

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:03 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: Books not boats

From: Daniel Heynemann <sgt_murtaugh@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 6:15 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Books not boats

Jennifer,

I am writing you about the cutting of the youth librarian position. I think this is a huge mistake. Our library is an essential entity that provides resources for learning, entertainment, and community events.

The youth librarian has a responsibility for providing resources and events that specifically target children. They generate excitement and spread information about the library to the youth in our communities.

The sting of cutting this position is made worse by our choices about what to do with taxpayer money. Decisions like buying a boat to ferry people to Sand Island seems even sillier when you realize we won't have a youth librarian.

Come to St Helens where we don't invest in our youth, but we invest in tourism.

Sincerely,
Daniel Heynemann
Resident of St Helens

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Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:05 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: Youth librarian position

From: Amanda Heynemann <amandanoleen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 6:48 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth librarian position

Hello Ms. Johnson,

I am writing to let you know that I strongly opposed to the budget committee getting rid of the youth librarian position. A youth librarian is so important to our community, they work to provide education, fun and resources for the parents and children for St. Helens. As a library board member, I saw how hard Gretchen worked to create the wonderful program that we have. It will fall to the other members of the library staff to continue a meaningful youth program. Our current library staff is incredibly dedicated to our library, but they have their hands full. It is unfair to the current staff to take on an entire job position without additional pay.

Please fund the youth librarian position. It is a needed job in our community.

Regards,
Amanda Heynemann
St. Helens Public Library Board Member

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:06 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Comments To The Budget Committee.

-----Original Message-----

From: rdunn008@gmail.com <rdunn008@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 7:44 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Comments To The Budget Committee.

I do think it is a mistake to not pursue hiring a replacement for our recently departed Youth Librarian. Gretchen did a lot for kids and teens of our county with her programs and planning.

Sent from my iPhone

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:06 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: library position

From: Jessica Barnes <threebutterflywishes@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 9:06 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] library position

Hello,

I am messaging in about the youth librarian position.

As a COVID homeschooler and as one who has intentions to continue homeschooling I have utilized the library more than I have in the past. There is a great need for our library to keep its youth librarian. I have noticed an influx in homeschooling families and we need the knowledge, energy and ideas of a youth librarian who's job it is to engage the community of children in ways of library story-time, community outreach: at the schools, rec center and free-lunch program.

With the influx of homeschoolers we need someone who can devote time to finding additional resources to add to our library. Curriculum and reading programs that can be checked out. The children and young adult's sections have flourished since the last youth librarian was hired. I can feel a cultural difference in them from when I was a youth checking books out at the St. Helens library and it is a difference of energy that I want to keep and have for my own children. The devotion in the children/young adult sections cannot stop here. We cannot let this position dissolve.

If it is money that is needed - I believe the budget committee has underestimated the power of our community coming together to keep this position. I do not have a proposal as of now - but I know that people would come together to discuss a plan and make it happen if they were given the chance.

thank you,
Jessica Barnes

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:07 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] St. Helens Youth Librarian

From: Samantha Murdoch <samanthaagmurdoch@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 9:11 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] St. Helens Youth Librarian

Dear J. Johnson,

I am writing to please implore St. Helen's to not remove the youth librarian position at the library. I have a four year old daughter and we are regulars at the library and we will both be devastated if we lose our librarian. It also sounds like if we lose our youth librarian that we will lose grants to run the library and it may shut down completely.

This would be utterly heartbreaking for a town like our with so many children and young people.

Please, please do not let this happen.

Thank you,
Samantha Murdoch

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:07 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External]

From: Rachel Garland <rachelmefford25@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 9:18 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External]

To whom it may concern:

We need a children's librarian. That position helps our children in so many ways. My oldest was resistant to reading and the last one was able to suggest a book and that has led to live a reading. Other children deserve to gain that same love. Having programs for our children helps for families where money is tight and we can't always afford other options for entertaining them.

Rachel Garland

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:08 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: Youth Librarian

From: John and Shanna Wallace <jnswallace@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 9:38 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth Librarian

I grew up here in St. Helens and watched the library grow to the beautiful thing that it is today. It keeps growing and expanding, and offering things for our kids to do, that are so much better than some of the things kids find themselves doing when they are bored. It offers so many programs for the kids to enjoy, and the library needs people to run those programs. If you are cutting funding from the library, how are these programs going to be feasible? How can our kids utilize them if there isn't someone there to offer the services to them? Then the kids will stop going to the library and start doing other things.

I don't know how it is justified to cut a persons position, to turn around and give other people a raise? I don't know much about that but even if it was for inflation, how do each of you justify that? You're taking a full wage from another person, to give more to the people that are working. How do you know that the person that is being let go, isn't a single parent and this is the only money coming into feed the family, or that their spouse wasn't just laid off, injured or worse?

Please don't cut funding to the library, it is a very important fixture in our lives. My children are homeschooled, online curriculum, and they love the library and participate in the summer reading program. They love going to the library and finding new books to read. This is such a great resource for them. And it is a safe place for kids to get together and share interests. It offers so much to our youth, you are affecting them far more than you are considering.

Thank you,
Shanna Wallace

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:09 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Library Budget cuts

From: Michelle wolcott <meish708@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 9:56 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Library Budget cuts

To whom it may concern,

My family lives outside of St Helens and we pay the annual fee for library membership. It has come to my attention that we are at risk of losing library status because of budget cuts. We rely heavily on the library throughout the year and especially during the summer to provide structure and learning for our children. Please consider keeping the youth librarian position so we can keep our kids engaged in this essential community resource.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michelle Wolcott

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:31 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Comments to the Budget Committee

From: Jessica Raynor Sturdivant <jessica.montessori@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 10:00 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Comments to the Budget Committee

Accountant-Committee Secretary, Jennifer Johnson and St. Helens Budget Committee:

I represent our community as a parent of two young children, a Montessori teacher, and a St. Helens Library Board member.

Over the years, my children have benefitted from the many offerings of the St. Helens Public Library. During the days of being stuck at home in 2020, we looked forward to Youth Librarian Gretchen Kolderup's videos on Facebook. We enjoyed the Take-and-Make program, rushing to pick up the kits on a weekly basis. My son loved to buzz through McCormick Park, reading all of the storybook placards (his favorite was *Blueberries for Sal*). The Summer and Winter Reading Programs have been a highlight for my children! Gretchen and the other St. Helens Library staff have always genuinely celebrated their accomplishments when they came in to receive their prizes for meeting their reading goals.

When the library was able to restart the Make It! program on the porch, Gretchen was there to welcome my apprehensive children, who were shy after so much time at home. We participated in the Rocket Science Crash Course, where my children (ages 6 and 9) got to play with math and coding, identified navigation constellations, and experimented with rocket designs. Gretchen was also there to encourage my children's love of reading, and supported them in finding books that capture their interest. It was no surprise that Gretchen was nominated as 2020 Employee of the Year for the City of St. Helens.

We were absolutely stunned to learn that the St. Helens Budget Committee seeks to eliminate the Youth Librarian position. We have been eager to meet the new Youth Librarian, so that my children can begin to build a strong, nurturing relationship with this individual, just as they had forged with Gretchen.

As an educator, I see great value in the position of Youth Librarian at our St. Helens Library. This role provides incredible support to families and teachers, who appreciate the promotion of literacy from another trusted adult in the children's community. The Youth Librarian helps guide adults towards new books to offer their children, both at home and in the classroom. For those who homeschool their children, the Youth Librarian is a role model and mentor for children and caregivers alike. Many children in our community cannot afford the activities that the Youth Librarian comes up with and puts together for the community. Low income families appreciate the library as a safe and inviting place to bring their children after school, and in the summer months. The Youth Librarian offers guidance to families who are less familiar with children's literature and activities.

I implore you to reconsider. Take the time to meet with the new Library Director. Listen to the voices of the parents, caregivers, educators, and other community members. Our Youth Librarian has put the St. Helens Public Library on the map. To take away this position would be devastating to the children, parents, caregivers, and educators in our community.

Sincerely,

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:33 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Youth Librarian

From: storyj <storyj@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 10:15 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth Librarian

To the City of St Helens,

Please make your budget cuts somewhere else. The Youth Librarian position is so important to our community, our children need this safe haven on so many levels. Many parents cannot afford extracurricular activities for their children and our library is a safe place where the children can come and learn to love books, discover the joy of reading and so much more.

Please consider what this loss will do to our community and the status of the library itself.

Thank you,

Joanna Story

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S9+, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:33 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Budget meeting- youth librarian comments

From: Kelsey Bartlett <kelseybartlett4789@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 10:29 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Budget meeting- youth librarian comments

Dear Jennifer Johnson and the budget committee,

I am writing the email to urge the budget committee to reconsider cutting the budget for the youth librarian. As a long time St. Helens resident, it is very important to myself and my family that the library be fully funded and fully operational. The library is a vital and important community space that must be preserved at all costs. It is one of the only public spaces that still exists without the expectation of spending money to be present. Knowing that Columbia County is a low income community, it is even more important to preserve this space for it's community members. Not only does the library offers free access to books, it also offers a safe space for all. This includes the many free programs for the youth in our community. As a parent to an elementary school aged child, these programs are vital to continue to be offered and available. These youth programs are vital to our most vulnerable populations living at or below the poverty line. These may be the only extracurricular activities that some children have access to participate in because they are free. We need to preserve these youth programs. If anything, we should be adding to the library budget and expanding these incredibly important resources. Our community needs to continue to provide access to the library and all that it offers. By cutting the budget for the youth librarian, our community will lose the ability to offer accessible and affordable programming and resources for the most vulnerable populations. Our children deserve to be able to utilize the library to it's fullest extent. I urge you to reconsider cutting the youth librarian budget and to fully fund our library.

Sincerely,
Kelsey Bartlett

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:33 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: Youth Librarian Position

From: Cherish Thiessen <cherishwilcox@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 10:30 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth Librarian Position

Dear Budget Committee,

Please do not eliminate the youth Librarian Position. When I had a baby and looked for ways to get out of the house to free, baby friendly activities in our community, the library story times were one of only two things I found. Please keep the youth Librarian job and continue the programs the youth Librarian offers. Our students need incentives and encouragement to read over the summer, which the youth Librarian offers.

Sincerely,
Cherish Thiessen

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Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:34 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Youth Library Program

-----Original Message-----

From: raquel.langager11@gmail.com <raquel.langager11@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2022 10:30 PM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth Library Program

Hello,
I will be unable to attend the meeting tomorrow, but I felt compelled to sent this email to express my distress at the idea of canceling the youth program at our library. With the growing population of St. Helens, many who will be children and teens, a youth section will be even more crucial to the development and learning of the youth of St. Helens. No library could be called such without a section dedicated to the youth who will replace their parents as the next citizens and voters of their home. To take this resource away from so many children and youth would be unexeptable.

Raquel Langager

Sent from my iPhone

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:35 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Budget Committee Meeting, Re: Library budget,5-12-22

From: Keirney Barham <keirney7@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 12:12 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Budget Committee Meeting, Re: Library budget,5-12-22

Dear Accountant-Committee Secretary, Jennifer Johnson,

I am writing to you with serious concerns about the proposed cuts to the library budget. The library is one of our most relied on resources, serving everyone, but especially lower income community memeber. Cutting the budget is not only detrimental to the program, but to the whole community.

Cutting the children's librarian position creates a void in our community's education and care of our youngest and most vulnerable members. In addition, cutting the children's programing means our library will no longer qualify as a library. That means they will lose any grants that are tied to being a library. In effect, cutting this position is the first step in losing our library. It would be a disgrace and a disservice to the community. I am asking the committee to make a better and more equitable decision.

-Sincerely,

Keirney Glenn-Barham

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:36 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Budget Committee Meeting, Re: Library budget, 5-12-22

From: Linda Glenn-Barham <lindaglennbarham@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 12:29 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Budget Committee Meeting, Re: Library budget, 5-12-22

Dear Accountant-Committee Secretary, Jennifer Johnson,

I'm writing to let you know of my concerns regarding the proposed library budget cuts. I believe that by cutting their budget, you will cause irreparable harm to our community. I am especially concerned that the harm caused to people with lower incomes has not been thoughtfully considered.

I also understand that by cutting the children's programs, our library then becomes ineligible for grant monies they now receive. And that they will no longer be qualified as an actual library. This is unexceptable in every way.

It is the committee's responsibility to make a decision that better benefits our community. Especially in light of there being such a brouhaha about making our town such a wonderful community in which to live.

I would appreciate the committee taking a moment to carefully consider my very serious concerns in this matter.

-Sincerely,

Linda A. Glenn-Barham

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:36 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Youth programs

-----Original Message-----

From: momoflitlemonsters@gmail.com <momoflitlemonsters@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 6:23 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth programs

Dear Jennifer Johnson and the budget committee,

I am writing the email to urge the budget committee to reconsider cutting the budget for the youth librarian. As a long time St. Helens resident, it is very important to myself and my family that the library be fully funded and fully operational. The library is a vital and important community space that must be preserved at all costs. It is one of the only public spaces that still exists without the expectation of spending money to be present. Knowing that Columbia County is a low income community, it is even more important to preserve this space for it's community members. Not only does the library offers free access to books, it also offers a safe space for all. This includes the many free programs for the youth in our community. As a parent to an elementary school aged child, these programs are vital to continue to be offered and available. These youth programs are vital to our most vulnerable populations living at or below the poverty line. These may be the only extracurricular activities that some children have access to participate in because they are free. We need to preserve these youth programs. If anything, we should be adding to the library budget and expanding these incredibly important resources. Our community needs to continue to provide access to the library and all that it offers. By cutting the budget for the youth librarian, our community will lose the ability to offer accessible and affordable programming and resources for the most vulnerable populations. Our children deserve to be able to utilize the library to it's fullest extent. I urge you to reconsider cutting the youth librarian budget and to fully fund our library.

Sincerely,
Brittani James

Sent from my iPhone

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:37 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Youth Librarian Position

-----Original Message-----

From: Cedar StOnge <cstonge2011@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 6:29 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth Librarian Position

To whom it may concern,

I am a mother of two small children in the town of St.Helens. My children and I have participated in library programs since early 2018 and treasure our time spent in the library or out with library staff. Story time, nature buddies, summer reading program, the list goes on, and I believe those are all "youth librarian" lead. The thought of dissolving the position causes me great sadness and also a little panic, what will we do this summer? Last year we were involved in a library program almost daily, and my kiddos were motivated to participate in their "take home stuff" as well as extra reading when we weren't there. Nature buddies has been highly utilized and is one of the only FREE programs I know of for local families. I believe it was a partnership between the library and Rec center and was how I found out and branched out to some of the Rec center activities. These networks are important, but our library is the root of it. There is already SO little for our youth in this community, and what I have found you either need to be low income to attend, or pay ridiculous tuition costs for camps and such. Having a space where your income doesn't limit you is so important. I can tell you without the youth librarian position and activities they organized there will be a massive hole in my family's routine as well as many friends we participated with and even met at library functions.

I hope you consider our children who don't have voices at these meetings.

Thanks!

Concerned Local Mama
Cedar St.Onge

Sent from my iPhone

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:59 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Library

From: Peggy Kreman <pkreman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:48 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Library

I am writing to state my concerns about the proposed budget cuts to the library. Why? Because you don't make money off it like you do the rec center? What about families who can't afford the rec center? The library can be a life changer for children why would you even consider that? Find a better solution!

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:59 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: St. Helens Public Library Budget

From: knight artnphotos.com <knight@artnphotos.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 7:55 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] St. Helens Public Library Budget

Budget Committee

I live in Columbia City, however, I buy a Library Card in St. Helens because of their Youth Program for my grandson. When he stays at my house, going to the library is part of our routine. He loves the St. Helens Public Library.

In addition to that, the Makers Space is one of the best things to happen for our community! Allan has been an amazing teacher. The possibilities are limitless for learning and creating. We need him in there, in the Makers Space, not working the desk at the Library because of a staff shortage.

Please do not cut the Youth Librarian position from the budget.

Thank you,

Teresa Knight

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 8:08 AM
To: Matt Brown
Cc: Kathy Payne; Lisa Scholl
Subject: FW: [External] Youth librarian

-----Original Message-----

From: Donna Holdridge <dhold32013@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 8:06 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Youth librarian

As a grandma of an elementary student I am asking that you not cut the youth librarian position. This is so very important to the kids in this community. My grandson is an avid book reader and loves to read and goes to the library all the time. Please don't take that away from him or the other children of this community.

Sent from my iPhone

Matt Brown

From: Jennifer Johnson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 8:38 AM
To: Matt Brown
Subject: FW: [External] Comments on librarian position for today's council meeting

From: andrea jurkiewicz <andigirl1975@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 8:35 AM
To: Jennifer Johnson <jjohnson@sthelensoregon.gov>
Subject: [External] Comments on librarian position for today's council meeting

I understand that it is on the City's agenda to vote on budget cuts for the library that would result in the loss of our youth librarian.

Why would the City want to take away such a wonderful resource to the residents of St Helens? This decision, unfortunately, disproportionately impacts low income earners more than anyone else. The City, by making this cut, is making it abundantly clear that they don't care about resources for low income individuals and families. For some reason, this seems to be a common occurrence for our City Council.

You may wonder why I would say that? Let's look at a very recent discussion by the City. For reasons known only to the Council, they decided to add a fee onto resident's water bills to cover the costs of the recreation center. This was not approved by those of us who live here. It was a unilateral decision by the City Council. They are now planning to do that again to build a new police station. Again, without public approval. The shamefulness of this is that these fees are added to a needed service. People can't go without water or they would die. We have so many people living paycheck to paycheck and the City thinks adding more fees is a good idea? You should all be ashamed of yourselves for considering this as a viable option especially since the events that happen at the rec center are not free or income based in any way so people could pay on a sliding scale.

Now, back to the library topic. By making this decision, you are removing a resource from the City residents that many rely on. Teaching our youth essential reading and research skills are foundations that they will carry with them throughout their lives. These skills will carry forward to school, jobs, and relationships as these young people grow up. Libraries are important community hubs. These kids' programs help parents meet other parents who are in similar circumstances. They create a support group for the parents as much as they do for the children.

These programs are a needed resource especially in small communities that don't offer much in the way of free or reduced fee activities. So, why would you take that away? You have families who may only make it out of the house for "fun" activities whose sole trip is to the library for these events. The reason is because these are free and parents and grandparents can take the kids out for a fun day without having to worry about how to pay for it. Many of these people can not afford the activities at the rec center due to the fees charged. How many of you have lived paycheck to paycheck? How many of you have worried how you would pay your rent or water bill? How many of you have wondered if you would be able to feed your kids or get them a birthday gift or Christmas gift? These are real worries within our community and taking away a life affirming resource is not the answer.

Make cuts somewhere else. Look at how money is being spent. Why was another building purchased for a recreation center? Was that truly needed? Was it needed more than the librarian you have on staff who is committed to making this community better by being dedicated to the kids who live here?

Librarians shape our future generations. The skills needed are unique to that field and require a special person to jump in and be prepared. If, for some reason, the City is cutting this position due to lack of attendance, please keep in mind we've been in a pandemic where people were told to not mingle with others and the City enforced this policy. Also, maybe ask the people what they'd like to see at their library. Because it seems like the City Council has forgotten that the library belongs to the residents of St Helens not to the Council members.

Please reconsider this cut. There are other options if you look for them.

Andrea Jurkiewicz

St Helens Resident for 27 years