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## City library to host community roundtable meetings on budget

Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 21, 2011 05:03 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

The Boston Public Library will host two community roundtable meetings next week to provide an overview of the system's budget.

The meetings will focus on topics such as FY 2012 revenue assumptions, library trust funds, capital budgeting, and the budget planning timeline.

To make up for major funding cuts over the past two fiscal years, the library laid-off staff and approved a controversial plan last spring to close four of the city's 26 branches. After outcry from some residents and politicians, potential branch closures have since been avoided by added city and state aid – including a recent \$350,000 state-funding jolt unanimously approved for branch-saving use by library trustees Tuesday – that will keep all city branches operational through the end of the fiscal year that ends June 30.

A comprehensive budget proposal has not yet been drafted for FY 2012, but library officials said they expect to have “fewer resources” in the coming fiscal year than during FY 2011. Cuts considered a year ago will likely be considered again in shaping the coming year's budget, the library's chief financial officer Sean Nelson said in an interview Friday. The library's president [told the Globe earlier](#) this month that reductions could include “collections, hours, or branches closures.” The mayor said earlier this month he [continues to support fewer branches](#) as a cost-saving measure.

The library CFO will lead the roundtables, sharing online resources and relevant articles, officials said. The city and library trustee board will also be represented.

“Over the past few months, many community members expressed an interest in learning more about the Boston Public Library's budget,” said Nelson in a release. “These gatherings are designed to address that interest and provide an overview of the steps in our annual budget process.”

The first budget roundtable will be Jan. 25 in the Central Library's Orientation Room. A second meeting is scheduled for the following night at the Dudley Branch Library in Roxbury.

Nelson said Friday that the meetings next week will cover more general budgetary topics, while a second set of roundtable meetings this spring will likely offer more details on the FY 2012 outlook.

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That set of roundtables will begin with a meeting March 15 in the Central Library's Orientation Room, followed by another gathering the following night at the Codman Square Branch Library in Dorchester.

All four roundtables are set for 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

A special library trustee meeting will be held Feb. 24 when officials expect to have more details on the FY 2012 outlook.

For details on the library's budget and finances, visit, [www.bpl.org/budget](http://www.bpl.org/budget).

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