



**JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE (JIC)  
FY23-2024 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION 20230426-004  
AFFORDABILITY PRIORITY – BLACK LITERATURE INVESTMENT AT APL**

Date: April 26, 2023

Subject: Joint Endorsement of the African American Resource Advisory Commission's  
FY23-24 Budget Recommendation 20230321-007: Black Literature Investment  
for the Austin Public Library

Motioned by: Commissioner Amy Temperley      Seconded By: Commissioner Serita Fontanesi

AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE ADISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20230321-007

JOINTLY ENDORSED RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL ON FY23-2024 BUDGET

**WHEREAS**, Austin the most livable city in the nation for all while building and sustaining a culture of equity across the city; and

**WHEREAS**, this requires tackling tough issues such as institutional racism and implicit bias;

**WHEREAS**, Austin values inclusiveness and embraces diversity; and

**WHEREAS**, African-Americans comprise 7% of Austin's population due increased gentrification and lack of resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the city of Austin recognizes the structural and historical and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans and its residents are an intricate community that holds deep relevance to Austin's history and continued diversity; and

**WHEREAS**; African Americans in Austin want to stay and plan their lives where they want to grow and have good experiences, where their children can have a good education, good jobs, arts and music they are attracted to; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Public schools and Public Libraries are ingrained in our communities and nurture the minds of future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, there are current efforts to ban books of cultural value and significance that reflect African American history and cultural heritage from our public schools; and

**WHEREAS**, an erasure of African-American literature in Austin Public schools would constitute another inequitable action that would not serve in best interest of the small percentage of African-Americans who reside within Austin city limits; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Public Libraries and Austin Public Schools work hand in hand to educate and inspire ALL through the joy of reading; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Public Libraries are a vital asset to African American communities for summer reading programs and access to cultural specific literature and media; and

**WHEREAS**, African American literature should be given particular attention in Austin Public Libraries by increasing its catalog selection; and

**WHEREAS**, All Austinites will benefit from the increased availability of “banned” and increased African Literature in Austin Public Libraries; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Public Libraries serve as an extension of Austin Public Schools for African-American youth; and

**WHEREAS**, an investment in culturally significant African American literature will be welcomed by the Austin Public library system and reiterate Austin's inclusiveness, its embrace of diversity by tackling tough issues such as institutional racism and implicit bias; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin rejects prejudice and bigotry based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and nation of origin, including the idea that anyone is better than or more deserving of privileges than another based on the above characteristics; and

**WHEREAS**, the Austin Public Library provides knowledge, technology and inspiration to the Austin community. The library is a hub of books and education, a meeting place of minds and an incubator of ideas.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, The City of Austin should increase the Austin Public Library’s budget above the zero-base budget to accommodate a significant investment in African American Literature into the Austin Public Library’s catalog; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, The African American Resource Advisory Council unanimously voted at its special called meeting, in March, supports a budget recommendation for an increase above the zero base budget for the Austin Public Library in the City’s FY2024 budget cycle.

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ROLL CALL VOTE: 8 – 0

For: African American Resource Advisory Commission: Serita Fontanesi  
Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: Vincent Cobalis  
Commission for Women: Rebecca Austen  
Commission on Aging: Amy Temperley  
Early Childhood Council: Leonor Vargas  
Hispanic/Latino Quality-of-Life-Resource Advisory Commission: Amanda Afifi  
LGBTQ+ Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: Charles Curry  
Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities: Jennifer Powell

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Commission on Immigrant Affairs: Juan Vences-Benitez  
Human Rights Commission: Kimberly Brienzi

Attest: Jeremy Garza, Staff Liaison, Equity Office:

x Jeremy Garza