

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: Lisa Harper Wood, Director of Leisure Services
Date: June 18, 2013
Subject: Changing Hours of Operation for Richland Hills Library

City Council Action Requested:

Consider revising the Library's hours of operation on Tuesday and Thursdays from open 1:00 pm – 9:00 p.m. to open 1:00 pm – 8:00 p.m.

Background Information:

The Library has had the following hours of operation for the past twenty-five years:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday	10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday	1:00 p.m – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

With changing demographics, it is time to re-examine the Library's hours of operation to better serve the community. The Library staff has spent the last year manually tracking foot traffic. After reviewing the data, discussing Library services and coverage with the staff and patrons, the following observations have been made:

To provide improved library service, the library hours need to be reduced by two hours per week while keeping the current staffing level as it is. This will allow for:

- The integration of regularly scheduled staff meetings to plan for the execution of Library events
- Staff training on new equipment, software and databases
- Safety
- Collection management
- Better customer service
- Continuity with the other libraries in the consortium. All of the metrOPAC libraries close at 8:00 p.m. on their late nights.

Richland Hills Public Library is open only one hour less than Haltom City Public Library and two hours less than Watauga Public Library. Each of these libraries are in communities much larger than Richland Hills. According to the Texas State Library Standards, Richland Hills is only required to be open 30 hours a week. The Library is currently opened 44 hours per week. I applaud the Council for setting such high standards when it comes to providing Library service to the community. And by closing two hours a week will be a positive move for the city.

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Another consideration is safety. Library staff coverage on Tuesday and Thursday evenings are two part-time clerks. Fortunately, there have been only minor incidences where the staff has felt vulnerable. Closing the Library at 8:00 p.m. will help reduce their feeling of isolation.

There are many evenings when the staff is there from 8 – 9 p.m. with no patrons in the building. It is an inefficient use of utilities and staff to continue to keep the current hours when the need is no longer there.

Therefore it is my recommendation that the Council close the library at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Board/Citizen Input:

The Library Board agrees with this change.

Financial Considerations:

There is no additional expenditure of municipal funds associated with this item.

Staff Contact:

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