

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

CITY OF LOWELL

VOTE

IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER,

A Supplemental Appropriation to raise from the tax levy, local receipts, and offset receipts, and appropriate to the Pollard Memorial Library's Ordinary Expense Accounts in FY2021.

ORDERED,

By the City Council of the City of Lowell, as follows:

That the amount of One Hundred and Eighty Thousand and 00/100 (\$180,000) Dollars be hereby further appropriated by raising from the FY2021 tax levy, additional local receipts, and offset receipts and appropriating to the Pollard Memorial Library's FY2021 budget, according to the detail in "Attachment B"

ORDER RECOMMENDED AND INTRODUCED BY:



Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager



Conor Baldwin
Chief Financial Officer

Allison Chambers
Deputy CFO

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager

FROM: Conor Baldwin, Chief Financial Officer 

CC: Victoria Woodley, Library Director

DATE: October 5, 2020

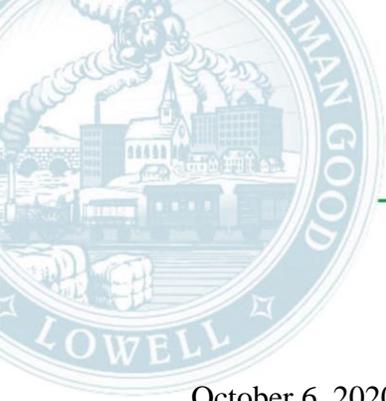
SUBJECT: Contingency Transfer & Supplemental Appropriation – FY2021 Library Funding

During the FY2021 budget process, each and every city department was asked to reduce their revised funding amount for the year by at least 7.5%. Some departments—especially those whose additional funding requests were either determined to be non-essential or whose full operation was impractical—were asked to further reduce their annual budgets. In order to prioritize funding for the city in the FY2021 budget, departmental request had to be examined based on whether they were providing essential services to the public. With revenues forecasted to drop by a significant amount in FY2021; human services divisions like recreation, CASE, and the Pollard Memorial Library (“PML”) expenditures were further reduced so that critical public health and public safety departments’ funding could be held harmless.

Upon further analysis and discussion with the Board of Trustees (“BOT”); the Pollard Memorial Library’s FY2021 budget is in need of supplemental funding, to maintain compliance with the eligibility requirements for state library aid. Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L., c.78, s.19A) states that a municipality must appropriate a figure of at least the average of the last 3 years’ municipal appropriations to the library for operations, increased by 2.5%, in order to be certified for State Aid to Public Libraries. A municipality and its library must be certified by the MBLC as meeting statutory requirements to receive State Aid to Public Libraries funding, otherwise the facility may risk losing annual funding and face other repercussions, such as decertification.

The BOT has advocated strongly for additional funding and, through a series of working sessions with the BOT Chair and the Director, we have come up with a plan to supplement the funding, while minimizing the impact to taxes as much as possible. The plan keeps the PML in compliance with the spending requirement maintains eligibility for aid. The plan is twofold; first, a transfer from the City Manager’s contingency budget will add funding into the PML operating budget. This funding is an existing appropriation and will have no impact on taxes. Second, a supplemental appropriation is needed by the City Council, which will utilize local receipts and aid in excess of the city’s very conservative 2021 estimates, to be used towards the library.

I have asked the law department to prepare the necessary votes. Please let me know if there are any questions.



Eileen M. Donoghue
City Manager

October 6, 2020

Mayor John J. Leahy
And
Members of the Lowell City Council

Dear Mayor Leahy and Members of the Lowell City Council,

I am hereby requesting that the City Council approve a supplemental appropriation to the Pollard Memorial Library's FY2021 operating budget to meet the funding requirements set forth in M.G.L. c.78, s.19A. This is the second of two votes recommended by the finance department to preserve critical state funding for the library.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners ("MBLC") maintains strict compliance with the requirement for cities and towns to increase annual municipal contributions to their libraries by an amount equal to or greater than 2.5% of the average appropriation of the last three fiscal years. This requirement remains intact, despite the fiscal challenges wrought upon the city from COVID-19. All other applicable spending controls will remain intact for the Library, but the two votes on the Council agenda will both preserve the state aid revenue and the certification status of the Pollard Memorial Library.

Enclosed with this email is a memorandum from the Chief Financial Officer which details the financing plan. Please do not hesitate to let me know if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

Eileen M. Donoghue
City Manager

Cc: Conor Baldwin, Chief Financial Officer
Victoria Woodley, Library Director
Joanne Belanger, HHS Director