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CITY OF WACO ANNOUNCES WACO MCLENNAN COUNTY LIBRARY DIRECTOR

WACO, TEXAS (June 20, 2024) – The City of Waco announces the appointment of Roberto Zapata as Director of Waco McLennan County Library, effective July 22, 2024.

Zapata brings over 20 years of extensive experience in library administration, programming, and community engagement. His reputation for excellence in serving the public and his expertise in collaborating with stakeholders make him a valuable addition to our community.

Zapata’s municipal government career includes his most recent leadership role as Assistant Director of Customer Experience at Houston Public Library, where he oversaw operations for over 30 locations and 300 staff members. During his time in Houston, Zapata guided the Customer Experience Division through the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring customers had access to the library while prioritizing staff safety. He also implemented crucial policy changes to improve how the organization meets patrons' needs.

Zapata previously served as the Assistant Director of Public Services at the McAllen Public Library. During his tenure with the city, the library significantly enhanced outreach services and programming. In addition, Zapata was a Co-Chair of the McAllen Book Festival, which saw increased attendance through community engagement. Zapata began his career at Houston Public Library in 2003 before moving and growing with San Antonio Public Library as a Branch Manager.

Roberto Zapata holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio and a Master of Information Resources and Library Science from the University of Arizona. He also earned a Bachelor of Liberal Arts in English and Spanish from the University of Texas at Austin. His commitment to professional development is evident in his involvement as an instructor for the Texas Library Association LAUNCH Program and various library associations and leadership institutes.

Zapata shared, “An unwavering commitment to positive outcomes for learners and equitable opportunities for community members is a north star, and I am excited that Waco is my destination. I look forward to charting a course with colleagues and everyone we serve to ensure Waco McLennan County Library is a vibrant, inclusive space for discovery, creativity, and sustainability.”

“We are delighted to welcome Roberto Zapata as our City's new Library Director. Roberto brings a wealth of experience and a passionate commitment to literacy, community engagement, and innovative programming. His vision for the library as a community hub aligns perfectly with our goals of enhancing public service and fostering a love of learning among all residents. I am confident our libraries will continue to thrive and expand their reach, providing invaluable resources and opportunities to everyone in our community,” said City Manager Bradley Ford.

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