

Staff Report

File #: 20-27**Version:** 1**Date:** 1/27/2020**Item #:** 6.g.

TO: Mayor and City Council
THROUGH: Steve Powers, City Manager
FROM: Norman Wright, Community Development Director

SUBJECT:

Welcoming and Inclusive Library Spaces

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Welcoming and Livable Community

RECOMMENDATION:

Information Only.

SUMMARY:

Status report on planning to ensure Salem Public Library locations are welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Planned activities and improvements to have the temporary location be welcoming and inclusive include:

1. Host an Opening Ceremony with speakers from Council, the Library Advisory Board, Staff, and HRC members sharing the common vision of an inclusive and welcoming library space. Activities through this day will be designed specifically to highlight the inclusivity of the library.
2. Reaffirm the Library's Mission and Values with internal and external signage at prominent places throughout the Library. See the attachment "Draft Interior Vestibule Welcoming Mission & Values" for a preliminary interior version.
3. Create more booklists and displays with LGBTQIA themes and other reflections of the diverse

Salem community.

Within a few months after the lease for the temporary location was approved, a team of Human Rights Commission members, interested citizens, and staff was formed. The combined efforts of this group have resulted in the planning currently underway.

The Salem Public Library is guided by and aligned with the City's vision, mission, and values as articulated in the Salem Strategic Plan. The alignment begins with the Salem Public Library's mission statement:

Salem Public Library serves its community by promoting and providing opportunities for full and equal access to information and ideas, the love of reading, the joy of learning, and engagement with the arts, sciences and humanities in a safe and comfortable environment.

The Salem Public Library's values (<https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/salem-public-library-core-values.aspx>) continue to affirm commitment to providing a welcoming and inclusive organization and space. Among the seven values is an emphasis on diversity, as expressed by the following aspiration:

We aspire to be adaptive and culturally astute. We promote and protect diversity of ideas in an inclusive environment. We value all aspects of our community's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity in the full spectrum of resources and services we provide.

Additionally, the Library's services are governed by Article V of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>), which is cited as follows:

A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

BACKGROUND:

City Council approved the lease of 1400 Broadway St. NE on their July 22, 2019, meeting (<https://salem.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4216474&GUID=0FDF47A5-71C5-4279-8689-F927E60AA403&Options=&Search=>>).

The Human Rights Commission created and approved a statement regarding the temporary location. The statement ended with this request,

"In the event that the City must use this location, the Commission recommends that the City Council publicly proclaim the City's support and adherence to the purpose and intent of the City's Human Rights Code, particularly as applied to the LGBTQ community, and urge all of the city's residents to support and encourage a city free of discriminatory barriers. Further, the City should affirm that the City, particularly the Library, is open and welcoming to all members of the Community, and that the City is committed to ensuring that the Library will remain so during its relocation. The Commission and the LGBTQ Task Force is committed to working with the Salem

Public Library to develop options to make the Library's temporary space accessible, welcoming and inclusive to all."

Sarah Strahl
City Librarian

Attachments:

Draft Interior Vestibule Welcoming Mission & Values