

April 19, 2010

To the Honorable Mayor and Troy City Council members:

The Friends of the Troy Public Library and its membership respectfully ask the City Council to reject any budget that calls for permanent closure of the Troy Public Library in the coming budget discussions. We ask that you request alternative solutions to this economic problem, before you take an irrevocable step toward closing our treasured city library.

- The City asked the library to cut \$1 million from its budget next year, but does not allow for that reduction to produce results when a July 2011 closure date is imminent. It is unthinkable that a community asset would be shuttered without having attempted reduced hours, staffing or expenditures, in a first effort at cost containment and restructuring.
- City administration originally presented several options for reducing costs and restructuring services, but is currently only pursuing Option 1 which calls for complete closure of the public library. We urge City Council to insist additional options be presented. Council would never allow a single bidder on city projects, and this single option plan would never be allowed in other city business.
- Complete closure of the library would make re-opening cost prohibitive. It would be fiscally responsible to reduce services temporarily and run at limited speed, until such time it is feasible to return to previous levels. In addition, an empty building and depreciating assets on the city campus could render the library worthless and make it financially impossible to reopen in the future.
- There is drive and willingness on the part of the community to look at other ways to manage this economic problem without closing the library. Involved citizens and organizations such as the Friends, implore you to partner with us to seek out alternative solutions for securing financial health and viability of the library. It is time to tap the deep resources of talent in Troy and accept that there may be another way to proceed, if the council will take that bold step.
- The City of Troy has maintained a library and police force since 1963, and there is no reason that it must be a one or the other proposition today. During those 47 years, there have been up and down economic cycles that did not require closure of the library. The City must create new ways to weather this current cycle and maintain a cohesive and vibrant community without the drastic step of closing the library.
- The City Council should recognize that the defeat of the special election was a challenge to find new ways to manage operations. Therefore, we urge council to rise to that leadership challenge, fight pressures to play out old rhetoric, and do what is right and responsible now for the future of Troy.

The Friends of the Troy Public Library ask you to join us in our 51 year mission of promoting and supporting the library. Reject closure and work to find ways to secure the future of the Troy Public Library now.

Respectfully submitted by:

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