To: Chris Gray
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]- Murfreesboro Pride
Date: Thursday, November 3, 2022 8:50:28 AM

Chris,

Thank you for the email and 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. 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 we have the 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 our community finds acceptable and reasonable.

Thanks again for your email. I appreciate it more than you know.

Shane

From: Chris Gray <wcgray11@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 2, 2022 6:46 PM
To: Shane McFarland <smcfarland@murfreesborotn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]- Murfreesboro Pride

> You don't often get email from wcgray11@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

Hello

I worked in your lovely city for over 6 years and it felt like home. Always ever growing and ever evolving. The amount of support felt there was absolutely heart warming. But now, I feel absolutely heart broken. Taking away Murfreesboro Pride is silencing individuals in your community who already feel ostracized, unloved, unwanted. You're sending a message to our youth that if they are different, they don't belong here. You're sending a message to all students at MTSU (one of the largest state schools might I add) that the city they have come to receive their education could care less about their freedom of speech. Some of those students may have stayed and made Murfreesboro their home. But now, some may be questioning that. And I cannot blame them. "An explicitly sexual nature" being the reason…I guarantee there has been worse said around the town. If it's an issue bring it to the Murfreesboro Pride board to help render or figure out a solution. Shutting this event down is the wrong message to be sending to your community. To your youth. To your families. Just reconsider that. Especially working in mental health, the suicide death rates in the LGBT+ community are at an all time high. The courts allow same sex marriage, the least the council could do is allow a 1-2 day event to celebrate individuals. You never know, saying yes may actually be saving a life.

Sincerely,

Chris