

From: JJ
To: Michael Eitner
Cc: Tony Daysog; City Clerk; Adam Politzer; Amy Wooldridge
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Formal Complaint and Request for Co-Sponsorship Standards
Date: Thursday, January 22, 2026 4:39:14 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Dear Mike, Library and City Staff, and Appointed and Elected Officials,

Thank you for your email. I understand the Library's commitment to intellectual freedom, and I'm not asking the Library to restrict viewpoints or remove content.

First, regarding the “Entwined Liberations” program and AFF4CL: my concern is not the topic of the event, but the Library’s decision to present it as a co-produced, co-branded partnership. The flyer states “*co-produced with Alameda Families and Friends for Collective Liberation,*” displays AFF4CL branding alongside the Library logo, and it was promoted as an Instagram collaboration post (a joint post shown under both accounts). Based on my review of the Library’s Instagram and event calendar, very few events receive this level of shared branding and cross-promotion. That makes it reasonable for the public to interpret this as institutional affiliation and vetting, not simply providing “access.”

This is why I’m pushing back on the idea that simply stating “the Library does not endorse [AFF4CL’s] social media” resolves this issue. The governance question raised by my first complaint is: *what standards and approvals governed the Library’s decision to elevate AFF4CL to “co-producer” status and amplify the partnership through shared branding and promotion?* Those are discretionary choices with real reputational and inclusion impacts for a City institution. **In this case, AFF4CL has publicly promoted political violence. Absent a clear explanation of how that was assessed and addressed, the Library should not have granted AFF4CL the added legitimacy of co-producer status.**

Second, because your response cites the Library Bill of Rights goal of presenting “all points of view,” I also need to raise a broader concern about the lack of institutional neutrality of the Library over time. In 2025, multiple programs, most listing Oliver Mills as the staff contact, appear to follow a consistent, one-sided political framing on Israel/Palestine (and related topics), frequently featuring speakers or partner organizations that publicly describe themselves as antizionist or that advocate against Israel in explicit terms. A consistent pattern of this kind conflicts with the Library’s stated commitment to a variety of perspectives and raises the governance question of *what safeguards exist to prevent Library-branded programming from becoming, in practice, a vehicle for a staff member’s personal political viewpoint.*

Examples include:

- Apr 18, 2025 - [Arab American Heritage Month: Author Talk with Dena Takruri](#), who, among other antizionist narratives has stated that “**Israel must be understood as a Zionist settler-colonial state,**” (<https://x.com/dena/status/1392159881998729216?s=46>)

- Apr 29, 2025 - Presentation & archival deep dive with “Librarians with Palestine,” whose own website advocates for the campaign of "**Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions against Israel**" (<https://librarianswithpalestine.org/about/principles/>)
- May 10, 2025 - Jewish American Heritage Month: Presenting Anam Chaya, a performance by Rowan Katz, who herself endorsed her work as a "**call for action in any way possible towards a Free Palestine**" (<https://www.instagram.com/p/C2a78Uuvvgx/>)
- Nov 13, 2025 - Native American Heritage Month: Sogorea Te’ Land Trust, who on their own webpage condemn Israel and declare, "**We stand in solidarity with Palestine**" (<https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/2023/11/14/indigenous-people-for-a-free-palestine/>)
- Dec 20, 2025 - Entwined Liberations, co-produced with AFF4CL; which featured the film *Spaces of Exception*, described on your own webpage as about the Palestinian struggle for "**decolonization**," and featured Noor Al-Samari, who herself is part of a group of writers (Writers Against the War in Gaza) that "**organize against Zionism**" (<https://www.alamedafree.org/Events-directory/Entwined-Liberations-An-Afternoon-of-Poetry-Film>) (<https://writersagainsthewarongaza.com/>)

Upon thorough review, I did not find any Library events that framed Israel or Zionism in a positive light. To be clear, I am not saying the Library cannot host controversial perspectives or programs critical of a specific government or political viewpoint. I am saying that when Library-branded programming repeatedly and predictably presents only one side of a highly polarizing issue, it can reasonably be perceived as the Library adopting an institutional viewpoint. That, in turn, creates the appearance of viewpoint discrimination and risks fostering a hostile or exclusionary atmosphere for some Jewish and Israeli residents who rely on the Library as a City space intended for everyone.

Given both concerns, I’m requesting two things:

1. In direct response to my first complaint: a short written explanation of the Library’s standards and approval process for co-produced/co-branded partnerships (including collaboration-style joint posts), and specifically what approvals and diligence applied to the decision to label AFF4CL as a co-producer and share branding/promotional channels.
2. A short written explanation of what oversight exists to ensure divisive political issues are programmed in a way that reflects the Library’s stated commitment to a variety of perspectives over time, rather than the preferences of any single staff member.

Please confirm receipt of this message and that this correspondence will be forwarded to the Library Board and included in the public record for the next relevant meeting. In addition, please note to the Library Board that any previous or future discussion of this issue, even if using a personal email address, should be saved for public record as per the California CPRA.

Do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

"JJ"

Alameda Resident

On Thu, Jan 15, 2026 at 4:11 PM Michael Eitner <meitner@alamedaca.gov> wrote:

Dear JJ,

Thank you for your email. The Library strives to offer programs that are informative, educational, and cultural in nature for the enrichment of the community. The Library also seeks to provide a variety of perspectives through its programs and collection to reflect the diversity of Alameda.

When working with an outside organization, the Library staff carefully review the program content to assure that the program presented to the community conforms with the Library's mission, vision, and values as well as policies and foundational documents approved or endorsed by the Library Board. The Library Bill of Rights, which the Library Board has endorsed, states that libraries "should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues." Additionally, the Library's Collection Development Policy "upholds the right of individuals to access information that others may find offensive, unacceptable, or unorthodox."

As you noted below, you have no concern with the content of the event, which is the focus of what the Library manages. I understand you have concerns about social media posts made by AFFCL. The Library does not endorse social media posts made by AFFCL or any other group.

Sincerely,

Mike

Mike Eitner (he/him)

Director

Alameda Free Library

meitner@alamedaca.gov

510-747-7747

From: J J <jj6843746@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 12:59 PM

To: Michael Eitner <meitner@alamedaca.gov>

Cc: Tony Daysog <TDaysog@alamedaca.gov>; City Clerk <CLERK@alamedaca.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Formal Complaint and Request for Co-Sponsorship Standards

Dear Library Board Members and Library Director Eitner (CC: Honorable City Councilmember Daysog, City Clerk),

I'm an Alameda resident submitting a formal complaint about the Alameda Free Library's decision to co-produce programming with Alameda Families and Friends for Collective Liberation (AFFCL).

The flyer for "Entwined Liberations: An Afternoon of Poetry & Film" (Dec. 20, 2025) states the event was "co-produced" with AFFCL and places Library branding alongside AFFCL's logo (Exhibit A). The event was also promoted through official Library/City channels (Exhibit D). In other words, the Library attached City credibility to an outside advocacy group.

My concern is not with the content of the event itself. My concern is that AFFCL's public communications include messaging and imagery that a reasonable person can interpret as **endorsing or normalizing political violence** and depicting Jewish/Israeli symbols in a threatening way.

- Exhibit B shows AFFCL stating they "tell our kids" that "resistance is necessary" and that oppressed people have the right to "resist," paired with imagery including armed,

masked militants.

- Exhibit C shows a reposted graphic promoting “continued resistance,” depicting a hooded figure with a scythe and a Star of David/Israel-flag image on the figure.

Even if AFFCL is free to post such content, **the Library is not required to partner with it.** Co-branding with a group circulating this material undermines public trust in the Library as a welcoming civic institution and is **against the spirit of Alameda’s City Council adopted Vision Statement commitment to inclusion, meaningful engagement of all backgrounds, and safe public spaces.**

I respectfully request that the Library Board and Director:

1. Direct staff to report who approved AFFCL as a co-producer and what vetting was performed.
2. Adopt clear **co-sponsorship/co-production standards**, including a bright line against co-producing/co-branding with organizations that promote/normalize political violence or circulate propaganda-style militant imagery.
3. Pending review, **pause further co-produced programming with AFFCL.**
4. Confirm preservation of records related to this decision (approvals, emails, drafts, promotional materials).

Please confirm receipt and advise when this will be addressed. I hope that this issue can be discussed at the Library Board meeting this evening.

Sincerely,
"JJ" (anonymous due to perceived threat of violence)
Alameda, CA

Exhibits: A (co-produced flyer), B (AFFCL “resistance” post), C (scythe/Star of David imagery), D (City/Library promotions)

Exhibit A:



alamedafreelibrary and alameda4c... ⋮

A still from 'Spaces of Exception' (2023)



SAT DEC 20
2-4:30PM

ENTWINED LIBERATIONS

AN AFTERNOON OF POETRY & FILM

This event is co-produced with Alameda Families and Friends for Collective Liberation. Please join us in welcoming local poets Noor Al-Samarrai and noblewoman as we pair their works with a screening of the film 'Spaces of Exception' (2023) by Matt Peterson and Malek Rasamny. Enjoy free refreshments and community. Register so we know how much popcorn to provide! The program will take place in the Stafford Room of the Main Library at 1550 Oak St.

NOOR AL-SAMARRAI is a deeply committed poet, journalist, and educator who has written a book of fieldwork-derived poetry, *EL CERRITO* (2018). *SPACES OF EXCEPTION* observes & juxtaposes the communities & struggles of the American Indian reservation and the Palestinian refugee camp.

NOBLEWOMAN is a frequenter of the Berkeley Poetry Slam who believes that words are the friends we find in solitude.

Scan the QR code to register, or visit our website: www.alamedafree.org

If you have questions about the program or access needs you'd like us to meet, we are a call away at (510) 747-7713.




Noor Al-Samarrai



♡ 47 💬 ↻ 6 🗑️ 193 📌

alamedafreelibrary Please join us on Saturday from 2-4:30pm to welcome local poet Noor Al-Samarrai as we pair her works with a... more
December 13, 2025

Exhibit B:

← Alameda Families and Friends for Cea...



we tell our kids that resistance is necessary to keep Palestinians alive, that resistance shows up many ways and that all oppressed people have the right to resist to be free.

wokekindergarten

 Alameda Families and Friends for Ceasefire · Follow
Mar 16, 2024 · 🌐

As we take some time to be with our families this weekend, we are reminded of what families are going through in Gaza. How do we talk to our children about genocide? About human rights? About resistance? 🌱

Repost from @wokekindergarten: we are witnessing the attempted annihilation of a thriving Palestinian culture, life, community and people by the illegitimate, genocidal Zionist entity. so what do we tell our kids?

we tell our kids that resistance is necessary to keep Palestinians alive, that resistance shows up many ways and that all oppressed people have the right to resist to be free.

Exhibit C:

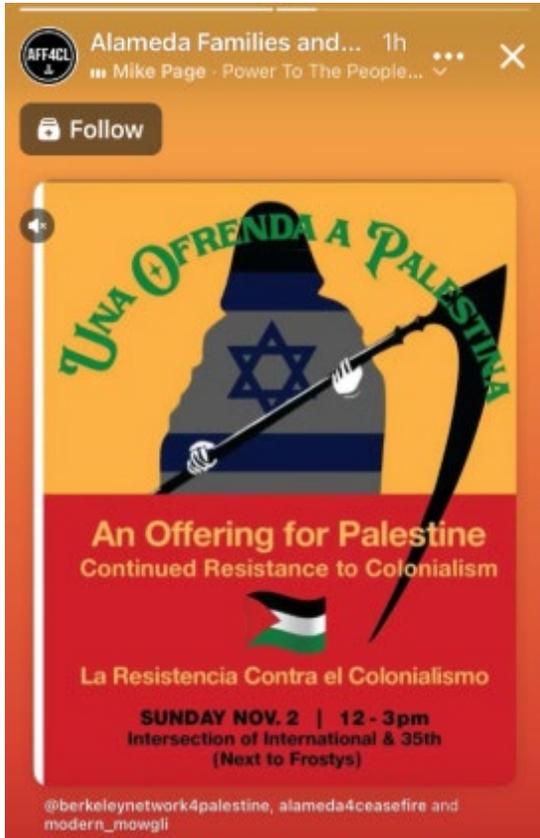


Exhibit D:

<https://www.alamedaca.gov/Shortcut-Content/News-Media/Alameda-Free-Library-Event-Alert-December-2025>