

From: noreply@cityofsalem.net on behalf of jarneyg@gmail.com
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Subject: Submission
Date: Sunday, June 22, 2025 10:17:47 AM
Attachments: [ATT00001.bin](#)

Your Name	Jonathan S. Arney
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Street	570 Eagle View Dr NW
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97304
Message	<p>I am providing a comment for agenda item 25-232 regarding the Livability Levy Oversight Committee. This is a written comment, and I will not be present to deliver it in person. Let me first say that I do not fault the Interim City Manager or Chief Financial Officer for my critique. The proposed structure is in keeping with other similar structures. Nonetheless, I am urging the council to reject the proposed structure of the committee and instead adopt one with a more equitable makeup. This is a difficult decision because a simple "Yes" vote would put the matter to rest and it is certainly the "easy" choice. By voting "No" requires an alternative proposal which is more work. I would like to make the case that even though it is the more difficult choice, it is the right one. I have three primary critiques of the proposed structure regarding both the composition and appointment of members. * By sending Levy measure directly to the voters rather than managing the spending through the general fund, the Council has effectively said "we wash our hands of this" so that if it doesn't pass, "it's the voters, it's not us". Now that it has passed, the voters deserve better. You can't wash your hands of a problem when the going gets tough and then pick it back up when the crisis has passed. * By making this committee appointed by the Mayor, the makeup of the committee is up to the discretion of the Mayor. The Mayor has been under investigation by the Oregon Ethics Commission of possible violations of open meeting law. Quoting from the Statesman Journal, the Mayor said "I do not have years of experience in this role, and I am here to learn." I don't know about you, but I would be reluctant to entrust spending \$12M to people appointed by a novice. Perhaps when the city elects a Mayor with other qualifications, this might be a good choice, but as it stands, I am not comfortable with it. * By placing three council members in the committee, this effectively ensures that only 3/8 of our council wards will be well represented in the matters of spending for the Levy. This has the potential to direct funds in a way that is favorable only to a few wards, leaving a large segment of the city to be without a voice in the direction of these institutions. I worry specifically about Ward 5 and Ward 6 which are very far from both the Center 50+ and Library branches. Ensuring better representation may help equitably distribute resources according to the needs of those wards. So what instead? Each of the institutions that benefit from the Livability Levy already have oversight. These organizations</p>

already have the knowledge of the operations of the institutions and are the best placed to make informed decisions on spending. I propose instead that the membership be decided as follows: Membership - Seven members appointed as follows: * One member of the Salem Public Library Advisory Board appointed by majority vote of that board. * One resident of Salem appointed by the Salem Public Library Advisory Board * One member of the Center 50+ Advisory Commission appointed by majority vote of that board. * One resident of Salem appointed by the Center 50+ Advisory Commission * One member of the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board appointed by majority vote of that board. * One resident of Salem appointed by the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board * One resident of Salem appointed by joint vote of the 3 boards. This structure ensures that each of the members is appropriately vetted and can make decisions that represent each of the parties that the fund benefits. Each of these boards already has representation from all wards, so it helps ensure that voters are more proportionally represented. In addition, each of these boards already understand the operations and funding challenges because they are already closely connected with their respective institutions. Of course, the Mayor and Council members are welcome to attend these advisory board meetings, submit comments, and otherwise express their opinions, but should not directly interfere with the spending decisions of those boards.

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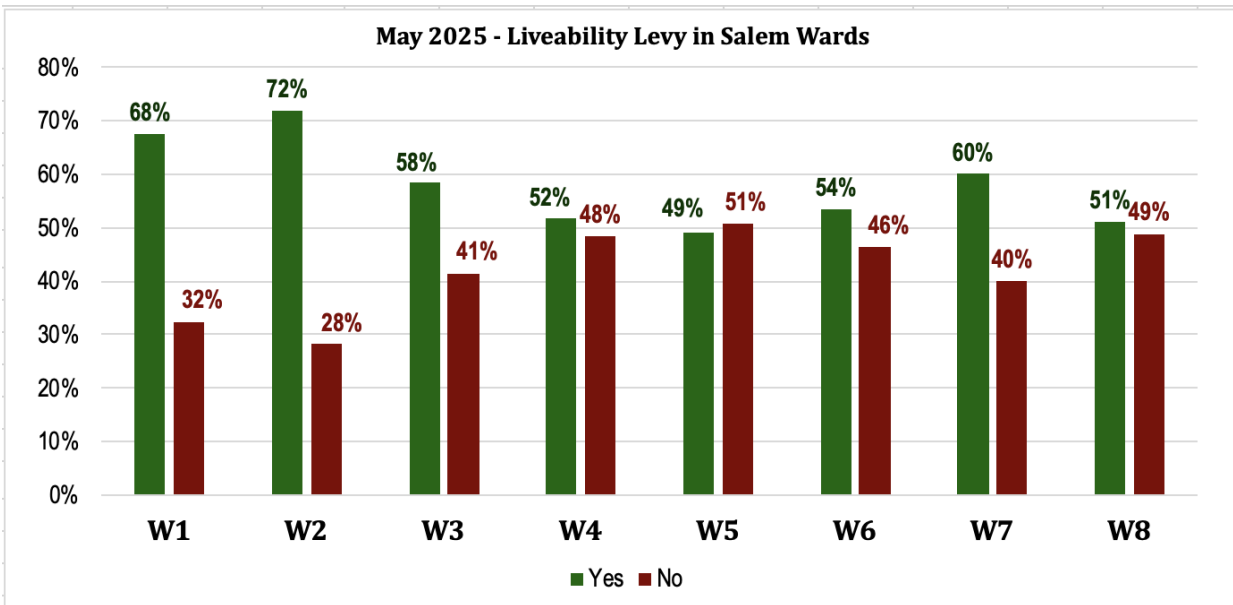
From: [Jim Scheppke](#)
To: [citycouncil](#)
Cc: [Josh Eggleston](#)
Subject: Livability Levy Results by Ward
Date: Monday, June 23, 2025 10:25:41 AM
Attachments: [Screenshot 2025-06-23 at 10.05.37 AM.png](#)

Dear Council:

I thought you would all be interested in this analysis by Tina Calos of the final results of the Livability Levy election by ward. We had overwhelming support in Wards 1 and 2 and very strong support in Wards 3 and 7. I thought we would do better in Ward 8 but I think it's because their branch library has been so degraded in recent years that they don't care as much. When we build that branch library in Ward 5 that we have promised they will be more supportive of the library next time. ;-)

I keep thinking to myself that with this kind of support of the library, parks and the senior center, we probably could have pulled this off years ago (maybe by not this much though). We have been underestimating our citizen's support for these services I think.

Jim



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