From: Brandon Salas
To: Shane McFarland
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL]- BoroPride 2023!!
Date: Thursday, November 17, 2022 11:57:23 AM

> You don't often get email from brandon.salas.88@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

Dear Mayor McFarland, just wanted to follow up on this.

Thanks for taking the time to read and respond!

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Brandon Salas** <brandon.salas.88@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Nov 8, 2022 at 11:47 PM
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL]- BoroPride 2023!!
To: Shane McFarland <smcfarland@murfreesborotn.gov>

Mayor McFarland,

I sincerely appreciate you responding to my email. While I agree with you and am proud to have someone with an open mind in office like yourself, I still struggle with the city's decision to keep the Tennessee Equality Project from hosting Pride. There are talks of videos that are mentioned below and in the news, yet the public hasn't seen these videos. Are these videos valid? Are they "deep fakes" that conservative groups could have created to cause this to happen? Are there multiple videos and accounts that show inappropriate behavior? These are questions that I have.

Lastly, I truly understand where you are coming from, but Drag is a large part of our LGBTQ community. Adults, parents, and even teenagers understand the type of shows that drag performers put on. I understand that this instance may have not been entirely appropriate for children but why punish the whole organization? Why not slap a fine for "the breach" in policy? Why not create a rule or discuss this issue to work with TEP so this doesn't happen again? There are so many avenues that could have been taken. Like you said below "I believe we can all work together and find ways to make sure everyone can be accommodated."

The city manager's action last Thursday does not reflect this statement.

I urge you to reconsider, again.

Thanks again for your response and time.

Brandon

On Tue, Nov 8, 2022 at 5:02 PM Shane McFarland <smcfarland@murfreesborotn.gov> wrote:

> Brandon,
>
> Thank you for your email. I appreciate your comments.

I have been involved in elected office for almost 20 years. I have tried my absolute best to represent everyone regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual preference, or any other factors. The City's responsibility is to deliver services to our residents and I have tried to do my level best to stay out of all the political chaos that surrounds our world and make sure that every person in Murfreesboro feels welcome, respected and represented.

I wanted to give you that context in regards to BoroPride. I was on record responding to constituents who didn't want the festival to occur that it was not appropriate to deny use of our Parks and Recreation facilities if a group meets the requirements as set forth by the City. It is not the City of Murfreesboro's obligation to determine who can and can't use those facilities based upon whether we agree with their mission, political stance, views or other thoughts. I emailed and told several people that BoroPride had a right to use those spaces as long as they upheld the rules just like everyone else.

Here's where I have an issue. I was sent the videos of the "drag" show at the end of the festival. The videos I saw were not representative of what the event application portrayed or what was billed as a "family friendly" event. This has nothing to do with whether I agree or disagree with the festival, but can we not all agree that having a "show" like this is not appropriate for a Parks and Recreation venue where children are present? For example, we wouldn't allow a college fraternity to have a bikini contest at a family park. The intended use of a parks and recreation venue is not for someone to be performing "mock" sexual acts on stage with children present. I think that is just common sense and something if you asked the majority of the community, they would agree.

I am going to continue to represent ALL residents in Murfreesboro….not just the ones I agree with. I do think we all can make these decisions together and use common sense about what is appropriate and reasonable for use of our parks and recreation facilities.

I believe we can all work together and find ways to make sure everyone can be accommodated.

Thank you,

Shane McFarland

From: Brandon Salas <brandon.salas.88@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 8, 2022 9:32 AM
To: Shane McFarland <smcfarland@murfreesborotn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]- BoroPride 2023!!

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Mayor McFarland, my name is Brandon Salas and I live in Hermitage, TN. I am emailing to urge you to rescind the action of the city manager and allow BoroPride to use city facilities for the annual Pride celebration in 2023. This event means so much to thousands of people of all ages in the area who benefit from the accepting space it creates. It reduces fear, shame, and stigma while building up the community.

As the leader of the LGBTQ+ Alliance Employee Resource Network at Gresham Smith, I know for a fact that many of our employees live in the Murfreesboro area and that these actions will directly affect our employee's way of life. We are the largest Architecture and Engineering firm in Tennesee and fully support the LGBTQ+ community. We hope you will do the same. Thank you for considering my views and allowing us to gather safely!

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Brandon Salas

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