

06-18-2024

Dear Mayor Rich and Honorable City Councilmembers,

In the interest of time, I hereby submit my "public comments" for tonight's meeting.

Thank you for taking time this evening to review the Library Ad Hoc Committee's Findings & Recommendations. ("Report")

I wish to thank all the members of our community who served on the Ad Hoc Library Committee this past year for a job well done.

The Committee's Report provides detail and, for the more ambitious among you, references to more information. Therefore, I do not see a need for repeating its substance here.

Of value are your questions.

I believe the mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities

I also believe that community is central to librarianship; a library does not exist without the community

In the City's future, the Ad Hoc Committee envisioned a Community Service Hub, a reimagined civic commons, anchored by a new civic building housing the library and other vital civic activities and programs. A facility which is managed responsibly to maintain financial, social, and environmental sustainability for the well-being of our community.

Some have said that the Ad Hoc's goal is ambitious.

The Committee's focus is on our community's strengths, on positive imagery and diction, and on uplifting and optimistic narratives. We firmly believe that through this project Sebastopol can rally itself to previously unattainable heights of greatness and community well-being.

Financially, local loyalty leads to local benefit and local support every 100 dollars invested, \$73-\$79 of local investment (v. \$43 of outside investment) stays in the local economy.

I ask for your authorization for the Ad Hoc Committee to move into the "feasibility" phase where the voices of our community members will be sought; community assets and resources identified; partnerships formed; and, the feasibility of our project tested.

Under Vice-Mayor Zollman's leadership the Ad Hoc Committee has conducted its business effectively and frugally. I don't see this changing in the future.

I will be available to receive your questions during this evening's meeting or by email at [fengbarth@sonomalibrary.org](mailto:fengbarth@sonomalibrary.org)

Yours sincerely,

Fred Engbarth  
SCL Commissioner appointed by the City of Sebastopol