LEBANON EXPRESS

# Column: From the Mayor's Desk

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Does anyone remember the Federal Government Sequester? Where things like the tour of the Whitehouse and the Veterans Memorial were made off limits to the public? Why were those things done instead of cutting in other areas? To tug at the heartstrings and show how bad the cuts were.

The same thing is being done by some about the cuts to the library. Every department in our city had to take cuts, including the Library. The Police Department, the Senior Center, Engineering, Admin and others.

Each department had to cut, and no department was given any preference. Our police department is one of the most important essential services that we provide, and one police officer position was eliminated and two more open spots were closed, that is 3 police officers in total. There were also a couple of other cuts in the department.

The Senior Center had a 23 percent reduction in staff. The Senior Center Manager is working through the short staff now, and programs are going on and will continue to run.

The Lebanon Express corrected it's online version of the Library Staff cuts to correctly reflect two full time employees left, and not one like the printed version stated.

I fully support the library and it's services and know what a benefit they are to the community. However, it is being poorly represented that all of the library services are being cut and there will be no more library.

This is patently false, and some people are throwing gasoline on the fire. The library and all departments had cuts and have to deal with how they are going to staff those cuts. It is up to each manager to work out how to continue as much of their services and programs as they can.

Our new City Manager and Library Manager will be working together to see that the Library is open as many hours as possible and that we can keep as many programs as possible.

It is very hard in each and every department in our City. There is a lot of work, and a lot less people. About 10% less staff doing the same job that more people performed. Everyone is working very hard and the workload is big.

I feel like we are having a "close the White House for tours" moment here. The library is not being targeted or attacked, and as I mentioned, all departments have lost significant amounts of people.

I hope that everyone takes a deep breath and knows that we are not closing down the library, we just need to live within our means and make adjustments, including with the library. And that is what is happening.

I support people getting together for a cause, especially when they feel something is wrong. However one of the most important parts of getting people involved in a cause is looking at the full picture and understanding both sides of the story.

Every department is dealing with an increased workload and some programs may have to be cut. The recent budget reductions affect every department and they affect every citizen in our community.

We may not be able to be open as many hours or have every single program, but with good management, we can make it work.

*Mayor Paul*