

Public Comment

de la Guerra, Sheila

Library Services.

From: Mary Housel <mhousel@cityofsantamaria.org>
Sent: Sunday, April 12, 2020 10:47 AM
To: sbcob; Williams, Das; Hart, Gregg; Hartmann, Joan; Adam, Peter; Lavagnino, Steve
Cc: Nelson, Bob
Subject: Library funding and Budget Workshop Monday 4/13

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Good morning,

Please read my letter aloud at the budget workshop regarding the Library funding.

Thank you for fully funding the county library branches in the current fiscal year so that all deficits were covered. I am hopeful that you will continue to fund the deficits that remain after the \$7.80 per capita in 2020-21. Funding the deficits for the branches will include an additional allocation of \$658,664 beyond the \$7.80 per capita allocation of \$3,540,085.

As you know, the Library Advisory Ad Hoc committee and zone librarians met many times over the year to develop library standards covering staffing, open hours, collections, programs, technology and facilities. Please notice that the libraries in unincorporated areas continue to be particularly below the standards created and it demonstrates that those areas have no other support from cities. It is vital that the county find a way to address these inequities in the unincorporated areas. Please recognize the time and thought librarians put into the standards by funding them at the \$641,978 requested.

The City of Santa Maria is launching a bookmobile in July 2020 and is request additional funding of \$28,174 from the county for visits to Casmalia, Sisquoc, Tanglewood, and the Santa Maria-Bonita School midway between Santa Maria and Guadalupe. These areas lie in unincorporated areas that the City vehicle cannot visit without county funding. This cost would be additional funding to the zone 3 request and is not currently included in the budget request.

Historically, libraries have been heavily used after economic downturns and high job loss which we are currently experiencing with the Covid 19 pandemic. Once libraries reopen from the pandemic, Santa Barbara County residents will depend on them more than ever as their beacon of hope for computing and wifi connections, job hunting, preparation for the next school year, and relief from social isolation. The county residents are depending on you to fully fund library deficits and keep libraries accessible and operating at full capacity particularly post pandemic.

Sincerely,

Mary Housel

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Our City Mission: "To provide the highest quality service in the most efficient, cost-effective and courteous manner possible."

Our Library Mission: "To inspire literacy and lifelong learning, embracing and strengthening our diverse community through free and equal access to information, knowledge and ideas."