

BEFORE THE BOARD OF ETHICS
FOR THE CITY OF TACOMA

In re: the Matter of the Complaint Against
Tacoma Public Library

Board of Ethics Complaint No. 2020-003

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND
ORDER OF DISMISSAL OF
BOARD OF ETHICS COMPLAINT
NO. 2020-003

I. JURISDICTION AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

- 1.1. On October 13, 2020, an email was sent to City of Tacoma Councilmembers Beale, Ushka, Hunter, and McCarthy by Richard Garner with the subject line "Outrageous Political Email from Tacoma Public Library – Ethics" (attached hereto as Exhibit A).
- 1.2. The email was processed as a complaint against the Tacoma Public Library Board of Trustees under the Code of Ethics, referred to the Board of Ethics ("Board") and was assigned as Board of Ethics Complaint No. 2020-003.
- 1.3. The Board considered Complaint 2020-003 from October 19, 2020 to October 29, 2020 after Exhibits A and B were forwarded by Deputy City Attorney Charles Lee to each individual board member.

II. FINDINGS OF FACT

- 2.1. The Board makes the following findings of facts:
 - 2.1.1. Exhibit A was processed as an ethics complaint but did not actually make reference to Tacoma Municipal Code (“TMC”) 1.46 (“Code of Ethics”) or reference specific types of prohibited conduct under TMC 1.46.030. It also did not specify who the complaint was lodged against (i.e. who was responsible for the content and transmission of the email or webpage).
 - 2.1.2. Exhibit A includes an email that was allegedly sent to Tacoma Public Library members which indicated that the library’s budget may be reduced which could lead to the elimination of 22 library staff members specifying this would include three library managers and 18 public services staff. The email then asks the reader to join its “Tacoma Needs Strong Libraries” campaign providing a link to a webpage where a portion of it is captured in Exhibit B. The email and webpage provide recommended action items such as contacting Tacoma City Council, attending events to make public comment, and using the City’s outreach resources to provide feedback. The email concludes with “TPL is honored to serve our Tacoma community and we thank you for your ongoing advocacy and support. Please stay tuned for more ways that you can help keep your libraries strong.”

III. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 3.1 Complaint No. 2020-003 (Exhibits A and B) do not articulate or allege facts sufficient to constitute “prohibited conduct” as listed under TMC 1.46.030 and therefore establish a violation of the Code of Ethics.
- 3.2 Therefore, Complaint No. 2020-002 should be dismissed pursuant to TMC 1.46.045.F.2.a.i.

IV. ORDER

Based on the foregoing, Complaint No. 2020-003 is hereby DISMISSED.

DATED this 2nd day of November, 2020

City of Tacoma Board of Ethics

By: 
Katie Baird, Chair

cc: Tacoma Public Library
City Attorney

Hours & Location Help

Hours & Locations

Find by address or ZIP code

See all locations

Help

Search FAQs

Get a Library Card

Contact Us

Computers & WiFi

Suggest for Purchase

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

More FAQs

Log In / My TPL

My Library Dashboard

My Borrowing

Checked Out

On Hold

Fees

My Collections

For Later Shelf

Completed Shelf

In Progress Shelf

Lists

My Profile

My Settings

tacoma public library

Start here. Go anywhere.

Search the

Catalog

Catalog

Website

FAQs

Events

by

Keyword

[↑ Back to Top](#)

Keyword
Title
Author
Series
Subject
Tag
List
User



Advanced Search

Search

Catalog
Website
FAQs
Events

by

Keyword
Title
Author
Series
Subject
Tag
List
User



Advanced Search

Catalog



Visit [TPL Now](#) for current services updates, book drop and phone hours, TPL To Go info, and more.

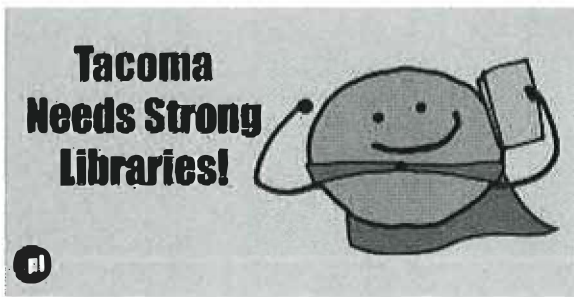


News

Tacoma Needs Strong Libraries!

October 13, 2020

On Tuesday, Oct.
6, 2020,
Tacoma's City



Manager presented the City of Tacoma's 2021-22 budget to Tacoma's City Council, with adjustments made due to the \$67 million deficit caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Tacoma Public Library's Proposed Budget has been reduced by \$2.2M, leading to potential reductions in programs and services and the elimination of 22 library staff members, including three library managers and 18 public services staff.

In response, Tacoma Public Library has launched the Tacoma Needs Strong Libraries campaign, and we need your help.

Please advocate for Tacoma Public Library:

- Contact Tacoma City Council and let them know Tacoma needs strong libraries
- Attend public input sessions:
 - City of Tacoma Community Town Hall on Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 6 p.m. via Zoom
 - City of Tacoma Public Hearing, Tuesday, Oct. 27 at 5:15 p.m.
 - City of Tacoma Public Hearing, Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 5:15 p.m.
- Provide feedback on the City of Tacoma budget with the Balancing Act Budget Tool
- Make a donation in support of at-risk library programs and services
- Share the Tacoma Needs Strong Libraries campaign with your networks!

Take action today! The City Manager's budget is currently being reviewed by the City Council and is scheduled for adoption at their Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2020 meeting.



2020 (4)

Adults (18)

Books (6)

Tacoma (17)



Previous



Services

- Get a Library Card
- Suggest for Purchase
- Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Form
- Computers & Wifi
- Mobile Apps
- TPS Pathway
- Partnership
- Northwest Room
- Digital Media Labs

Community

- Summer Reading Club
- Extreme Reader Challenge
- Tacoma Reads
- Book Clubs
- Museum Passes
- Request a Visit
- Handforth Virtual Gallery
- Meeting Rooms
- City of Tacoma
- Tacoma Public Schools

About the Library

- Hours & Locations
- Board of Trustees
- Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Plan
- Anti-Racism Statement
- Employment
- Newsletters
- Press Releases

Get Help

- Homework Center
- Ask a Librarian
- Contact Us
- FAQs

Support the Library

- Donate
- Volunteer

Contact Us

Tacoma Public Library
 1102 Tacoma Ave. South
 Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 292-2001

Website Feedback



[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Accessibility Statement](#) © 2020 Tacoma Public Library

Powered by BiblioCommons.

BiblioWeb: app01 Version 3.24.1 Last updated 2020/10/16 09:00

2020-003 Ex A

From: RICHARD GARNER <rgardner02@comcast.net>

Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 10:31 PM

To: Beale, Chris <chris.beale@cityoftacoma.org>; Ushka, Catherine <cushka@cityoftacoma.org>; Hunter, Lillian <lillian.hunter@cityoftacoma.org>; McCarthy, Conor <Conor.McCarthy@cityoftacoma.org>

Subject: Outrageous Political Email From Tacoma Public Library - Ethics

Sorry, I'm on a Tacoma Commission (Transportation) and this flunks the ethics test by the training I've had. I think this was sent to everyone with a library card.

Are city departments allowed to beg for funds (in a political sense)?

Dear Tacoma Public Library community,

On Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2020, Tacoma's City

Manager presented the City of Tacoma's 2021-22 budget to Tacoma's City Council, with adjustments made due to the \$67 million deficit caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Tacoma Public Library's proposed budget has been reduced by \$2.2M, leading to potential reductions in programs and services and the elimination of 22 library staff members, including three library managers and 18 public services staff.

In response, Tacoma Public Library has launched the Tacoma Needs Strong Libraries campaign, and we need your help!

Here are some ways you can advocate to keep Tacoma Public Library strong:

- **Contact Tacoma City Council, and let them know Tacoma needs strong libraries!**
 - **Attend public input sessions and speak up for the library:**
-
-

-
-
- City of Tacoma Community Town Hall on Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 6 p.m. via Zoom
 - City of Tacoma Public Hearing, Tuesday, Oct. 27 at 5:15 p.m.
 - City of Tacoma Public Hearing, Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 5:15 p.m.
 - Provide feedback on the City of Tacoma budget with the Balancing Act Budget Tool
 - Make a donation in support of at-risk library programs and service
 - Share the Tacoma Needs Strong Libraries campaign with your networks!

Take action today!

The City Manager's budget is currently being reviewed by the City Council and is scheduled for adoption at their November 17, 2020 meeting.

TPL is honored to serve our Tacoma community and we thank you for your ongoing advocacy and support. Please stay tuned for more ways that you can help keep your libraries strong.

Tacoma Public Library
1102 Tacoma Avenue South
Tacoma, Washington 98402
(253) 292-2001
www.tacomalibrary.org
