



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: February 24, 2022

In Control: Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee

DEPARTMENT: Library

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Ramiro Salazar

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Briefing regarding access to information through the San Antonio Public Library.

SUMMARY:

Ramiro S. Salazar, Library Director will provide an overview of the San Antonio Public Library services and resources, with a focus on access to library materials and future plans.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The San Antonio Public Library's mission is to change lives through the transformative power of information, imagination, and ideas. Through a collection of nearly two (2) million items, access to public computing, trained and professional staff, library buildings and programs, the Library is a community wide resource. City Council, as part of the Fiscal Year 2022 budget adoption, eliminated library fines for materials returned late, which made the library a more welcoming space as any real or perceived barriers were mitigated. The Library widely promoted the fine free

initiative and continues to engage the community through intentional public information about library services and resources.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed behaviors and also exposed vulnerabilities to basic utilities such as the Internet. In light of this, the Library will undertake a comprehensive planning initiative which will incorporate metrics and usage data to inform behavior along with a community needs assessment. Using this data, the Library will develop a tool to ensure library resources and staff are deployed in the most impactful and efficient manner.

In the current climate of challenges to library material, Library Board of Trustees Chair Paul Stahl and Library Director Ramiro S. Salazar submitted an op-ed to the San Antonio Express News entitled Protecting Access and the Freedom to Read. This piece unequivocally states the Library's position regarding the freedom to read and is expected to be published soon.

ISSUE:

Ramiro S. Salazar, Library Director will provide an overview of the San Antonio Public Library services and resources, with a focus on access to library materials and future plans.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is a briefing only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is a briefing only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is a briefing only.