

From: [Lois Stark](#)
To: [CityRecorder](#)
Cc: [Chris Hoy](#); [Vanessa Nordyke](#); [Virginia Stapleton](#); [Inisioka@cityofsalem.net](#); [Micki Varney](#); [Trevor Phillips](#); [Deanna Gwyn](#); [Jose Gonzalez](#)
Subject: Testimony for City Council work session 11-20-23
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:32:04 PM

To: Mayor Hoy and City City Councilors
From: Lois Stark Chair, Salem Public Library Advisory Board

The Salem Library Advisory Board respectfully submits into the record the following comments and information for your consideration.

On November 8, 2023 the Library Advisory Board (LAB) voted:
“ That the (LAB) supports continued funding of the Salem Public Library at current funding levels.” (as adopted by Council for the FY 2024 budget)
We do not support cuts to staff, services, materials or hours.

We recognize that there are many important funding obligation and that the City must weigh and balance in apportioning limited dollars each year.

However, we consider the library to be an essential public service. The library is one of the few public spaces that truly belongs to the entire community. No one has to pay to enter and most services and activities are free.

The library is a place to share space. The more we “share” space and the more we interact, the stronger and more diverse our community will be.

Here is some current data for you to review:

In October, 2023 (according to a document from Bridget Esqueda, Interim City Librarian):

- There were over 33,00 visitors to the library
- Approximately 107,000 physical items were checked out or renewed
- Over 30,000 digital items were checked out

Here is a non exhaustive list of activities and services provided at our library:

- Children's' story hours each week
- Book club meetings for adults
- Art exhibits
- English language classes
- Genealogy search services
- A “Library of Things” (LOT) to check out kayaks, cooking utensils, drones, ukuleles, games, toys, tools, and many more
- Small and large meeting rooms for community or individual use
- A charging station for phones and other electronic devices
- Outreach to Head Start and other early learning centers
- A thriving teen program that is acclaimed statewide.
- Music, dance, and other cultural programs all year round
- 26 FREE computers for use to the public
- A SAFE, warm place for anyone to use; read, relax, be warm, learn, and thrive
- Many more activities

The Library Advisory Board appreciates this opportunity to express our recommendations and concerns.

We welcome your thoughts and input and are willing to brainstorm and/or provide options for increased revenue.

Thank you for your time and effort for our community.