



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
February 24, 2022
4PM
REMOTE ONLY
AGENDA

1. Vote on Chair
2. Review and approve minutes from January 20, 2022 meeting
3. Discuss Rice Library Mission and Vision statements
4. Review Freedom to Read policy and forms
5. Next Steps
 - a. Action Items
 - b. Next Meeting

Materials:

- Draft Minutes – January 20, 2022
- Example Mission and Vision statements
- Example Freedom to Read policy and forms

The public may view the meeting via Zoom by registering at:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_X16CzRIOTpyCM2Zfc1gklQ



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
January 20, 2022
4PM
DRAFT

Present: Stephanie Robock-Wexler, Judy Spiller, Rachel Dennis, Tom Newbold, Cici Nielson, Lindsay Burrowbridge, Lee Perkins, Kendra Amaral

1. Committee introductions and structure
 - Com wants to be moderately informal and foster open discussion.
 - discussed establishing bylaws and continuing to have an agenda and materials in advance of the meeting.
 - Susan Goodman was unable to attend but agreed to be considered for Chair.
2. Reviewed duties and priorities
 - Library policies, especially Freedom to Read policy. Forms already exist. Members agreed to assist Lee with draft.
 - Review and revision/affirmation of vision and mission statement. Committee members to share examples for next meeting.
 - Developing a five-year strategic plan. Funding is in place to hire a consultant to assist the Town with this effort. Committee wants to ensure external data such as surveys and info from non-patrons/targeted groups as part of development of the strategic plan.
3. Next Steps
 - Stick with last Thu of month at 4PM; may need to pause on meetings in March and April as staff focus on moving into and reopening expanded Rice Lib bldg.
 - Vote to make Susan Chair of the Com.
 - Com members assist Lee with turning ALA Freedom to Read statement into policy-type language.
 - Com members research vision and mission statements from other libraries. Send examples to Kendra no later than the week before the next meeting to be included in the meeting packet.

Mission/Vision Statements

Rice Public Library

Mission:

- Promote literacy and lifelong learning in a welcoming environment
- Ensure access to local, national, and global resources for all individuals
- Offer a collection that reflects the varying interests of our community through a variety of print, electronic, digital, and emerging media
- Address the educational and cultural interests of the community
- Collect, preserve, and disseminates Kittery and regional historical information

York Public Library – York, Maine

Our Mission:

York Public Library is guided by the past and focused on the future. Our mission is to provide free and equitable access in our commitment to connecting people, advancing learning, and promoting creativity.

Our Vision:

We embrace the rich heritage and vibrant future of our community. We aspire to be the best possible library for York through innovation and collaboration with local organizations to:

- Provide a forum for people and ideas to connect
- Serve our diverse population through outreach and inspired programming
- Promote democracy by ensuring freedom of access to information.

Enriching Lives. Inspiring Minds. Creating Community.

Kennebunk Free Library - Kennebunk, Maine

Mission:

To inspire and enable our communities to discover, learn, and connect.

Vision:

Kennebunk Free Library will be central to our communities, responsive to them, and deeply valued by them.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, 2018

Scarborough Public Library – Scarborough, Maine

Mission:

The mission of the Scarborough Public Library is to provide access to a broad and deep collection and high quality services that promote lifelong learning in a welcoming, community-centered facility.

Vision:

The Scarborough Public Library will be an innovative leader in implementing a variety of strategies to bring knowledge and promote learning opportunities for people of all ages.

Values:

The Scarborough Public Library will:

- Be a vibrant spirited library that demands outstanding performance in all areas.
- Assist a broad population to access knowledge and information through diverse formats for both formal and independent education.

- Maintain a professional and highly skilled staff to assist with access to information and services.
 - Use resources judiciously to provide a stimulating and welcoming atmosphere, and a variety of programs and spaces that serve as an anchor for the community.
 - Serve as a proactive and courageous leader in the library community – keeping abreast of the latest technology while honoring and maintaining tradition.
 - Engage and respectfully consult with community members to ensure that a broad population has a positive experience.

Adopted 10/2015

Falmouth Memorial Library – Falmouth, Maine

Mission Statement:

The Falmouth Memorial Library enhances the quality of life of our community by inspiring lifelong learning, providing free and open access to information, and fostering community connections.

Vision Statement:

The Falmouth Memorial Library serves the community as a center for intellectual inquiry and discovery by providing relevant resources, services, programs, and cultural and social experiences that celebrate ideas, promote creativity, connect people, and enrich lives.

Guiding Principles:

- Promote literacy and a love of learning – We recognize literacy’s vital importance to expanding horizons, and we strive to support each person’s journey as a lifelong learner.
- Welcome and embrace the entire community – We strive to ensure that all people feel welcomed, safe, and supported in the Library.

- Adapt and innovate – We invest in our staff, technology, resources, and infrastructure to provide quality service and remain relevant to the community’s evolving needs and interests.
- Form strong community partnerships – We extend our reach and impact in the community through collaboration with individuals and organizations who value our mission.

Merrill Memorial Library - Yarmouth, Maine

Mission Statement:

The Merrill Memorial Library is a public library that makes available to all members of the community a broad range of materials, services and information.

The mission of the library is to provide our patrons with educational, recreational and cultural enrichment and opportunities for independent learning and for personal and professional growth.

The library trustees and staff will support this mission by providing an environment that is welcoming, stimulating, respectful and supportive.

Portsmouth Public Library - Portsmouth, NH

Mission Statement:

To engage, educate, empower, and enrich our community through creative and dedicated service to all.

Vision Statement:

The Portsmouth Public Library is the thriving heart of our community, supporting a resilient, inclusive city whose citizens are free to pursue growth and knowledge.

Core Values:

- Building community
- Curiosity and innovation
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Excellent customer service
- Intellectual freedom
- Literacy and learning in all forms
- Mutual respect
- Preservation of Portsmouth history
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Sustainability

We also endorse the [American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights](#) and its interpretations and the [American Library Association's Equity of Access principles](#).

Adopted by the Board of Library Trustees on November 17, 2021

The mission of the Rice Public Library is to:

- Promote literacy and lifelong learning in a welcoming environment
- Ensure **free, open, and equitable** access to local, national, and global resources for all individuals
- Offer a collection that reflects the varying interests of our community through a variety of print, electronic, digital, and emerging media
- Address the educational and cultural interests of the community
- Collect, preserve, and disseminates Kittery and regional historical information
- **Preserve the principles of intellectual freedom by providing uncensored access to knowledge**

Possible language to include:

the unrestricted right to read

freedom to read, which includes free and open access to a range of divergent materials

Sturbridge, MA Public Library

As a cornerstone of the community we **provide free and open access to constantly evolving resources**, programs, and technology to enrich lives through education, recreation, and connections.

The **Rockport Public Library** is a vital resource for ideas, information, and recreation for all members of the community. It provides **universal access** to knowledge and lifelong learning through print, online resources, programs, and services. The library will be responsive to the needs of its community, advocate and support the use of appropriate technology, build an excellent collection, commit itself to the highest ideals of library service and the **principles of intellectual freedom**, and provide a welcoming meeting place for the community.

York Public Library is guided by the past and focused on the future. Our mission is **to provide free and equitable access** in our commitment to connecting people, advancing learning, and promoting creativity.

Our Vision

We embrace the rich heritage and vibrant future of our community. We aspire to be the best possible library for York through innovation and collaboration with local organizations to

- Provide a forum for people and ideas to connect
- Serve our diverse population through outreach and inspired programming
- Promote democracy by ensuring freedom of access to information.

Harvard, MA, Public Library

Library Values:

- Responsiveness to our community and patrons
- Free and open access to a wide range of resources
- Protection of intellectual freedom
- Partnership with schools and community organizations
- Integration of new and traditional services
- Preservation of historical resources

The mission of **the Lenox Library** is to connect our community to resources and programs that encourage lifelong learning and celebrate our collective history and culture.

The Lenox Library strives to enhance the quality of life in our community by:

- Offering a wide array of engaging, high-quality programs for all ages
- Maintaining collections and resources that support life-long learning in the community
- Improving access to and promotion of the Local History Collection
- Providing a welcoming and comfortable community space where individuals can connect with one another and to the resources they need and enjoy
-

The **Manchester** City Library shall strive to provide quality services and materials to meet the cultural, educational and informational needs of our **diverse and changing community**.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

ANNEX C

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.

ANNEX D

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

ANNEX E



Kent Memorial Library

Read. Learn. Imagine.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

1. Author/Producer/Performer: _____

2. Title: _____

3. Publisher: _____

4. Request initiated by: _____

5. Address: _____ Phone: _____

6. City: _____ Zip Code: _____

7. Patron represents: Self ____ Group ____ Name of Group _____

8. To what material do you object? (Please be specific: list pages, etc.) _____

9. What do you feel might be the result of exposure to this material? _____

10. Would you recommend this material for any particular age group? _____

What age? _____

11. Is there anything good about this material as a whole? _____

12. Are you familiar with all of the material? _____ What parts? _____

13. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by critics? _____

14. What would you like your library to do about this material? _____

Please use the back of this sheet if you need more space.