Mayor Hoy, Councilors Stapleton, Nishioka, Phillips, Gwyn, Varney, Gonzalez, Hoy, Nordyke and Varney
Re: February 12,2024 Council Agenda Item 4.a.24-49

The value of the library in dollars far outweighs the City's budget for the library. In April 2023, first-time check outs and Digital downloads were valued at $1,391,575. This extrapolates to almost $17million annually. The FY23 budget was for just over $6million - almost a 300% return!

December 2023 had almost 31,000 visitors to the two libraries, and data from 2023 range up to 35,000 per month. January 2024 saw a 27% reduction in service hours at the Main library and 40% reduction at the West Salem Branch. Sunday and evening closures particularly affect youth and teens who need a place to study, families' access to the Discovery Room on Sundays, programming at Loucks auditorium.

Following the failure of the employee tax, the Library Advisory Board (LAB) voted to support continued service levels: no reductions. The Council agenda proposes FY24 budget cutting 7 unfilled library staff positions. Acting City Librarian Esqueda explained at the January LAB meeting recruitment for these positions was not being done to avoid layoffs. Restoring, rather than cutting, these positions would enable the library to resume service levels that better meet the community needs.

The libraries' value to the community goes beyond these measurables. The programming, art, gathering and study spaces are utilized by all ages and diverse backgrounds. During FY28 the City will begin disbursement of funds for up to 2 addional library sites. Experienced staff will be needed for these sites.

Mayor Hoy has submitted a letter of support for HB4072 . Since there may be additional revenue to the City from the State, consider deferring this agenda item as pertains to the library. The library provides essential and emergency services: warming and cooling center designation; connecting patrons to resources for their safety and well being; connecting diverse people through its programming and outreach.

Respectfully submitted,
Francine Boullosa, LAB member since 2018

Mayor and Council:

As you consider amending the FY 2024 budget to eliminate 7.35 vacant positions at the Salem Public Library I urge you to read the attached report "Benchmarking Analysis of the Salem Public Library." The report uses the latest FY 2023 data from the State Library to compare our library's resources and performance to seven peer libraries, as well as to 24 Oregon public libraries serving populations over 30,000.

The report finds that "it is not an exaggeration … to conclude that the Salem Public Library is the worst major public library in Oregon. It has the worst funding per capita and nearly the worst staffing and volunteer hours per capita. It is probably safe to say that with the recent reduction in main library operating hours to only 38 hours per week, it has the worst main library operating hours among major libraries in Oregon."

I also need to point out that the Library, with only about 6% of the 809.5 FTE positions in FY 2024 General Fund budget, is taking 22% of the position reductions. Why is our library, already the worst in Oregon, being singled out for the most severe cuts?

Jim Scheppke, Ward 2
jscheppke@comcast.net

BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS OF THE SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY
By Jim Scheppke, Former State Librarian of Oregon and 38 Year Salem Resident

Introduction

A benchmarking analysis is a type of market research used by private and public organizations to compare their data to that of their peers using a selection of important metrics. Benchmarking analysis is essential to helping an organization to see where it stands in comparison to its peers so that it can plan for improvement.
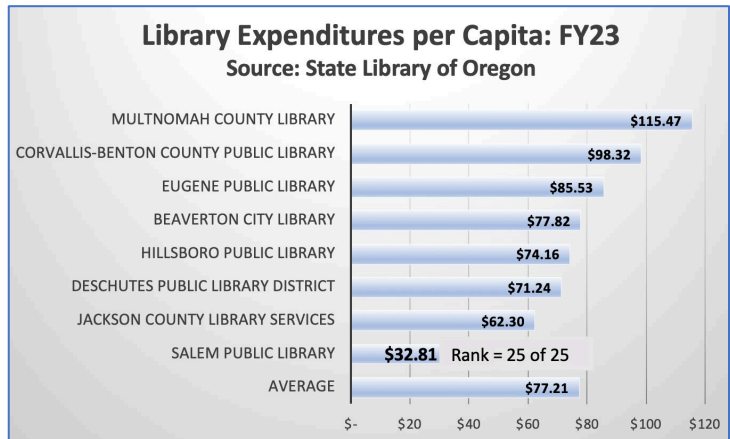
For many decades the State Library of Oregon has been annually collecting a wide range of data from Oregon public libraries that enables benchmarking analysis. My analysis directly compares the Salem Public Library to seven peer libraries serving the largest populations in the state using the latest data for Fiscal Year 2023 (July 2022 – June 2023). In addition, the analysis looked at Salem Public Library's ranking among the 25 Oregon public libraries serving populations over 30,000.

The analysis is presented using charts that graphically illustrate how the Salem Public Library compares to its peers. Included in the charts is a note on how the Salem Public Library ranks in comparison to all 25 public libraries serving populations greater than 30,000
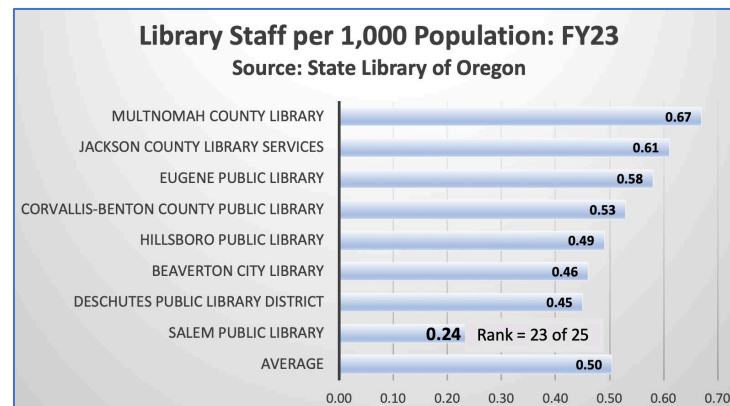
The metrics chosen for this analysis, out of hundreds reported by the State Library, comprise both input measures and output measures. They are the measures that in my judgement give the best, most accurate, assessment of the resources and performance of the Salem Public Library. However, it should be noted that the Salem Public Library has in Fiscal Year 2024 suffered a hiring freeze and major service reductions after having lost approximately 20% of its staff. So when this analysis is completed again a year from now, the picture is likely to look even worse.
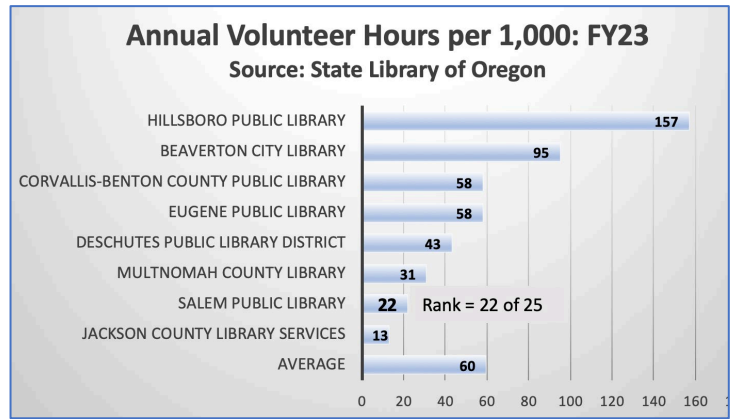
Input Measure Analysis

The most important library input measure is **library expenditures per capita** which drives the other input measures. The State Library also reports library income (budget) but expenditures is the preferred metric, since often a budget is not completly spent. In FY 2023 Salem Public Library reported the lowest expenditures per capita among its peers. It also had the *lowest expenditures per capita of any of the 25 Oregon libraries serving populations greater than 30,000*. Eugene Public Library, serving a similarly sized population, had more than twice the expenditures per capita as Salem Public Library.

Library Expenditures per Capita: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

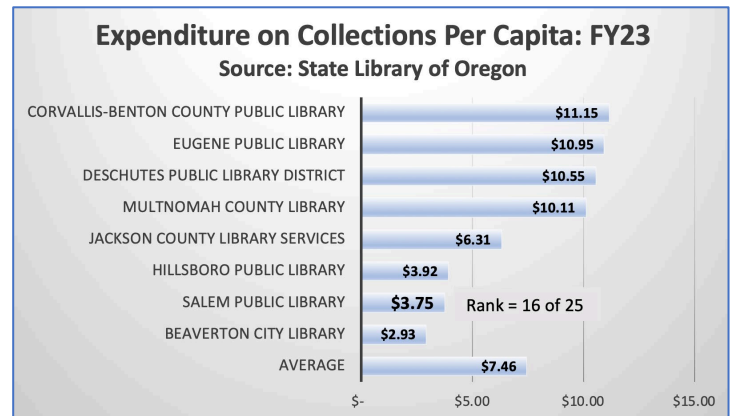| Library	Value
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	$115.47
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	$98.32
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	$85.53
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	$77.82
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	$74.16
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	$71.24
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	$62.30
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	$32.81 Rank = 25 of 25
AVERAGE	$77.21

Staffing is the by far the biggest single expense of a public library. This metric includes all paid staff including professional librarians and other staff, both full time and part time, measured in Full Time Equivalents (FTE). Salem Public Library had by far the lowest amount of staffing per 1,000 population in Fiscal Year 2023, a little more than half that of the next highest peer. Again it is useful to compare to Eugene Public Library serving a similar sized population which had more than double the staffing per 1,000 as Salem Public Library. Only two libraries serving populations greater than 30,000 had fewer staff per 1,000.

Library Staff per 1,000 Population: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

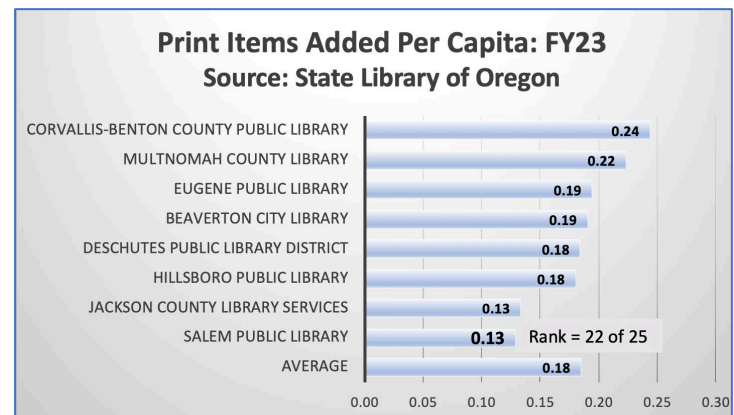| Library	Value
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	0.67
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	0.61
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.58
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.53
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.49
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	0.46
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	0.45
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.24 Rank = 23 of 25
AVERAGE	0.50

Oregon public libraries make extensive use of volunteers to supplement their paid staff. In this comparison of annual **volunteer hours per 1,000** population served we see that only one peer library logged fewer volunteer hours than Salem Public Library. And of the 25 libraries serving populations less than 30,000 only three libraries logged fewer volunteer hours per 1,000 population served. Eugene Public Library logged more than twice the volunteer hours per 1,000. It is interesting to note that even libraries that are well-staffed like those at Hillsboro and Beaverton manage to productively use lots of volunteers.

Annual Volunteer Hours per 1,000: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

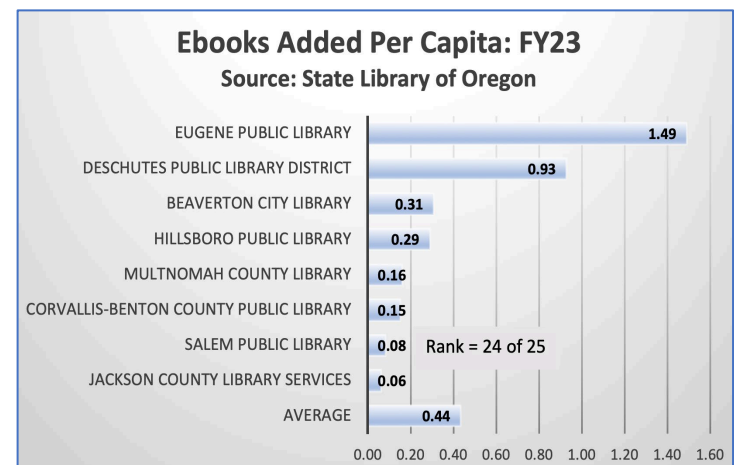| Library	Value
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	157
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	95
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	58
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	58
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	43
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	31
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	22 Rank = 22 of 25
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	13
AVERAGE	60

After expenditures on staffing, the next largest expense for public libraries is adding new library resources to their **collections** including books, ebooks, audiobooks, periodicals, and even a "library of things." Only one of the peer libraries spent less on their collections per capita in Fiscal Year 2023. Eugene Public Library, with a similar sized population spent nearly three times as much to grow and maintain their collections.

Expenditure on Collections Per Capita: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

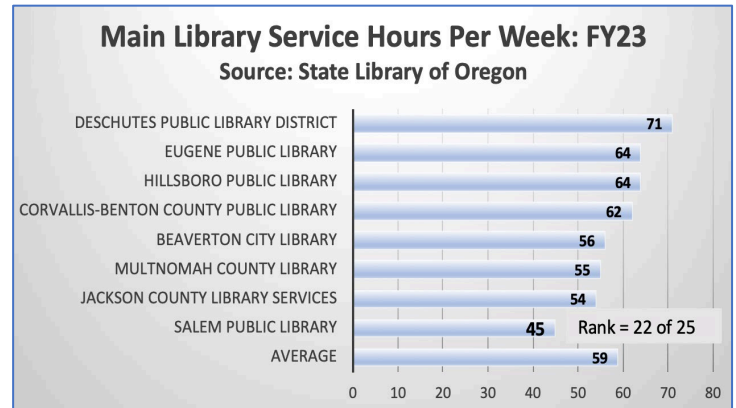| Library	Value
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	$11.15
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	$10.95
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	$10.55
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	$10.11
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	$6.31
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	$3.92
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	$3.75 Rank = 16 of 25
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	$2.93
AVERAGE	$7.46

Print items added per capita measures the number of physical books, as opposed to ebooks and audiobooks, added to the library collections. Salem Public Library added the fewest books per capita in Fiscal Year 2023 among all the peer libraries and only three other libraries serving populations less than 30,000 added fewer books per capita than did the Salem Public Library.

Print Items Added Per Capita: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

Library	Value
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.24
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	0.22
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.19
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	0.19
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	0.18
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.18
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	0.13
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.13 Rank = 22 of 25
AVERAGE	0.18

Ebooks added per capita measures the number of new ebooks made available to library users per capita in Fiscal Year 2023. Libraries must license access to ebooks from suppliers like OverDrive and cloudLibrary at a cost considerably higher than paper books. Only one peer added fewer ebooks per capita to its collections in Fiscal Year 2023. Some libraries, like in Eugene and Bend are clearly trying to build outstanding ebook collections for their users.

Ebooks Added Per Capita: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

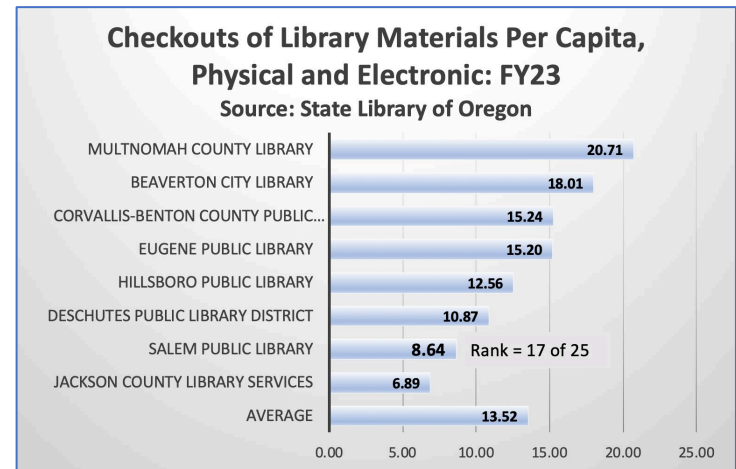| Library	Value
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	1.49
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	0.93
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	0.31
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.29
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	0.16
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.15
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	0.08 Rank = 24 of 25
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	0.06
AVERAGE	0.44

Main library service hours per week measures the number of hours the main library was open to the public in Fiscal Year 2023. Salem Public Library's low ranking reflects the fact that it was closed on Mondays, while all of its peers were open seven days a week and most had more evening hours. Only three other libraries serving populations less than 30,000 had fewer main library service hours. It is worth noting that in January 2024, hours at our main library were reduced to 38 hours over only five days.
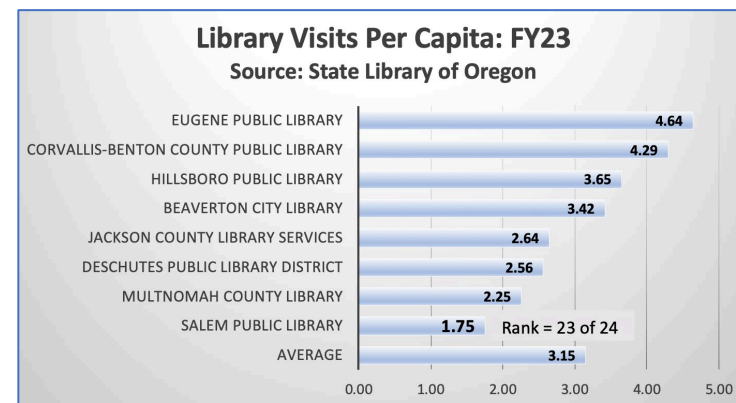
Main Library Service Hours Per Week: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

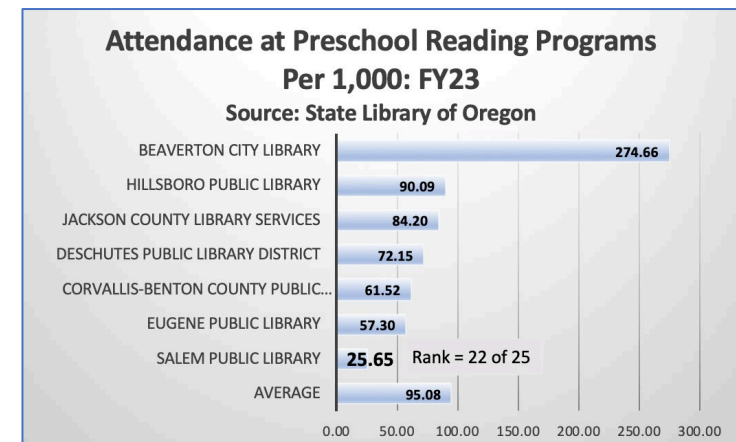| Library	Hours
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	71
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	64
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	64
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	62
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	56
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	55
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	54
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	45 Rank = 22 of 25
AVERAGE	59

Output Measure (Performance) Analysis
The most important performance measure for a public library is **checkouts per capita**, also sometimes called circulation per capita. It measures everything the library checks out including books, ebooks, audiobooks and other items in the library collections. Only one of the peer libraries had fewer checkouts per capita in Fiscal Year 2023 and two of the peer libraries checked out over twice as many materials per capita as did Salem Public Library. The lack of branch libraries and reduced open hours explain most of the poor performance of Salem Public Library on this measure.

Checkouts of Library Materials Per Capita, Physical and Electronic: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

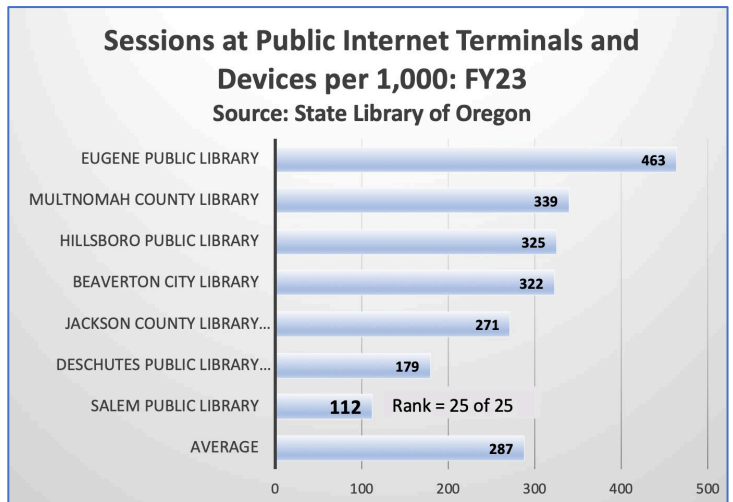| Library	Value
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	20.71
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	18.01
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC...	15.24
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	15.20
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	12.56
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	10.87
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	8.64 Rank = 17 of 25
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	6.89
AVERAGE	13.52

Library visits per capita measures the number of individuals who enter the all library facilities, including the main and branch libraries, during operating hours. The library security gates record this count which is highly accurate. It is not surprising that Salem Public Library performs poorly on this measure because of its lack of branch libraries and limited hours of operation. Only one library serving fewer than 30,000 population performed worse.

Library Visits Per Capita: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

Library	Value
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	4.64
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	4.29
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	3.65
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	3.42
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	2.64
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	2.56
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	2.25
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	1.75 Rank = 23 of 24
AVERAGE	3.15

Providing frequent **preschool reading programs** is perhaps the most important service a public library can provide to a community. Education research has shown that children who do not develop a familiarity with books and a love of ready before they enter kindergarten are likely to never become proficient readers. Salem Public Library's poor performance on this measure may provide part of the reason why only 24% of third graders in Salem-Keizer schools could pass the 3rd grade reading test in 2023. In Beaverton 56% of 3rd graders passed the test.

Attendance at Preschool Reading Programs Per 1,000: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

Library	Value
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	274.66
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	90.09
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	84.20
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	72.15
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC...	61.52
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	57.30
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	25.65 Rank = 22 of 25
AVERAGE	95.08

Sessions at public internet terminals and devices (e.g., tablets) measures the number of times individuals used all library facilities (main and branches) to access the internet. Sessions are logged electronically. This measure does not include library users who use library wi-fi connections on their own devices. This is a vital service that addresses the "digital divide" for unsheltered persons, job-seekers, students, and low income residents. Salem Public Library logged the lowest number of sessions of any library serving more than 30,000 population. Eugene Public Library, with about the same population as Salem, logged more than four times as many sessions per 1,000 as Salem Public Library.

Sessions at Public Internet Terminals and Devices per 1,000: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

Library	Sessions per 1,000
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	463
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	339
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	325
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	322
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY…	271
DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY…	179
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY	112 Rank = 25 of 25
AVERAGE	287

Conclusion of the Benchmarking Analysis

Based on this benchmarking analysis of State Library data from Fiscal Year 2023, it is not an exaggeration, I believe, to conclude that the Salem Public Library is the worst major public library in Oregon. There are libraries serving fewer than 30,000 population in the state that would show similarly poor per capita funding, staffing and performance. But for the 25 libraries serving more than 30,000, it is clear from these numbers that Salem Public Library is at the bottom. It has the worst funding per capita and nearly the worst staffing and volunteer hours per capita. It is probably safe to say that with the recent reduction in main library operating hours to only 38 hours per week, it has the worst main library operating hours among major libraries in Oregon.

Poor funding, staffing and collection expenditures lead directly to poor performance. With public libraries, you get what you pay for. Only one library serving more than 30,000 had fewer individuals use their library per capita in Fiscal Year 2023. None of these libraries had fewer internet users per capita. Perhaps most concerning is the fact that all preschool children are not being adequately served with frequent, accessible reading programs, like library storytimes in multiple languages, which I believe contributes greatly to the poor outcomes we see later on when reading proficiency is tested in our schools.

I need to emphasize that none of this is the fault of the library staff. Their efforts have been nothing short of heroic in attempting to continue to offer quality public library services in the face of relentless and severe budget and staffing cutbacks over many years. The fault lies with us in failing to support our library as other Oregon cities and counties have done.

My hope is that this benchmarking analysis will be widely read and reflected on in Salem, and that Salem residents will wake up to the fact that we have seriously neglected our library for many years and that we need to find ways to improve our support. The capital city of Oregon deserves a public library we can all be proud of.

Jim Scheppke, Ward 2
jscheppke@comcast.net

Mayor and Council:

I wanted to provide you with further context as you deliberate on amending the FY 2024 budget to eliminate 7.35 vacant positions at the Salem Public Library. I hope you will read the attached report "In the Past Two Decades We Have Cut Our Library Hours in Half." The report compares the current 48 hour per week library schedule to the 96 hour per week schedule in 2003. It also compares the schedule to that of other libraries in Oregon including 10 cities with populations under 6,000 whose public libraries are open more hours per week than the main library in Oregon's capital city.

Jim Scheppke, Ward 2
jscheppke@comcast.net

IN THE PAST TWO DECADES WE HAVE CUT OUR PUBLIC LIBRARY HOURS IN HALF

By Jim Scheppke, Former State Librarian of Oregon and 38 Year Salem Resident

In 2003 the population of Salem was about 144,000. By 2024 we added about 33,000 more to our population and yet at the same time we have cut the operating hours of our public library *in half*, from 96 hours per week to 48.

Library Hours in 2003

Hours

Central Library Hours
585 Liberty Street SE

*Sunday 1 - 5 PM
Monday 10 AM - 6 PM
Tuesday - Thursday 10 AM - 9 PM
Friday & Saturday 10 AM - 6 PM

For Reference and information call 503-588-6052.
24-hour automated information 503-589-7740
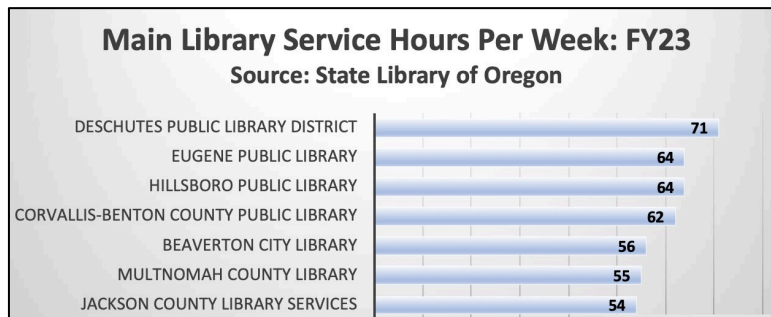
*Closed Sundays from June 2 through September 1

West Salem Branch Library Hours
395 Glen Creek Road NW

Sunday CLOSED
Monday Noon - 8 PM
Tuesday - Friday Noon - 5 PM
Saturday 10 AM - 5 PM
For information call 503-588-6301.

Library Hours in 2024

Main Library

585 Liberty St. SE
Salem, OR 97301

Main Library Open Hours

Tuesday	10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m.-5 p.m.

West Salem Branch

395 Glen Creek Rd. NW
Salem, OR 97304

West Salem Branch Open Hours

Tuesday	1-6 p.m.
Saturday	12-5 p.m.

Our main library is the only main library in a major city in the state that is closed on Sunday and Monday. It is only open 38 hours a week — far less than in other peer cities in the state.

Main Library Service Hours Per Week: FY23
Source: State Library of Oregon

DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	71
EUGENE PUBLIC LIBRARY	64
HILLSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	64
CORVALLIS-BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	62
BEAVERTON CITY LIBRARY	56
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	55
JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES	54

There are 37 cities in Oregon *with populations under 20,000* whose public libraries are open more hours per week than Salem's main library. Here are 10 Oregon cities *with populations under 6,000* whose public libraries are open more hours per week than Salem's.

City	Population	Main Library Hours/Wk.
Echo	905	40
Dufur	2,027	43
Enterprise	2,080	40
Vernonia	2,403	40
Maupin	2,612	40
Stanfield	3,033	40
Coquille	4,710	45
North Plains	5,106	52
Gold Beach	5,221	55
Myrtle Point	5,555	45

For the capital city of Oregon to have such substandard library service is an embarrassment. Our children, families, seniors, and students are not getting the library service that is the norm in nearly every other city in our state. It's time we do what is necessary to restore our library.

I support adding of 4 members to the team. We have an unsheltered crisis , a drug problem and mental health crisis in Salem. We need the team to clean up those living on our streets and in our parks and connecting the them to services. As tax paying citizens we should feel comfortable being downtown, our neighborhoods and our parks as well as taking guests out and about in Salem. I follow a Facebook page and am shocked at the number of overdoses , even DOA's that I read about as well as those in mental heath crisis on a daily basis

The city is in a budget crisis. I am surprised that those overseeing departments in our city cannot handle diversity, equity and inclusion within their departments

It is also important for diversity, equity and inclusion in our city to maintain our parks and our parks programs!

Linda Miller
Matthews Loop South

Hello Mayor Hoy and all councilors,

First of all, thank you for all of the work you do for our community. You spend so much of your time in listening, speaking at events, and endless meetings. None of your time is compensated so I really appreciate your dedication to Salem.

I don't have to repeat what you hopefully hear so often: Our Salem Public Library is a gathering place that is SO important to our community.
You know about the story times for children, the Library of Things where you can check out a ukulele or a cool drone, the music and dance performances, and the art exhibits, the meeting rooms where anyone can meet for free, the ebooks, the computers for those who don't have one, and being a SAFE, warm place for teens and others to gather.
Ok….you know these things. And you have told me personally that these things are important.

So why is the library NOT a priority in the budget! In you current agenda item 4. a. 24-29 the library is taking the majority of the cuts. Our library has already been drastically decimated by cutting the hours. Just recently we learned the delivery of books to homebound senior has been discontinued. This program has been going for 50 years. This is a crucial service for seniors who can't get out and about. Imagine how these seniors must feel right now- discarded? not important? abandoned? (Remember: seniors vote)

I saw that there is huge savings in police salaries. Why not transfer some of that money to the library? You have the ability to do this. Take action! Fund our library!
I could cite statistics until you are sick or it but I won't. Our libraries are an excellent investment.
Our library is a wondrous community resource. YOU KNOW THIS!
I am very tired from hearing from City officials that it will all be ok. It's not.

Thank you for reading this.

Lois Stark
440 21st SE
Salem OR 97301
Ward 2