From: Oscar Hanson
To: Shane McFarland
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL]- Boro Pride
Date: Thursday, November 3, 2022 7:51:30 PM

> You don't often get email from oscarh1048@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

Thank you for responding to my email, Mr. Mayor.

I do have a problem with what you mentioned about the drag show. Sure, drag shows can be sexual, I won't say you're wrong, but the way you handled it is. Not all drag shows are sexual.

What I do not seem to understand is why you would not allow the whole event to continue, when you always could just ban the drag show, or set stipulations for dress code and gestures, and let everything else continue as normal. I am pretty sure as Mayor of the city, you have the power to control what goes on in your own city. The city approves the permits, does it not? Which I assume that also goes through you, too. So, I believe you should be able to do what I said previously.

I do not feel that beginning statement you mention about representing "everyone regardless of sexual orientation" is true. Your action to not support letting pride submit a permit ever again, yet allowing a white supremacist group to "legally rally wether the permit is approved or not,"(https://www.google.com/amp/s/fox17.com/amp/news/local/murfreesboro-city-leaders-say-white-nationalist-rally-is-allowed-regardless-of-permit) because the 1st amendment states the freedom of assembly is pretty telling of your ideas of the LGBTQ+ community, Mr. Mayor. The city in 2017, which included you, allowed them to congregate due to the 1st amendment; their ideas are racist and fueled with hate, pride is neither. Pride is a way for the LGBTQ+ community to have a safe way of expressing themselves and meeting like-minded people, and you've taken it away due to one incident involving a drag show. It's completely avoidable.

Also, you did mention in the last statement: "I believe we can all work together and find ways to be sure everyone can be accommodated," yet I believe that statement is false too. If you believed that statement, I bet there would have been efforts to make sure something like that does not happen again, and the event can continue. Yet, the city will not approve permits for it. You better be sure you mean the words you say; I do not think you do. I would not be speaking to you if that were the case.

I hope my words may persuade you to make a decision once again.

On Thu, Nov 3, 2022 at 6:19 PM Shane McFarland <smcfarland@murfreesborotn.gov> wrote:

> Oscar:
>
> 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
Mayor City of Murfreesboro

From: Oscar Hanson <oscarh1048@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 1:18 PM
To: Shane McFarland <smcfarland@murfreesborotn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]- Boro Pride

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Hello Mayor Shane McFarland, I heard about the decision that was made recently to ban the Boro Pride event indefinitely for "conduct and speech of an inherently sexual nature," despite no evidence being shown.

I am appalled at this gross misuse of power to target an already marginalized and underrepresented group such as the LGBTQ+ community. Pride events are absolutely essential to our community to allow people to express themselves and their identity in a safe, controlled environment.

As a genderqueer, pansexual person, I feel my 1st amendment rights granted to me by The Constitution are being infringed upon. No matter if you agree or disagree with a group's message, I believe any group, as long as they comply with both the city and the 1st amendment, should be granted access to congregate. You guys approved a "White Lives Matter" group's permit to freely express themselves back on October 28th, 2017, so why not the LGBTQ+ community?

According to the Trevor Project, 45% of LGBTQ+ people have contemplated committing suicide (The Trevor Project on Instagram: "Our 2022 National Survey shines a light on the harms of discrimination and anti-trans bills while emphasizing the benefits of affirming…"). Now why do you think that is?

The existence of gay, bisexual, lesbian, and other LGBTQ peoples is not inherently sexual and it is not fair for any government to limit our right to assembly and speech. I hope you all will reconsider the choices you made as they have the potential to severely and negatively impact these vulnerable populations. Those in positions of political power should not let their religious morality come into play when making judgments that affect their community. You can choose to be religious, being LGBTQ+ is not.

As being from Murfreesboro my whole life, I am appalled that my city is not making me feel like I belong.

Thank you for reading. I hope you take my words into consideration.