



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH CITY COUNCIL MEETING – COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: NATALIE MOSER, CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2024

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR TRANSPARENCY AND DETAILED REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 2023-41 REGARDING LIBRARY MATERIAL ACCESSIBILITY

BACKGROUND

Following the enactment of Resolution 2023-41 by the City Council (4-3; Bolton, Moser, Kalmick voting No) on October 17, 2023, significant changes have been made to the accessibility of library materials based on whether the materials contain “content of sexual nature.” As I understand, the changes include the relocation of certain materials from the Children’s section and the Teen section to an “adult-only” section, and the requirement for parental consent for minors under the age of 18 to access these materials. Additionally, the reorganization has led to the removal of signage for specific library areas, notably the Teen Central area, and the introduction of new guidelines for library access based on age and card type.

RATIONALE

The implementation of Resolution 2023-41 has raised concerns among community members regarding access to library materials and the criteria used for restricting such access. Providing clear, transparent information and engaging with the community on these changes is essential to uphold the public's trust and ensure that the library remains a welcoming, inclusive space for all users.

REQUEST:

I request the city staff to prepare and present a comprehensive report on the following aspects related to the implementation of Resolution 2023-41:

1. Criteria for Material Assessment and Relocation:

A detailed explanation of the specific criteria used to determine whether a book or material contains "content of sexual nature" as defined by Resolution 2023-41. This should include examples of content that led to the relocation of materials to the adult section.

2. List of Relocated Materials:

A transparent, accessible, and readily available list of all books and materials that have been moved to comply with the resolution. The list should detail the specific portion(s) of a book or material that triggered each relocation (e.g. page #), which of the above criteria applied, the date when each reshelving occurred, and the quantity of a book or material that was reshelved.

3. Newly Acquired Materials:

A description of how books and materials coming into the library’s collection will be assessed, where the books and materials will reside while awaiting assessment, and where such books and materials will be located to comply with Resolution 2023-41.



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4. **Library Access Changes:**

Clarification on the physical changes made to library areas, particularly regarding access for teens and young adults. This should include an explanation of the enforcement mechanisms for the new access rules based on age, card type, and guardian presence.

5. **Community Engagement and Feedback Process:**

Description of the process for community members to provide feedback or contest the relocation of specific materials, including the steps for completing a Material Evaluation Form and the review process.

6. **Digital Assets**

There has been almost no discussion of how this process works with regard to digital assets the library offers our residents. Provide a discussion of how new “Youth” cards will be able to access the resources provided online.

7. **Clarification on Youth Re-carding Process:**

In light of the changes introduced by Resolution 2023-41, there is a significant need for a clear understanding of the new youth re-carding process, which will affect youth library card holders and their parents/guardians.

This section of the report should cover:

a. **Re-carding Procedure:**

A detailed overview of the process for transitioning current youth library card holders to the new card system, including any steps that need to be completed by parents or guardians. This should specify whether the process can be initiated by any parent/guardian or must be conducted by the individual who originally signed the youth up for library access.

b. **In-Person Requirements and Alternatives:**

Clarification on whether the re-carding process must be completed in person at library facilities and, if so, what alternatives exist for parents or guardians who are unable to comply with in-person requirements (for example, due to logistical constraints or health concerns).

c. **Dispute Resolution:**

Guidelines on how disagreements between parents or guardians regarding the appropriate card type for their child will be resolved by library staff. This includes scenarios where parents may have differing views on the accessibility of certain materials for their children.

d. **Impact on Library Resources and Services:**

An assessment of how the re-carding process and the associated changes in library access will impact library resources and services. This should consider both the logistical aspects of implementing the re-carding process and the broader implications for library services available to youth in the community.



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TIMING

This report is requested to be prepared and presented at the next available City Council meeting. In the interim, staff is also asked to make (1) the criteria for assessment and re-location; and (2) the list of relocated books and materials available to the public as soon as possible (available at each library location and via the library website) to ensure ongoing transparency and community engagement.

Environmental Status:

This action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

Strategic Plan Goal:

Non Applicable - Administrative Item