

Commissioner Lori Stegmann's 2022 Budget Remarks

First let me apologize for not having my video on as I have been quite sick. The good news is I do not have COVID-19 however I do have pneumonia. Because I will be departing the meeting after this vote, I wanted to acknowledge and celebrate Pride Month. It is more important than ever to stand with our LGBTQIA2S+ community and all marginalized community members. And I am proud to do so. Thank you for bringing forth today's proclamation and for all the work you do to increase awareness and inclusivity every day.

This historic budget is representative of the challenges we have faced this last year and will serve as a beacon as we meet the future head on. I have been incredibly proud of our departments and staff as I witnessed their agility, their stamina, and most of all their commitment to our community.

Together with a common vision, our over 6000 employees leapt into action to respond to a global pandemic while at the same time addressing the long overdue systemic change that is foundational to building safety, trust, and belonging. All during a time in which the need for social, racial, and criminal legal justice must no longer be sheltered by our dark history and lack of action.

I am pleased to see this budget reflect critical investments in health and human services, justice system reform, and recovery efforts for our communities and residents who have been most affected by the pandemic. There is still much work to be done but I believe more so than ever that the strength and resilience of our organization and every single person who works for Multnomah County can and will guide us through these tribulations.

I'd like to thank my colleagues and the chair for the collective leadership that you bring to this board everyday. It is an honor to serve alongside you. I believe this budget and the final amendments reflect our shared values.

I would also like to recognize and thank our department leaders and staff who are creating and adapting programs and services in real time and in the future. A special thank you to our budget director, Christian Elkin and our CFO, Eric Arellano as you've balanced not only our general fund process but that of the federal ARP funding. Because of all of your contributions we have arrived on this day to adopt a budget we can all be proud of. I also want to thank our community partners who continue to serve our children, our families, and our communities across Multnomah County. Without them we could not bring to fruition this extraordinary budget.

I'd also like to thank the countless volunteers who give so generously of their time. Because of you, we are better able to meet the needs of our communities.

And last but not least, I would like to thank my team, Rebecca Stavenjord, Nathan Clark and Layan Ammouri who show up every day with kindness, compassion and vulnerability. The lived experience they bring to our work has taught me so much and made serving as the D4 commissioner one of the most rewarding moments in my life.

Thank you.