



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 20

Agenda Date: May 12, 2022

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Library

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Ramiro Salazar

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

A resolution supporting the freedom to read and to access information in public libraries.

SUMMARY:

A resolution supporting the freedom to read and to access information in public libraries.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On February 24, 2022, Ramiro S. Salazar delivered a presentation to the City Council Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee about access to information. The Committee acted to draft a resolution to support access to information for City Council's consideration.

In the current climate of challenges to library material, Library Board of Trustees Chair Paul Stahl and Library Director Ramiro S. Salazar authored an op-ed piece published in the San Antonio Express News entitled Protecting Access and the Freedom to Read on February 23, 2022. This piece unequivocally states the Library's position regarding the freedom to read and is expected to be published soon.

ISSUE:

The First Amendment guarantees all individuals the right to express their ideas without governmental interference.

The City of San Antonio believes that all individuals should have the right of self-enlightenment and to form their own opinion. The San Antonio Public Library's mission is to change lives through the transformative power of information, imagination, and ideas. Therefore, it becomes paramount that all individuals should have the freedom to access without prejudice the collections of our library system. Through a collection of nearly two (2) million items; access to public computing; trained, professional staff; library buildings and programs; the Library is a community wide resource.

Professional librarians receive extensive education and ongoing training to qualify them to develop collections which meet the broad and varied interests and needs of their communities and to represent a diversity of perspectives. The San Antonio Public Library will oppose efforts that restrict the freedom to read through banning, removing, or other forms of restricting access to books or other materials.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose to not approve this resolution.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no fiscal impacts

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the resolution supporting the freedom to read and to access information in public libraries.