

From: [KAREN R. HEUBERGER](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Cc: [citycouncil](#)
Subject: Testimony On Agenda Item 4.b.
Date: Sunday, June 8, 2025 1:44:55 PM

I voted for the recent levy per city of Salem/Library. I am relieved that it passed. I think the first priority---before focusing on new library branches---is to fully open existing branches. The Main library and the West Salem library branches operate with woefully inadequate days and hours of operation. Meet needs in areas that are in need of library service with a mobile library. This is a more prudent use of financial resources. Open up library positions to volunteers. It may be surprising how many civic minded citizens volunteer to help---without costly salaries and PERS benefits required.

Our students perform pathetically on academic tests. This should be an all out effort to expand use/hours/days at our current library branches.

The Main library has a great auditorium--Loucks---that is unusable for Sunday afternoon concerts currently. A shame! The West Salem library has a room suitable for small group meetings/gatherings---that is virtually unusable due to the pathetic limited hours available. A shame!

I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Thank you,

K. R. Heuberger

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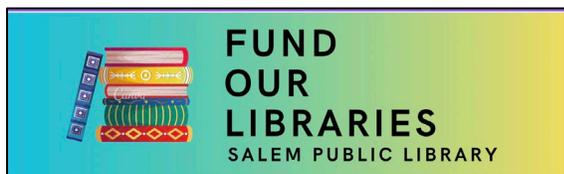
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Salem, OR 97308

From: [Jim Scheppke](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Cc: [citycouncil](#)
Subject: Testimony on Agenda Item 4.b.
Date: Saturday, June 7, 2025 11:19:09 AM
Attachments: [6-9 Testimony.docx](#)

City Recorder: Please accept my testimony for Item 4.b. on the June 9th agenda, Public Hearing on the FY 2026 City of Salem Budget.

Jim Scheppke, Ward 2



Testimony on Agenda Item 4.b., Public Hearing on the FY 2026 Salem City Budget

Mayor and City Council:

On behalf of Fund Our Libraries we want to again thank you for your support of the Livability Levy which will enable preservation and some restoration of hours at our public library for the next five years. Even with the levy funds, our public library will still have the lowest per capita funding of all of our peer libraries in Eugene, Hillsboro, Gresham, Beaverton, Medford, Bend and Corvallis. But hopefully we can work over the next five years to see further improvements in our library services.

The win by nearly 20 points in Marion County was something no one would have predicted. We think that happened because thousands of library users were energized and passionate and turned out to support the library they use and love. Fund Our Libraries saw this passion when we tabled at the main library every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. beginning on March 8th and most Wednesday mornings. In total we tabled for over 80 hours and reached an estimated 6,400 library users most of whom made a pledge to vote 'yes' on the Livability Levy. We think this is what made all the difference in the election.

Having helped pass the levy, we now ask that the City Council turn your attention to the two branch libraries in Northeast and South Salem that voters were promised in the 2022 Safety and Livability Bond measure. These branches are desperately needed, especially for children and families who live too far from our main library to make a habit of using it on a regular basis. The fact that our 2024 3rd grade reading scores (24%) are the lowest among the 10 largest school districts in the state is evidence of the fact that we need to do more to instill the love of books and reading in all of our children, beginning at birth. Libraries can do this. Third grade reading scores in Portland, with its 15 branch libraries that make early literacy their top priority, are more than double ours at 56%.

Again our thanks for your support of our library, and we look forward to working with you to continue to bring our library services in Salem up to Oregon standards.

Jim Schepke, Fund Our Libraries
Ward 2

From: [J Stembridge](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#); [citycouncil](#)
Subject: Testimony On Agenda Item 4.b.
Date: Sunday, June 8, 2025 3:44:40 PM

Dear City Council Members and Mayor Hoy,

It is with joy that we write to thank you for your support of the Livability Levy that recently passed.

Your support created the atmosphere for the business community to join with the efforts of local citizens to pass the measure. Together we did the job!

The work we all did together created new opportunities for children in Salem.

However, we need to be honest: we have children in parts of Salem who still do not have access to library services due to the distance they must travel to reach the main library.

We urge you to create branch libraries in Northeast and South Salem to reach the children in need of library service, as the voters were promised in the 2022 Safety and Livability Bond measure.

The low reading scores of Salem Keizer school children attest to the importance of investing in such branch libraries to expand the opportunities for more children to become successful readers. For the truth is, once young children become successful readers, they are much more likely to succeed in all they hope to do in life.

Thank you again for your excellent efforts on behalf of the whole community,
Sincerely,

Joan and Jim Stembridge
Salem residents, 47 years
Library users, 47 years