

Statement from Director John Howard on the Cancellation of Difficult Discussions Series

It was a tough decision to cancel the Difficult Discussions series for winter 2024. This series, conceived and planned by me personally, was intended to serve as an opportunity for our community to see that it is possible to tackle contentious societal issues, if we are willing to listen to those who disagree with us, recognize our shared values, and seek common ground. The series as planned was cancelled due to difficulties with finding appropriate speakers with availability that matched our needs. In the end, we were not going to put on a program that did not meet the standards we had set for this series.

I remain committed to this concept, and to making our library a safe place where such conversations can take place. As we step back from this particular series, I intend to explore alternate formats and the possibility of partnering with organizations and groups in the community that are also committed to reducing polarization and promoting productive public discussion. If you are interested in helping plan future programs of this sort, please reach out to me via email at director@mahometpubliclibrary.org.