

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG
LIBRARY

Library Board of Trustees
Library Board of Trustees Meeting
West Boulevard Library,
2157 West Boulevard Charlotte, NC 28208
Monday, January 22, 2024, 3:00pm – 7:00pm

Trustees Present

Ailen Arreaza
Peggy Brookhouse
Dr. Stacey Brown
Jon Buchan
Joe Helweg
Dr. Kimmerly Martin
Tracy Montross
Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson
Preethi Srinivasan
Charles Thomas, Chair
Dr. Ricky Woods

Staff Present

Rachel Bradley
David Dillard
Michael Engelbrecht
Jenni Gaisbauer
Janet Goretti
Krystal Green
Mario Lopez
John O'Connor
Caitlin Moen
Angie Myers
Emery Ortiz
Marcellus Turner
Martha Yesowitch

Others Present

Mark Kutny

Mr. Charles Thomas opened and welcomed everyone to the Board meeting at 3:00pm. Mr. Thomas acknowledged the Trustees that were joining the meeting virtually.

Absence with Cause

Mr. Thomas requested a motion to approve absence with cause for Ms. Ailen Arreaza, Mr. Jon Buchan, and Ms. Preethi Srinivasan. On a motion by Mr. Joe Helweg and seconded by Dr. Ricky Woods, the Trustees unanimously approved the absence with cause.

All three trustee were present later in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Thomas requested a motion to approve the Minutes from December 18th. On a motion by Ms. Tracy Montross and seconded by Mr. Helweg, the Trustees unanimously approved the minutes.

Welcome

Ms. Janet Goretti, the Interim Branch Manager at West Boulevard Library welcomed the Trustees and staff to the library. She noted that she has been in her current position for three weeks. Ms. Goretti recognized the amazing staff who have been with the branch for a long time. She informed the Trustees that the library is a wonderful community resource and have many well-attended programs. Ms. Goretti explained that West Boulevard has a strong partnership with Neighborhood Coalition that helps seniors apply for housing in a new affordable housing apartment complex. She also

briefly discussed the branch being an early voting site, hosting volunteers who help with income tax filing, and beginning Learn2Earn in partnership with the City of Charlotte.

Chair Update

Mr. Thomas informed the Trustees that he was attending this meeting virtually due to a prior work commitment that has him out of town. He acknowledged Vice Chair, Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson, and noted that she would be running the meeting in-person if he needed to leave the meeting early.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Ms. Angie Myers reviewed the FY2024 Budget Adjustments:

- Projection data is based on 6 months (50% of the year) of activity.
- Federal revenue is expected to be undercollected as the budget includes \$804k in ARPA funds that are anticipated to be spent in FY2025. A corresponding amount will be underspent in various expense lines such as: \$193k in Salaries & Benefits, \$497k in Library Collections, \$24k in Facilities, \$19k in Programming, \$25k in Personnel , and \$46k in Misc. General Operating Expenses.
- Excluding ARPA funds, salaries and benefits are projected to be over budget by \$400k. Budget methodology adjustments were implemented in FY2023 to account for position vacancies that have historically resulted in unspent funds throughout the County. Due to the Library's low vacancy rate, position costs are projected to be higher than budgeted. County Budget and Library will continue to monitor and reconcile at year-end for audit purposes.
- Expenses have exceeded Revenue collected as of Period 6 due to outstanding reimbursements. This includes the final reimbursement (\$1.1M) of MeckTech Federal funds, and the one-time Collections funding from Mecklenburg County (\$1.7M). Both items were received in January.

	FY 2024 - Current Budget	FY 2024 - YTD Actual Results @ 12/31/23 (Pd 6)	% Collected or Spent	FY 2024 - Projection	% Variance: Projection vs. Budget
Revenues					
Revenue					
Intergovernmental:					
Mecklenburg County	\$ 47,145,138	\$ 22,685,880	48%	\$ 47,145,138	100%
State of North Carolina	794,256	288,002	36%	794,256	100%
ABC Board	903,770	225,943	25%	903,770	100%
Federal	2,897,842	265,805	9%	2,048,121	71%
City of Charlotte	2,500	0	0%	2,500	100%
Total Intergovernmental Revenues	\$ 51,743,506	\$ 23,465,630	45%	\$ 50,893,785	98%
Library Fees	\$ 745,321	\$ 422,535	57%	\$ 921,157	124%
Foundation Contributions	1,352,531	0	0%	1,338,744	99%
Other	227,500	103,668	46%	248,686	109%
Fund Balance & Reserves Appropriation*	(73,529)	0	0%	(73,529)	100%
Total Revenues	\$ 53,995,329	\$ 23,991,833	44%	\$ 53,328,843	99%
Expenditures					
Current:					
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 36,346,355	\$ 17,695,643	49%	\$ 36,564,070	101%
Library Collections	8,195,955	3,673,963	45%	7,698,732	94%
Facility Related	3,780,301	2,165,901	57%	3,672,467	97%
Programming	681,651	233,747	34%	536,510	79%
Technology & Equipment	1,610,590	1,143,806	71%	1,606,315	100%
Professional Services	1,187,278	189,300	16%	909,945	77%
Personnel Related Expenses	341,181	132,368	39%	287,888	84%
Misc. General Operating Expenses	1,752,018	536,033	31%	1,546,535	88%
Interfund Transfer	100,000	0	0%	100,000	100%
Total Expenses	\$ 53,995,329	\$ 25,770,761	48%	\$ 52,922,462	98%
Total					
(Revenue-Expenditures)	\$ -	\$ (1,778,928)		\$ 406,381	

* Includes inter-fund transfer of ABC 100k to CommonSpark Campaign.

After some discussion, and on a motion from the Finance Committee, the board unanimously approved the budget adjustments.

Advocacy Committee

Ms. Tracy Montross provided the following updates:

- Ms. Montross informed the Trustees that the committee has now set up monthly meetings from December through June and will hear from different speakers and will gather more information about the Communications and Marketing assets the Library utilizes.
- The committee is largely following the American Library Association’s advocacy playbook, which provides a step-by-step guide on how to create an advocacy action plan.

Governance Committee

Ms. Tracy Montross provided the following updates:

- Ms. Montross presented the Public Comment Process Policy for approval. The Governance Committee did some research to evaluate how other public boards and libraries systems facilitate public comments. The committee reviewed best practices around all the common policy proposals throughout various systems and created the Public Comment Process Policy.
- Ms. Montross and Trustees discussed making a change to item #8 to delete the phrase “negative comments” and remove the word “posters” from item #4.
- This process will become part of the Board meeting agendas every month. Going forward, every meeting will have a public comment portion in the beginning. If no one shows up, then the Chair will move on to the next item on the agenda. But you'll start to see on agenda.

After some discussion, and on a motion from the Governance Committee, the board unanimously approved the budget adjustments.

CEO Report

Mr. Marcellus Turner provided the following updates:

- MT thanked Trustees and staff for supporting the University City Regional Library Groundbreaking and acknowledged that the event was cancelled due to bad weather. He explained that there are plans to record a virtual groundbreaking and for the video to be shared at a later date. MT provided the Board with a brief Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer hiring update, noting that there were four applicants selected from the second round of phone screenings to move forward to in-person interviews which will begin January 23rd.
- MT provided the Trustees with an update on the January 17th BoCC Meeting and Public Hearing. MT recognized the two speakers, Ms. Sharon Kugelmass and Mr. Raymond Sullivan, who signed up and spoke in favor of the library. Both speakers expressed the positive impact the library has had on their lives. MT explained that this meeting was a great template for how the Library can be represented at the BoCC meetings in the future. MT also thanked the Trustees for their strong presence at the Public Hearing.
- MT gave the Trustees an update on the recent Verse & Vino debrief meeting. He explained that Ms. Jenni Gaisbauer, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Gene Cochrane, and himself met with various members of the Jewish community. Out of these meetings came a recommendation to work with Project Shema, an organization that works to train and support the Jewish community and its allies in understanding Jewish Culture and history. The organization helps build compassion

and understanding across different communities. MT discussed that the Library is in talks with Project Shema about the scope of training to be provided and the cost of these services. MT informed the Trustees that there is no budget for this training and so the Library will need help from the Library Foundation to provide funding.

- MT asked Ms. Emery Ortiz to provide an update on the Technology Kitchen Cabinet and ARPA funds and projects. Ms. Ortiz explained that the Technology Kitchen Cabinet is an informal think tank brainstorming group that is going to be comprised of both Library staff and members of the community who are involved in the technology sector, including nonprofits around the Charlotte area. The first meeting of the cabinet is set for 10:00am on January 26th and will be a general discussion surrounding emerging technologies and best practices. It is a virtual meeting and there are currently 16 people scheduled to attend. The group will be open to add more members. One goal is to have this cabinet review the completed strategic plan to help discuss the technological components of it.
- Ms. Ortiz explained the two primary divisions of the ARPA funding that the Library uses. One is to grow the Library's digital literacy programs and create more formalized curriculum in both English and Spanish so the Library can help in an area of proven need. The second division works on the mobile technology classroom that is in the works. This is going to be a very small vehicle that can handle approximately 4 to 6 individuals at a time receiving technology instruction, and any leveraged programming that would involve technology.
- The Outreach department is focused on planning the programming for this vehicle. The Library is currently getting RFP submissions, and the request is live on the Library's website. At the March Board meeting there should be a final presentation to show the submissions to the Trustees so they can select a vendor.
- Ms. Ortiz informed the Trustees that there are 2 Project managers who have been in place since last year who do a great job moving these programs through.
- Two things that were included in the ARPA Grant are translation tablets which are now at all branch locations and help staff interact with speakers of any language and an expansion of digital collections to include more Spanish and English books and materials.

Library Director Report

Ms. Caitlin Moen provided the following updates:

- Ms. Moen shared with the Trustees a Story of Impact from a patron at the Plaza Midwood Location. The patron spoke highly of the new librarian, Kathy, who restarted the Plaza Midwood writing group. The group consists of new members and returning members. The patron was excited about the writing group meeting again and the energy of the group. The first meeting after the group was restarted lasted for approximately two hours and members spent time critiquing and discussing submissions and helping a member improve their resume.
- Ms. Moen updated the Trustees about the new West Boulevard Library branch. Ms. Moen explained that building a new branch for this location was included in the CIP submission for the next five years. It is the second project that will be tackled and is expected to begin in 2025 with the design services RFQ process. The completion of the new West Boulevard location is set for 2028. The new location will be located by the Stratford Richardson YMCA and next to the new Atrium building in that area.
- Ms. Moen reminded the Trustees about Community Read on March 19th and the selected book, *Buttermilk Graffiti* by Edward Lee. She also informed the Trustees that the author will be signing books and speaking at ImaginOn on March 19th.
- Ms. Moen informed the Trustees that an employee, Teresa Clay, was honored by Novant health and recognized at the Charlotte Checkers Hockey game. She was awarded the title of Community Hero of the Month and was excited to represent the Library well.
- Ms. Moen explained to Trustees that the Library had a productive meeting with Mecklenburg County's Safety and Security team. The biggest take away from the meeting was the County committed to going to every library branch location over the next 18 months and providing personalized active shooter and de-escalation training to staff. Following this rollout, the training will continue as a regular reoccurring event for all branches. The meeting helped

to work through some of the physical infrastructure topics like events and access control. The County also shared their plan for safety and security and the projects that are currently underway.

Foundation Update

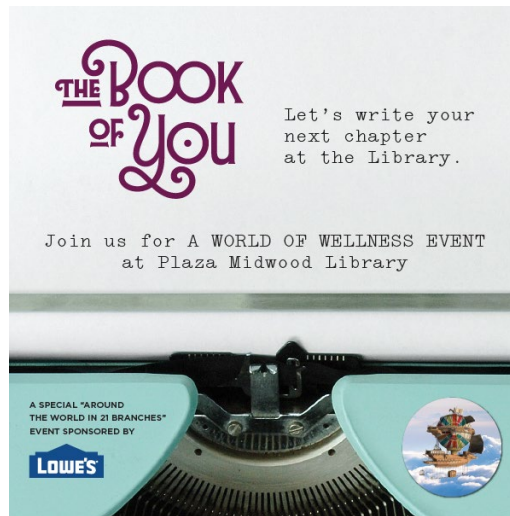
Ms. Jenni Gaisbauer provided the following updates:

- Ms. Gaisbauer informed the Trustees that just over \$1million has been raised this fiscal year. The annual fundraising amount is trending higher compared to last fiscal year. Donor numbers are higher and retention rates are up 80%.

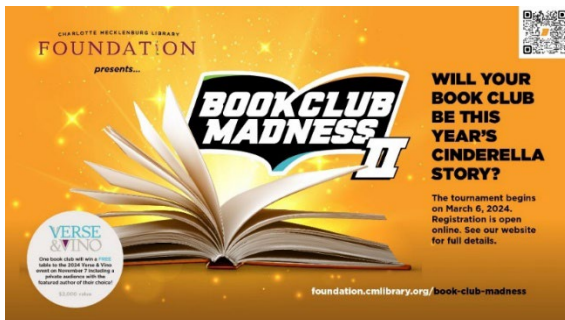
As of December 31, 2023

	FY23	FY24
July	\$ 107,188.68	\$ 163,042.33
August	\$ 48,817.83	\$ 338,354.46
September	\$ 92,593.67	\$ 108,759.08
October	\$ 69,298.57	\$ 69,298.83
November	\$ 192,922.24	\$ 171,661.51
December	\$ 261,988.82	\$ 181,195.24
Total	\$ 772,809.81	\$ 1,032,311.45

- Ms. Gaisbauer updated the Trustees about the next two Around the World events taking place. Sugar Creek’s Around the World event will be held on Saturday, January 27th from 11:00am until 2:00pm and all activities will be inside the building. The February Around the World will be at Plaza Midwood Library, February 9th and is an evening paid event for adults. The focus is on wellness and the theme is The Book of You because there will be writing activities.



- Ms. Gaisbauer explained that Book Club Madness 2 is happening, starting on March 6th, and is aligned with March Madness. There were 171 book clubs that participated last year and the Foundation has seen book club members turn into donors.



FY25 Budget Presentation

FY2025 (County) Budget Kick Off

- \$53.8M = Total FY2024 Budget
- 88% = Percent of FY2024 budget funded by Mecklenburg County
- Timing: County budget process really starts later this week and moves quickly through February into early March.
- Goals for the presentation:
 - Education
 - Ensure list of potential FY2025 budget enhancements is:
 - Complete
 - Prioritized

FY 2025 Budget – Important Dates







- Ms. Myers reviewed important upcoming dates for the FY2025 Budget process for the the Board of County Commissioners and for the Library.

January 24-26, 2024: BOCC Annual Budget Retreat
February 2, 2024: County Manager Budget Kick-Off (to Departments/Agencies)
February 15, 2024 – Presentation #1 to County Leadership by Library Staff (to levels below the County Manager)
March ?, 2024 – Library Budget due to County
March 15, 2024 – MT Presents to County Manager & Budget Executive Team
May 16, 2024 – County Manager Recommends Budget
May 23, 2024 – Budget Public Hearing #2
May 30, 2024 – BOCC Straw Vote Session
June 4, 2024– BOCC Adopts FY2025 County Budget
June 17, 2024– Library Board of Trustees Adopts FY2025 Budget

FY 2024 – BOCC Priorities

- Ms. Myers reviewed the Board of County Commissioners’ budget priorities from FY2024.
- Ms. Myers explained that when the Library makes a budget request they have to identify whether or not it is aligned to the BoCC priorities and indicate if it aligns with the 3-year strategic business plan.

Board Budget Priorities

 <p>Early Childhood Development: Expand services that promote healthy early childhood development and education from ages birth to five.</p>	<p>Racial Disparities: Ensure that investments by the County focus on closing racial and ethnic gaps so that race does not predict one’s success, while also improving outcomes for all. Race will be interwoven into the Board Priorities through policies, practices, and procedures that seek to analyze and eliminate the root causes of racial disparities with the hope that all people in Mecklenburg County will have an equitable opportunity to thrive in the community.</p> <p><i>Cross-cutting</i></p>
 <p>Educational Attainment: Align allocations to strategies and targets with proven results to improve college and career readiness outcomes for all students.</p>	
 <p>Environmental Stewardship: Preserve and protect the County’s environmental resources.</p>	
 <p>Health Access: Improve access to physical and behavioral healthcare for County residents of all ages and promote healthy behaviors.</p>	
 <p>Housing Insecurity: Reduce the number of residents experiencing homelessness and advance stable affordable housing options for all County residents.</p>	
 <p>Workforce Development: Support initiatives that connect job seekers with employment opportunities.</p>	

FY 2025 Potential Budget – NOT Requesting

- Ms. Myers explained that these items did not make the budget priority list but were discussed by the Senior Leadership team. These are important but other items were agreed upon to be more of a priority for FY2025.
 - \$ for Security Enhancements
 - Programming \$
 - Other Main Library Positions
 - Software Additions
 - Educational Partnerships Specialist
 - Community & Culture Lead Librarian
 - Additional operating budget for Chief Equity & Inclusion Officer

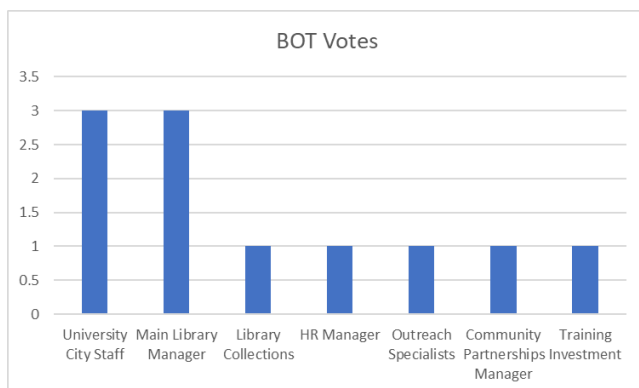
FY 2025 Potential Budget Requests

- Ms. Myers, Ms. Moen, Ms. Gaisbauer, and Ms. Green provided the Trustees with the reasoning behind each priority for FY2025. The Trustees and Senior Leadership team discussed the priorities for a better understanding of the ranking of each priority.

Library Leadership Priority List		Amount (\$3.2M)	Comments
Priority 1	University City Staff (6.5 Positions)	\$235k 6 months	45% increase in square footage; 1-story to 2-story building; 18% increase in staff requested
Priority 2	Main Library Manager (1 Position)	\$73k 6 months	Lead all planning efforts, relationship building, and staff preparations for opening
Priority 3	Library Collections (\$\$\$)	2.3M	Industry standard of 5.75/capita; collection budgets strained by increase in community growth, material costs, and digital pricing models.
Priority 4	HR Manager (1 Position)	\$108k 9 months	Next position in 3 year plan to get HR division closer to approaching industry standard
Priority 5	Marketing & Communications Assistant (1 Position)	\$72k 9 months	Graphic artist is greatest need to increase capacity of under-resourced M&C team.
Priority 6	Outreach Specialists (2 Positions)	\$144k (\$72k X 2) 9 months	Critical need to build capacity to reach historically underserved community members and maximize ARPA investment in 2 nd vehicle.
Priority 7	Community Partnerships Coordinator (1 Position)	\$72k 9 months	Position will build capacity to expand its relationships in the spheres of education, workforce development, and social services and keep up with growing portfolio of partners.
Priority 8	Training Investment (\$\$\$)	\$160k	Investment to move to a budget built around \$700 per FT employee. These funds would benefit all staff through enterprise-wide training programs and increased opportunities for industry and job-related conferences.
Priority 9	Administrative Support Coordinator (1 Position)	\$72k 9 months	Current structure of 2 support coordinators supporting 10 Library Leadership staff and/or functions and two boards is at capacity.

FY 2025 Potential Budget Requests – Trustees Top Picks

- Ms. Myers polled the Trustees on their top priority picks for the upcoming FY2025 budget.



FY 2025 Potential Budget Requests – Prioritized Lists

- Below are the priorities ranked by the Senior Leadership team and the preliminary list by the Trustees prior to the FY2025 Budget discussion.

Library Leadership Priority List	
Priority 1	University City Staff (6.5 Positions)
Priority 2	Main Library Manager (1 Position)
Priority 3	Library Collections (\$\$\$)
Priority 4	HR Manager (1 Position)
Priority 5	Marketing & Communications Assistant (1 Position)
Priority 6	Outreach Specialists (2 Positions)
Priority 7	Community Partnerships Coordinator (1 Position)
Priority 8	Training Investment (\$\$\$)
Priority 9	Administrative Support Coordinator (1 Position)

Trustees Preliminary Priority List	
Priority 1	Main Library Manager (1 Position)
Priority 2/3	University City Staff (6.5 Positions)
Priority 3/2	Community Partnerships Coordinator (1 Position)
Priority 4	HR Manager (1 Position)
Priority 5	Library Collections (\$\$\$)
Priority 6	Outreach Specialists (2 Positions)
Priority 7	Administrative Support Coordinator (1 Position)
Priority 8	Training Investment (\$\$\$)
Priority 9	Marketing & Communications Assistant (1 Position)

* Note: Real Estate Contractual Increases = \$35k

- Ms. Myers reviewed the differences in the lists and then requested feedback from the Trustees regarding the prioritization now that they have a more thorough understanding of each budget priority. The Trustees agreed that the prioritized list by the Senior Leadership team was acceptable.
- Ms. Myers informed the Trustees that they will be able to review the prioritized list again at the February Board of Trustees meeting where the finalized list will be agreed upon prior to MT presenting the budget requests to the Board of County Commissioners on March 15th.

Strategic Direction Discussion

MT spoke to the Trustees about Strategic Direction and the Library

Challenge:

- MT’s one job is to be sure CML makes a difference in the lives of library users.
- What matters to the community dictates who we are and what we do.
- For any industry including libraries to be successful, they need to have value and that value has to make a difference in the world.

Opportunity:

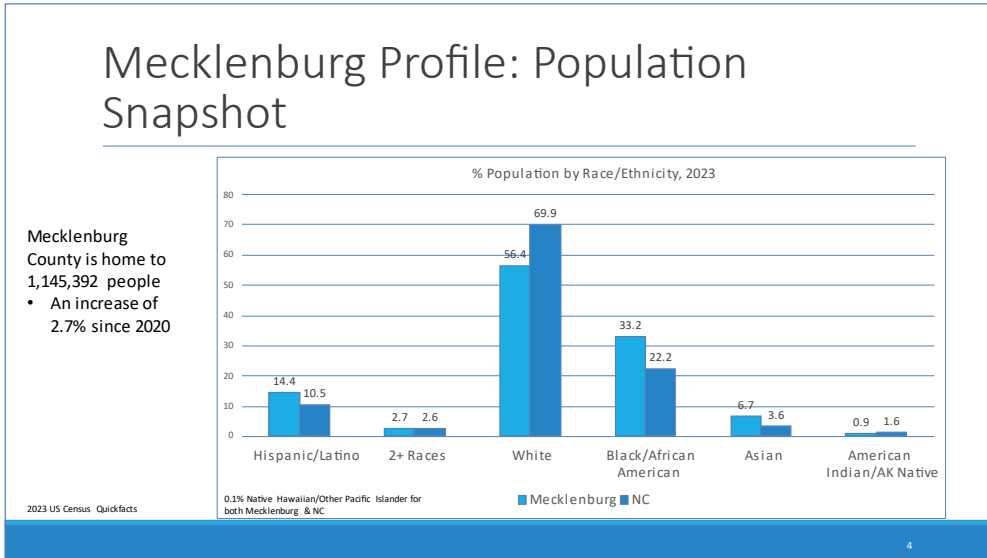
- CML has a wonderful opportunity to reset the definition and standard of a library with this course that we are taking.

Vision:

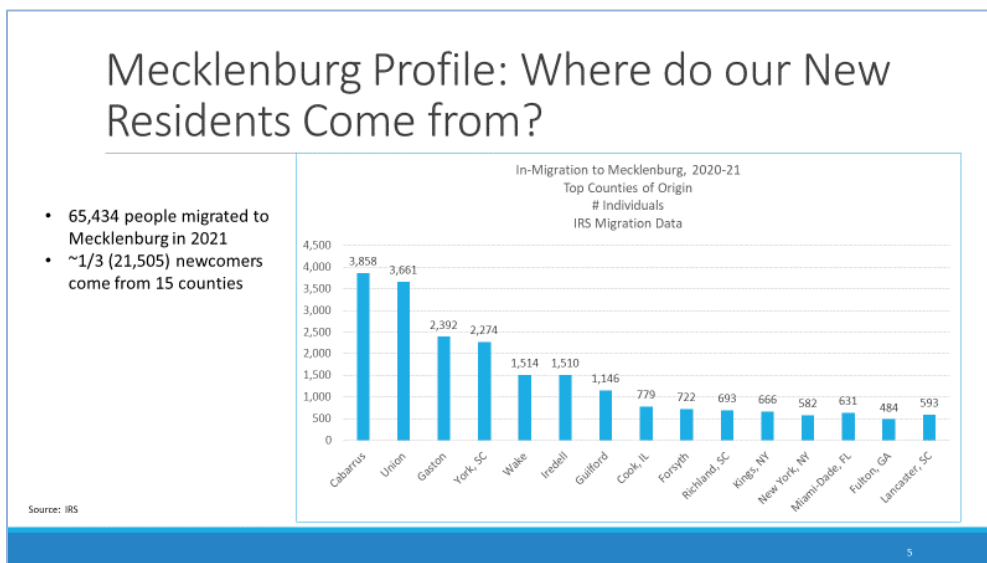
- CML is a 21st Century library that works off a strong business model that provides strong programming, a deep and comprehensive collection and an engaged staff that can help an individual achieve their goals.

Zoom Call with Karen Dash – Strategic Direction Consultant

- Ms. Emery Ortiz introduced the library’s consultant, Ms. Karen Dash, and informed the Trustees that Ms. Dash has provided a quote to extend her contract with the Library per their request at the December Board meeting. The extension would allow the Library to work with Ms. Dash through June 2024.
- Ms. Ortiz explained that there is an active staff steering committee for the strategic direction who will help during the process by being involved in reviewing surveys and discussing ideas on the best ways to disseminate the surveys.
- Ms. Dash briefly reviewed the early environmental scan results she obtained for Mecklenburg County and how these results inform the strategic direction process. Ms. Dash also explained her approach to the community engagement process and the methods that will be used to be as inclusive as possible when capturing community feedback.

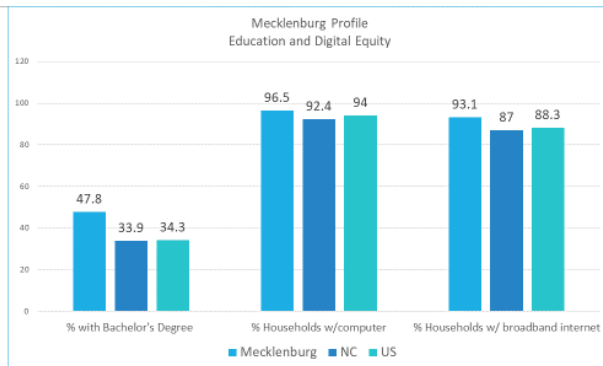


Mecklenburg County is home to 1,145,392 which is an increase of 2.7% since 2020.



65,434 people migrated to Mecklenburg County in 2021. 1/3 (21,505) of the newcomers come from 15 counties as shown in the chart above.

Mecklenburg Profile: Education/Digital Equity Snapshot



Source: US Census Quickfacts

Mecklenburg County is about 14% higher than the state and approximately 13% higher than the country for residents with a bachelor's degree. Mecklenburg County is at 96.5% for households with a computer and 93.1% for households with broadband internet. The data is from the US Census and is considered a 4-year moving average from 2018 to 2022. It was published in July 2023.

Mecklenburg Profile: Health Snapshot

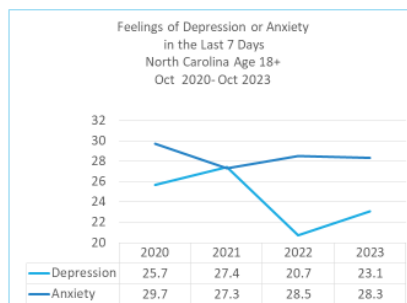
Among NC's 100 counties, Mecklenburg ranks:

- #6 in terms of Health Outcomes
- #9 in terms of Health Factors

Based on health behaviors; clinical care; and social and economic and physical environment factors

Mecklenburg is designated a North Carolina Health Professional Shortage area for some populations in:

- Primary Care
- Dental Care
- Mental Health/Behavioral Health Care



Sources: Robert W Johnson Foundation/UHiv of WI Population Health Institute, US DHHS/NC Office of Rural Health, US Census for CDC

This data helps to inform discussions around the Library's role and partners within the Community as well as provides a snapshot of the community's priorities.

Community Engagement

We will utilize a mix of the following channels to reach as many audiences as possible:

- Marketing survey link via website, blog, social media
- Email survey link to all Library customers
- QR code on flyers to (1) post in Library; (2) provide to partners
- QR Code/Reminders to complete survey at all Library programs
- Shortcut to survey link on Welcome Page of all CML public computers
- Outreach and promotion through partners, faith organizations, Parks & Rec

- Posts through City of Charlotte Community Engagement Division on NextDoor and the Housing and Community Services channels

On December 18th, the Board provided thoughtful insights regarding our Library's:

- Mission
- Values
- EDI
- Legacy
- Audience

CML Legacy Follow-ups

- “Good stewards of taxpayer funding”
 - **What does Return on Investment Look Like for CML?**

CML Audience Follow-ups

- **What are the top two external library audiences for whom we can improve our services?**
 - Parents and Students
 - Unemployed
 - “Working Poor”
 - Seniors/older adults
 - Immigrant community
 - Millennial/Gen Z
 - Young professionals
 - Uptown users
 - Book lovers
 - Authors
 - Young Children
 - Emerging Adults

Next Steps

Community Engagement!

- Dissemination of Community Survey in February
- 6 Focus Groups in February – March
- 12-15 Key Stakeholder Interviews – February – March
- Staff Steering Committee discussions

The Trustees engaged in a productive discussion regarding the Library's legacy and audience follow-up questions presented by Ms. Dash. The Trustees provided valuable feedback that will help to continue the strategic direction process as the Library moves into the community engagement phase.

After some Board discussion, Charles Thomas adjourned the board meeting at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcellus Turner

CEO

11