

6-29-20

Good afternoon. I am here to address the board during public comments because I was instructed that this is the only time I am allowed to speak about something that is concerning me.

I have served the Blanco Library for over 11 years, working hand in hand with this board in how to best serve the community. I have brought in over \$100,000 through grants. I have participated in multiple fundraising efforts that brought in another \$100,000. I worked to shepherd the library through its expansion, working closely with committees and the contractors. I assisted in hiring new staff members. I designed new policies that this board approved and are now in place. After all of this, now it seems my judgement is being called into question.

I take my responsibility to the Library, my staff, our patrons, and the greater Blanco community very seriously. That responsibility includes providing services to our patrons as well as the community, but also keeping them safe.

Through this pandemic I continue to find ways to provide services. While self-isolating, I expanded our virtual services and communications, answering phones six days a week. I am continuing to attend webinars and online meetings to keep up to date in the latest trends. I worked with staff members to ensure we meet the physical needs of our patrons and the community.

When we planned the physical reopening of the library, Covid-19 infected numbers in Blanco and statewide had stabilized, making it reasonable to open our doors on a restricted basis. At this time there has been a large surge of new cases in surrounding areas and Blanco. Even with our state mandated safety measures in place, health officials and the governor are recommending that anyone who can work from home, should do so.

I am not recommending that we should reshutter, but I am recommending we continue efforts to reduce the potential exposure of our staff and patrons. There are tasks that must be done in the library, but some tasks can be worked on off site. At this time, the staff schedule staggers hours inside the building to reduce physical proximity to each other and allows each of us to complete our duties. There is no reason, and it is irresponsible, to require the staff to be in the building for all of their scheduled hours.

This has been my stand for the last three and a half months and I am concerned that it is disregarded. I have been called an alarmist for wanting to protect myself, my staff, and my community. In general the board and I have worked well to make the library successful, but lately it feels like there are some unvoiced concerns or a misunderstanding that has not been discussed with me even though I am available to address any questions you may have. The overriding worry I keep hearing from the board is that the library may look abandoned if we do not have someone inside the building six days a week.

I love my library, this community, and only want the very best for it. I want us to work well together. I urge the board to discuss any issues or questions you have with me directly.

Thank you,
Crystal