

HENNEPIN COUNTY

LIBRARY BOARD




THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME AT ALL LIBRARY BOARD MEETINGS

September 27, 2023, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Ridgedale Library | Meeting Room 172 | 12601 Ridgedale Drive | Minnetonka, MN 55305

Library Board Agenda

POLICY COMMITTEE

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Attendance
-  3. Approval of Agenda*
-  4. Approval of May 24, 2023, meeting summary*
5. Communication Policy
6. Freedom to Read
7. Freedom to View
8. Library Board Per Diem and Expense Policy
-  9. Adjourn*

 *Denotes board action item

Library Board

Jane Brissett, President | Lynn Stetler, Vice President | Amal Karim, Secretary | Randy Klauk | Ashley Krohn | Michael Hogan | Erin Carney | Briana Eicheldinger | Adja Kaba | Jessica Kraft | Gordy Aune, Jr.

Interim Library Director
Dan Rogan



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Policy Committee

Meeting Summary

The Library Policy Committee met on Wednesday May 24, 2023, at East Lake Library, Meeting Room.

Attendees

Present: Ashley Krohn, Gordy Aune, Jr., Erin Carney, and Jane Brissett

Hennepin County Staff: J.R. Genett and Jeannette Lewis

Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Jane Brissett called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and welcomed attendees.

Attendance

Attendance taken by the board clerk. Quorum was met with (3) committee members present.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by: Erin Carney.

Seconded by: Gordy Aune, Jr.

Motion passed.

Approval of April 5, 2023, Meeting Summary

Motion by: Gordy Aune, Jr.

Seconded by: Erin Carney

Motion passed.

Code of Conduct for HCL Board Members

Committee members discussed the Code of Conduct for HCL Board members policy and made a change to bring to the full board for vote.

Under Roles and Responsibilities, Library Board members will:

Bring to the attention of the President when a board member is in breach of this Code of Conduct.

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Adjourn

Erin Carney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05pm. Seconded by Gordy Aune, Jr.

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Hennepin County Library Board Communication Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clarify how Hennepin County Library Board members communicate with one another and with Library administration in accordance with Minnesota Open Meeting and Government Data Practices Laws.

Definitions

“Library business” refers to the responsibilities and powers of the County Library Board as outlined in the Board’s bylaws.

“Non-substantive matters” refers to topics of coordination, such as reminders of meeting times, dates, places, or suggestions for agenda items.

Policy

It is the goal of the Library Board to keep all board members and Library administration informed about matters related to the work of the Library Board. In accordance with Minnesota Open Meeting Laws, Minn. Stat. § 13D.01-.08, Board member communications on library business are executed during Board or Committee meetings. Email is used as a one-way communication and for non-substantive matters.

Board members must be mindful of the requirements of Minnesota Open Meeting Laws and Minnesota Government Data Practices and how they impact email communications. The Open Meeting Law’s requirements apply to written communications (email, text message, etc.) when the communication: (1) is among a quorum of the Board and (2) it is about library business. Back-and-forth email communication among a quorum of a public body in which official business is discussed violates the open meeting law. However, one-way communication between the chair (or another board member) and all other library board members is permissible, such as when the chair sends meeting materials via email to all board members, as long as no discussion or decision-making ensues. Board members may have a non-public meeting, send an email, or have a non-public social media discussion with less than a quorum of Board members. There is no expectation of privacy for any messages sent or received by email in connection with a Board member’s role.

Library Board members will receive Board packets, meeting invites, and reminders via email. This information is also posted to the public website.

Library administration may provide information relating to library business to Library Board members using email. Any response from Library Board members regarding these communications must be sent only to Library Administration, not the entire Board.

Additionally, patron feedback is critical to the work of the Board. Outside of public comment periods of Board meetings, patrons can contact the Library Board by mail or by email through Library Administration.

Library Board members are provided with one another’s email address and phone numbers, unless an individual board member requests that their contact information is not shared. When contact information is shared with a quorum of Board members, the information is considered public data.

Email Protocol

The Library maintains a single Library Board email address. Emails sent to this address go to the board members private email addresses and to Library Administration. When emails from the public require a Board response, the President or their designee will respond and will copy other Board members and Library Administration. The President will inform Library Administration when they should respond to an email.

Process

This policy is reviewed by the Library Board (or a committee thereof) every four years, or more frequently as needed. Recommendations are advanced to the Library Board Policy Committee, which reviews, revises as necessary, endorses, and advances to the full Library Board for approval.

Associated Policies and Laws

[Minnesota Open Meeting Law](#)

[Minnesota Government Data Practices Act](#)

[Bylaws of the Hennepin County Library Board](#)

Policy History

Next review: 2023

Date adopted: September 21, 2022

Freedom to Read

Hennepin County Library Board Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to affirm and endorse the following Freedom to Read statement as adopted by the American Library Association.

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound

responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers. Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

Process

This policy is reviewed by the Library Director (or designee) every four years, or more frequently as needed. Recommendations are forwarded to a Library Board committee. The committee reviews and revises as necessary, endorses and advances to the full Library Board for approval.

Policy History

Next Review Date: 2023

Date Approved: 2019

Freedom to View

Hennepin County Library Board Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to affirm and endorse the following Freedom to View statement as endorsed by the American Library Association.

Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Process

This policy is reviewed by the Library Director (or designee) every four years, or more frequently as needed. Recommendations are forwarded to a Library Board committee. The committee reviews and revises as necessary, endorses and advances to the full Library Board for approval.

Policy History

Next Review Date: 2023

Date Approved: 2019

Library Board Per Diem and Expense Policy

Hennepin County Library Board Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to state the types of expenses the Library Board may incur and define the roles and responsibilities for managing those expenses.

Principles

- Library Board members provide valued service to the Hennepin County Library and the residents of Hennepin County as a whole
- Library Board members freely give of their time and talents in support of the Hennepin County Library's mission and vision
- Hennepin County Library provides fiscal support to develop Library Board members' knowledge and understanding of public library services
- Library Board members receive compensation for their expenses in accordance with Minnesota State Law and Hennepin County Policy

Per Diem Payments

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 383B.243 which states:

Members of the Library Board shall be allowed a per diem not to exceed \$50 for meetings relating to advice and recommendations concerning the library program. Each member may also be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred as a result of the meeting. Payment for meetings of the Library Board shall be authorized in an amount not to exceed two meetings monthly.

Per Diem payments may be claimed by Library Board members for the following meetings:

- Regular monthly Library Board meetings
- Special Library Board meetings
- Committee meetings
- Any meetings which Library Board members are requested to attend as official representatives

Professional Association Memberships

Library Board members may receive individual memberships in the American Library Association and the Minnesota Library Association for the duration of their service on the Hennepin County Library Board.

Travel and Library Conferences

Authorized travel and library conference attendance will be fully reimbursable, up to a Library Board member's budgetary shares. (A share is the Library Board travel budget divided by the number of Board members.) The value of a budgetary share is established as a part of the annual Library Board budget process.

- The Library Board President is entitled to two shares per year
- All other members are entitled to one share per year; members who officially represent Hennepin County Library in a professional library association receive one additional share per year
- A member whose board terms expires on December 31 and who does not seek reappointment or is not reappointed but who remains on the board until the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners appointment process is completed is eligible for reimbursement for conference attendance expenses incurred after the member's official term ended on December 31.

Expenses

On request, additional direct expenses, such as mileage and meals, shall be reimbursed in accordance with Minnesota law and Hennepin County Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Library Board members will submit:

- The "Library Board Timesheet" by the 5th of each month to the Library Director's Office
- Travel and library conference attendance requests to the Library Board President for approval
- Requests for travel and other expenses in accordance with Hennepin County procedures

Library Board President in consultation with the Library Director:

- Manages the Library Board budget
- Authorizes Library Board member travel and conference attendance

Associated Policies and Laws

- Hennepin County. Conference and Travel Policy
- Hennepin County Library Board. [Code of Conduct for Hennepin County Library Board Members](#)
- Minnesota Statute 383B.243. Per Diems

Process

This policy is reviewed by the Library Director (or designee) every five years (5) who then makes recommendations to the Library Board Program/Policy Committee. The Committee reviews and revises as necessary, endorses and advances to the full Library Board for approval

Policy History

Next Review Date: 2026

Date Approved: 2021

Previous Policy Dated: 9/27/2006

Replaces: Expense Policy; Per Diem Payments Policy