Resurfacing program. Because of the impact of adverse weather conditions and funding reductions in recent years, the condition of local roads have deteriorated and would benefit from increased funding.

Montgomery County Public Schools

INCREASE COST: ADDITIONAL STATE AID 3,769,331
MCPS is receiving additional Foundation Aid to restore the per pupil amount to \$6,694 from \$6,599.

INCREASE COST: MCPS PAYMENT TO THE STATE FOR RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION 2,789,669
Due to final actions in the General Assembly, beginning in FY12 the State Retirement Agency will charge local employers on whose behalf the State makes retirement payments a per-employee administrative fee. For MCPS this figure in FY12 will be \$2,789,669.

Montgomery College

INCREASE COST: COLLEGE PAYMENT TO THE STATE FOR RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION 145,230
Due to final actions in the General Assembly, beginning in FY12 the State Retirement Agency will charge local employers on whose behalf the State makes retirement payments a per-employee administrative fee. For Montgomery College FY12 will be \$145,230.

Total Tax Supported Expenditures 15,120,570

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- Create Program Specialist II to support marketing, outreach, publicity, diversification of funding issue (including Friends of the Library relationship), partnerships, and communication with the public, for the Director's Office; \$70,000, 1 WY.
- Operating Expense reductions: 20% reduction to system supplies; contract costs create \$20,000 savings in collection agency management and public printing/copying; reduce vehicle rentals \$8,000; reduce local travel reimbursement \$5,000; reduce cataloging supplies \$5,000; -\$53,000, 0 workyear.

Executive staff explains that MCPL reviewed options for reducing central administration to find the most efficient and minimal reduction of service related to a staffing reduction. In the period from FY08 – FY11, MCPL executive staff took on portfolios of work that involved direct service provision in order to support the changes and reductions elsewhere in the department. MCPL further reviewed what executive portfolios and related changes could be consolidated, reduced, and made more efficient for this round of reductions. The proposed plan focuses more responsibilities on the executive managers that remain and provides for lower-level, represented grade staff positions to accomplish a streamlined set of tasks that provide or support services to the public.

Council staff observes that remaining senior management staff will have an incredibly large portfolio. While Council staff recommends approval of the restructuring plan because of current fiscal constraints, the Department should monitor the workload of senior management staff to determine the impact of the abolishments and consider reinstating the positions when the budget outlook is more favorable.

B. SERVICE REDUCTIONS

Executive staff explained that to accommodate a reduction of over \$13 million and 33% from FY08 levels, the Department has had to reduce services. In doing so, the Department has sought to minimize the closing of branches and reducing library hours. Only branches being renovated have been closed, and total hours, reduced 13% in FY11, were not reduced further in FY12. Instead, the Department has reduced the services provided inside library branches: "Less programs to the public are provided by staff, less staff are available to answer the public's questions, help with homework, help customers use technology, advise customers on what to read given their needs, and all the other in-person services that library staff provide." However, in taking reductions, effort has been made to improve efficiencies, maximize convenience, and maximize services provision with minimal staffing.

1. Neighborhood Libraries

-\$1,222,230

Executive's Proposal

For FY12, the Executive is proposing that the following four library branches be designated as Neighborhood Libraries: Silver Spring, Chevy Chase, Twinbrook, and Long Branch. The libraries are located in the lower part of the County where there is a greater concentration of libraries. See ©68a for a map that shows 3-mile buffers around existing libraries. Savings of \$1.2 million and a reduction of 13.5 workyears are associated with this change. There will be no change to the number of hours the branches will be open.

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The Executive reports that the neighborhood libraries will be incubators for new methods of providing library services that are more tailored to each community and less staff intensive. There will be less staff at the branch to provide traditional library services, but the staff that remains will be certified and experienced in providing quality library services. There will also be new technologies and methods employed to serve the customers at those branches from many places in the library system. Changes proposed include the following:

Collection: The collections will be revised to become more focused on a limited range of subjects, genres, and formats that are tailored to the community.

Information Services: Branch staff will provide information services on a scheduled basis, based upon customer use and staff capacity. Information services will also be provided by Virtual Services via telephone, email, or chat. The information service point in the branch will not be staffed during all open hours, as is the norm in Area and Community branches.

Programming: Programs will be delivered at the branch by staff from a nearby Area branch or Central Administration. The branch's capacity to support volunteer-led programs may be diminished. The Neighborhood branch staff will not provide programs.

A Senior Librarian will manage each Neighborhood branch, instead of a Manager III; be directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of their branch; and report to the Public Services Administrator for Branch Operations, who is responsible for overall performance of all library branches. There will be approximately 6 - 8 staff at each library including approximately two part-time information staff and several circulation staff. A Librarian II and a Library Assistant Supervisor will be eliminated from each branch. There will be a total of approximately five workyears at each branch, which represents a reduction of approximately 2.5 workyears from the FY11 level. This arrangement is already in place at other small library branches, including the Poolesville Library, Gaithersburg Interim branch, Correctional Facility Library, and Library Cataloging and Processing.

The other branches in the system will also change how they provide services. Area branches will coordinate programming for their own branches and the Neighborhood branches. Because of the further decrease in staffing, Area branches, Community branches, and Neighborhood branches will be in more frequent communication about staffing assignments than they already are, and the need to temporarily assign staff from one branch to another will increase further. Several community branches (e.g., Davis, Potomac, and Marilyn Praisner) will have small staffing changes as a result of the budget and workload studies. The Virtual Services branch will experience more demand for its services, and Central Administration will further increase its work in coordinating staffing assignments to ensure branches can stay open, and offer grant-funded library programming.

Council staff observations: Council staff understands that some of the specifics regarding the change to Neighborhood Libraries still need to be worked through. At this time, it is unclear how much of the Executive's recommendation is driven by fiscal issues and how much

is driven by an interest in restructuring the services at libraries generally. Council staff raises the following issues regarding the Executive's proposal:

- **Ongoing Implementation of New Model:** Is the Executive is interested in continuing or expanding this Neighborhood Library model when resources are more plentiful?
- **Programming:** It is unclear whether and to what extent the amount of programming will be reduced or whether offerings will change because of Neighborhood status. How will nearby Area libraries or Central Administration determine the specific needs of the Neighborhood libraries for programming or other services? Will they have a direct link with library users in the community?
- **Collection:** It is also unclear how the Libraries will go about revising the collections at the four Neighborhood Libraries. How will the Libraries determine which subjects, genres, and formats will be provided? What is the direct fiscal impact in FY11 for limiting the collections at the Neighborhood Libraries?
- **Information Services:** What is the total amount of time that information services will be made available? What percent of total branch opening time will be information services be available?
- **Services to Special Needs Populations:** How will the changes impact individuals with special needs (e.g., sight or hearing impaired, English Language Learners, etc.)? Will all options of Virtual Services (i.e., telephone, e-mail, chat) be available at all Neighborhood Libraries? Will materials still be made available for this population?
- **Management:** The Senior Librarian will have multiple functions to perform in managing Neighborhood Libraries, some with circulation higher than a number of Community Libraries. How does MCPL envision the Senior Librarian's time to be apportioned among the many responsibilities of the position (e.g., supervision, training, and evaluation of information staff; supervision, training, and evaluation of circulation staff; time on information or circulation desk; handling customer issues; working with the branch's Library Advisory Committee and local Friends of the Library chapter; safety and upkeep issues; collection management development issues; and branch workplan and data analysis)?

Reduction of Core Services

Council staff is very concerned about the proposal to restructure and reduce services at Neighborhood Libraries. **The Executive is essentially recommending a reduction of core library services for Neighborhood Libraries.** The Libraries are interested in developing a model of service delivery that is less staff intensive and sustainable, but presumably this is out of necessity because of the continually shrinking Libraries budget. Council staff is concerned that the plan to provide virtual information services will not make up for the absence of face-to-face interactions when patrons need help. Council staff believes that the proposed reductions will negatively impact vulnerable populations including elderly and limited English proficient customers who may be reluctant to use technology to seek assistance, customers that need hands on assistance, or others that lack access to transportation to other branches in the system.

Council staff is also concerned that the proposed staffing for Neighborhood Libraries is insufficient to adequately manage services and maintain staffing levels that address the needs of the communities. Although the model for a Senior Librarian managing

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small library branches currently exists, the circulation of these small libraries is less than one-third of the circulation for the newly proposed Neighborhood Libraries. The communities proposed for Neighborhood Libraries are in the lower part of the County, which is more densely populated and diverse -- factors which create added challenges for service provision. In addition, three of the Neighborhood Libraries have had a number of Disruptive Behavior Incidents in the last two years as reported in the following table. These incidents place additional burdens on managerial staff.

Disruptive Behavior Incidents

| | FY10 | FY11 |
|---------------|------|------|
| Long Branch | 8 | 5 |
| Silver Spring | 3 | 6 |
| Twinbrook | 7 | 0 |
| Chevy Chase | 0 | 0 |

Silver Spring and Long Branch Libraries

Council staff is particularly concerned about reduction in services to the Silver Spring and Long Branch communities. The two libraries are farthest away, 4-5 miles driving distance, from other Area or Community Libraries. The Chevy Chase and Twinbrook Libraries are approximately 2.4 miles away from an Area Library. The Twinbrook Library is also approximately, 1.9 miles away from the Aspen Hill Community Library.

The needs of the Silver Spring and Long Branch Libraries are complex as they serve densely populated and diverse communities. Long Branch is one of the most economically challenged communities in the County. Residents in that community are more isolated and may have greater challenges accessing libraries that are outside of the immediate community. It may also be more difficult for limited English speaking residents in the community to use the alternative information services provided by the library when information staff is not available.

Silver Spring, on the other hand, is a well-used library and has a much greater circulation than a number of other libraries that are not proposed for reduction. See ©69 and 71. Executive staff explains that Silver Spring Library was chosen because it will receive a new library in the future and as a small-form library, it would be a good location to test out the Neighborhood Library concept. Council staff does not find this reasoning compelling. The new library would not be completed in any best case scenario before FY14 or FY15. It would seem more practical to keep the community invested in library services in the area instead of downgrading the status of the library to the lowest category only to upgrade the status to the highest category a few years later. Although the physical layout of the Silver Spring Library would make it a good candidate for the Neighborhood Library model, Council staff believes that the complexities and needs of the community outweigh this consideration.

The Council has received a considerable amount of correspondence requesting that services be maintained at the Silver Spring and Long Branch Libraries. Minimal correspondence and testimony have advocated specifically for the Chevy Chase and Twinbrook Libraries.

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Council staff recommendation: Place \$1,222,230 on the reconciliation list to restore services at all Neighborhood Libraries if funding is available. Restoration of funding would avoid the further dilution of greatly valued services in the four communities.

If the Committee is not interested in fully restoring services at Neighborhood Libraries, Council staff proposes the following lower cost options for partially restoring services:

- **Place \$611,115 on the reconciliation list to restore services at the Silver Spring and Long Branch libraries. This would allow the Libraries to pilot the Neighborhood Library concept on the two libraries that are closer to other libraries; or**
- **Place \$400,000 on the reconciliation list to restore a Librarian II position at each of the four proposed Neighborhood Libraries. Putting these positions back would restore a large portion of information services proposed for reduction. The Librarian II could also take some of the burden related to collection management and customer assistance off the Senior Librarian.**

2. Eliminate Olney Staffing during Renovation -\$622,400

The Executive recommends FY12 reductions associated with the temporary closing due to construction of the Olney Library this fiscal year. The Olney Library was closed in preparation for construction on December 31, 2010. Savings were taken in FY11 related to the elimination of management staff at the Olney Library, and that reduction is being annualized in FY12, providing an additional \$90,000 savings and 1 workyear. In addition, **the Executive is recommending the elimination of the remaining staff complement of Olney for a reduction of \$622,400 and 7.5 workyears in FY12.** The recommendation to eliminate most library staff positions during closing is unusual, and is due only to the fiscal environment and the need for savings.

During construction, library branch staff is typically distributed to other branches to assist with the resulting customer increases. In FY11, the staffing for the Gaithersburg Library was eliminated for the whole fiscal year. It appears that as a result of this closure, use at nearby libraries has increased, which in turn has stretched resources at those sites. The following charts compare circulation at the Germantown and Quince Orchard Libraries between FY10 and FY11 to date for the period July through February.

Circulation for Germantown Library

| | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February |
|------------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| FY11 | 114,037 | 106,198 | 89,097 | 87,019 | 83,604 | 71,257 | 85,661 | 73,483 |
| FY10 | 101,046 | 97,198 | 79,746 | 80,553 | 78,031 | 68,295 | 77,357 | 70,660 |
| Net change | +12,991 | + 9,000 | + 9,351 | +6,466 | + 15,573 | + 2,962 | +8,304 | +2,823 |

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Circulation for Quince Orchard Library

| | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February |
|------------|---------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| FY11 | 71,830 | 65,740 | 57,593 | 54,223 | 54,536 | 49,641 | 54,126 | 47,676 |
| FY10 | 66,855 | 65,092 | 54,216 | 54,349 | 50,699 | 50,519 | 49,357 | 49,412 |
| Net change | + 4,975 | + 648 | + 3,377 | - 126 | + 3,837 | - 878 | +4,769 | -1,736 |

Council staff recommendation: It is apparent from looking at the increases at the Germantown and Quince Orchard libraries after the closing of the Gaithersburg Library that distributing staff among libraries near to the temporarily closed library would help maintain an adequate level of services to users and reduce the increased burden to existing staff at those sites. It would also reduce the future fiscal impact of rehiring staff when the libraries reopen. **While this reduction may be unavoidable given the lack of available resources, Council staff believes that restoring some level of impact staffing resulting from the closing of the Olney Library or the Gaithersburg Library would be desirable. If the Committee is interested in placing funding on the reconciliation list for positions, it may want to ask the Department of Libraries to comment on its priority for staffing and what impact partial restoration of funding (e.g., increments of \$200,000) would have on service delivery.**

3. Sunday Service

-\$194,610

The Executive has recommended a \$194,610 reduction for Sunday service that includes a reduction 5.1 workyears. There will be a 40% reduction to staffing for service on Sundays. The budget submission indicates that the reduction will result in only the provision of virtual information services because of a reduction to substitute staff. However, MCPL is in the process of reassessing how to manage substitute staffing and service on Sundays.

At the time of budget publication, the Department believed that the rules of Reduction in Force would require the abolishment of all substitute information staff (who are temporary employees in the classification of Librarian I, part-time). Just prior to publication, the Department realized that such an abolishment would not be necessary due to the final composition of position classes to be abolished and the final status of vacant positions in the department. Therefore, the Department will re-plan how to implement the dollar reductions to substitute staffing.

Council staff recommends approval of this reduction for fiscal reasons. The reduction will certainly lower the level of services available to customers on Sundays. It is possible, however, that some information desk services will be provided.

C. MATERIALS

The Executive recommends a very slight increase of \$47,830 for the materials budget for FY12. This adjustment results in a total materials budget of \$3.05 million for FY11, which total remains 50% below the FY09 level. Council staff notes that the FY12 Capital Budget includes \$215,000 in current funding to upgrade the library's collection when it reopens.

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The following table shows the ten-year trends for the materials budget.

| | Total Library Operating Budget | Total Materials | Materials Budget Change from Previous Year | Materials as % of Total Op Budget |
|------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| FY01 | \$30,162,800 | 6,107,510 | | 20.5% |
| FY02 | 30,316,590 | 6,062,510 | -108,000 | 20.0% |
| FY03 | 30,561,150 | 5,012,510 | -1,050,000 | 16.4% |
| FY04 | 31,033,550 | 4,830,475 | -182,035 | 15.6% |
| FY05 | 31,921,900 | 5,017,700 | 187,225 | 15.7% |
| FY06 | 34,383,690 | 5,333,710 | 316,010 | 15.5% |
| FY07 | 38,357,360 | 5,931,710 | 598,000 | 15.5% |
| FY08 | 40,466,660 | 6,325,150 | 393,440 | 15.6% |
| FY09 | 40,405,130 | 6,125,150 | -200,000 | 15.2% |
| FY10 | 37,729,520 | 5,512,630 | -612,520 | 14.6% |
| FY11 | 28,950,370 | 3,000,000 | -2,512,630 | 10.4% |
| FY11 | 26,142,230 | 3,047,830 | 47,830 | 11.7% |

The impact from the 50% reduction to the materials budget has been significant. Libraries staff explains that the clearest indicator of the impact is the reduction in circulation of items, which is 16% lower in FY11 than in FY10, and has been down month-over-month since April 2010. The amount of holds customers are placing on library materials has decreased about 20% from FY10, and the number of holds filled has dropped to FY07 levels, after having steadily risen since FY07. See Charts 1 and 2 at ©19 and 20.

Between April 2010 and late summer 2010, the Libraries bought almost no materials, and since that time, purchasing has been very restricted. The materials that the Libraries have or plan to purchase have very high ratios of holds versus copies available. There a large number of titles between a 5:1 and 14:1 ratio of Holds to Copies available; 88 titles in demand have 10,500 holds placed on them and only 1,600 copies available to fill those holds. Many upcoming titles are showing strong demand; currently, 121 titles with over 6,228 holds placed on them to-date. See Chart 3 at ©20.

Council staff is concerned about continued low level of funding for the materials budget and the cumulative effect of the recent years' funding levels on the Department's collection overall. Given the current fiscal climate, however, Council staff concurs with the Executive's recommendation for materials in FY12 and does not recommend further reductions.

III. PROGRAM UPDATES

Noyes Library for Young Children

The Executive recommended an increase in expenditures related to the Noyes Foundation grant. The budgeted amount in FY11 was \$47,000, and for FY12, the recommendation is for \$70,000. The FY11 costs for Noyes are projected to be \$53,000 or less. The Noyes Children's Foundation has successfully raised over \$90,000 towards operation of the library, and continues

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