

# **Meigs Decatur Public Library**

## **Library Policies**

Adopted: September 21, 2021

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## I. Mission and Objectives

### A. Mission

1. The mission of the Meigs Decatur Public Library is to provide access to quality materials and services that fulfill educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the entire community in an atmosphere that is welcoming, respectful, and patron focused.

### B. Objectives

1. To serve all patrons of the library and the surrounding community.
  - a) A patron is defined as anyone who engages with library services.
2. To acquire and make available to all patrons books, periodicals, pamphlets, and other services as will address their needs to
  - a) become well informed
  - b) locate answers to important questions
  - c) cultivate the imagination and creative expression
  - d) develop skills for career and vocational advancement
  - e) enjoy leisure by means of reading and other media services.
3. To sponsor and implement programs to promote literacy and community engagement with youth and adults.
4. To curate library materials for people of various backgrounds and ages that stimulates thinking and intellectual development.
5. To utilize resource sharing with other libraries to ensure patrons are best served with the resources they request.
6. Cooperate and build partner relationships with other agencies and institutions in the community to better serve library patrons and the community as a whole.
7. To employ best practices in serving library patrons.
8. Use online, media, and other public relations mechanisms to promote the full range of available library services.

## II. Board of Trustees

### A. Mission

1. The mission of the Meigs Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees is to foster and promote library development and library services in Meigs County.

## B. Role of the Board of Trustees

1. The board of trustees is established according to the provisions of Title 10 of the Tennessee Code Annotated, and is exercising the powers and assuming the duties granted to it under said statute.
2. The Board shall seek to procure adequate funds for standard library service as measured by state and national levels. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to create policy for the library. The board is responsible for hiring a library director.
3. The Library Board will consist of seven volunteer members who are Meigs County residents and appointed by the Meigs County Commission. Appointments are for three years. The Board will meet six times a year on a bi-monthly basis. Board members are to abide by the current Board By-Laws.

## C. By-laws for the Board of Trustees

1. [See Appendix 1](#)

# III. Public Service Policies

## A. Eligibility for borrowing and services

1. Population library serves
  - a) The library serves all patrons (see definition in I.B.1.a.) Service is given without regard to religious, racial, social, economic, political status; or because of mental, emotional, or physical condition; age; sexual orientation; or gender identity.
2. Responsibilities of borrowers
  - a) Registration.
    - (1) All borrowers must be registered and must have a valid patron card to borrow library materials. Patrons must fill out an application form to register for a new library card.
    - (2) Identification is required. Accepted forms of identification include: state issued identification, student ID, other official ID; additionally, a recent non-personal piece of mail may be accepted at the discretion of the library director.
    - (3) Applicants under 14 years of age must have a parent or guardian consent for a library card to be issued.
    - (4) Library cards expire after 3 years. In order to renew a library card, patrons must produce identification and must clear all outstanding fines and bills.
    - (5) If a library card is lost or stolen, it is the patron's responsibility to request a replacement.
3. Materials access policy
  - a) Material can only be checked out with a valid library card.

- b) Patrons must be 14 and older to check out DVDs
- c) Patrons under 12 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- 4. Interlibrary Loan
  - a) Interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection. In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Meigs Decatur Public Library agrees to lend its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network.
- 5. Programming and Outreach
  - a) A "program" is a planned interaction between the library staff and the program participants for the purpose of promoting library materials, facilities, or services, as well as offering the community an informational, entertaining, or cultural experience. Programming includes such activities as storytimes, films and activities on no-school days, summer library program for children, speakers for young adults, and book or author discussion groups for adults.
  - b) The board, in conjunction with the library director, will establish a budget and goals for programming to facilitate the effective implementation of this service.

## B. Circulation Policy

- 1. Loan period, renewal, and overdue
  - a) Loan Periods and Fine Schedule

| <b>Material</b>         | <b>Loan Period</b> | <b>Daily Fine</b> | <b>Renewals</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Books                   | 14 days            | \$.05             | yes             |
| Non-current periodicals | 14 days            | \$.05             | no              |
| CDs & audio books       | 14 days            | \$.05             | yes             |
| DVDs                    | 7 day              | \$1.00            | yes             |

- b) Current issues of periodicals do not circulate.
- c) Audio Visual materials and Electronic equipment may be renewed once if there is not a waiting list for the item
- d) Interlibrary loans are due the date indicated by the lending library.
- e) The director may establish a unique loan period for special collections, materials that are temporarily in great demand, materials for student projects, materials to support homeschooled students, and materials added to the collection that do not meet current format descriptions.

- f) Any fines or fees may be waived by the Library director with the agreement of the board of trustees. The fee schedule and any fee waiver policy shall be reassessed annually.
- 2. Number of items loaned
  - a) There is no limit on the number of items a patron can borrow at one time; except that only two items on a given subject for a known school assignment.
- 3. Confidentiality
  - a) As specified in Tennessee State Law "records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds, including the records of a public library system, indicating the identity of any individual who borrows or uses the library's documents or other materials, resources or services may not be disclosed except by court order or to persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library or library system, to persons authorized by the individual to inspect such records, or to libraries authorized under subs. (2) and (3)."
  - b) The Meigs Decatur Public Library adheres strictly to all sections of this Statute regarding the protection of the confidentiality of its users.
- 4. Reserved materials
  - a) Reserves may be placed by patrons in person or over the phone. Patrons will be notified by phone, email, or mail when the materials are available. There is no charge to the patron for placing a reserve or for interlibrary loan services.
- 5. Lost and damaged materials
  - a) If a material is lost the patron is responsible for the replacement cost plus a processing fee (not to exceed the cost of replacement) set by the library director. This fee may be waived at the discretion of the library director.
  - b) If materials are damaged so as to be judged by the library as unsuitable for the collection, the patron must pay the full replacement cost for lost materials. A notice of these charges will be sent to the patron.
  - c) For lost and damaged materials, library cards are blocked until payment is received.
- 6. Wi-Fi hot spots
  - a) Hotspots will be lent only to Meigs County Public Library adult patrons (aged 18 and above) who are residents of Meigs County, have dependents enrolled in school in Meigs County, or are employed in Meigs County. These patrons must have no overdue items or unpaid fees or fines.
  - b) Loan period is for increments of 7 days (7, 14, 21, or 28 days) up to a maximum of 28 days.

- c) Overdue devices will be turned off the day after the due date.
- d) Overdue devices will accrue a \$5.00 per day fine up to \$50.00. This fine will not be waived or refunded.
- e) A replacement fee and processing charge will be assessed on the eleventh (11th) day after the due date.
- f) Borrower must also have a valid driver's license or government-issued identification.
- g) Borrower must have read and indicated with his/her signature agreement to abide by the Library's Acceptable Use Policy. Of particular significance to the Hotspots Policy are the prohibitions against pirating, illegal downloads, viewing of child pornography and all other illegal online activity.
- h) Borrower must also sign the Lending Agreement/Library Policy for Library Hotspots which details library and borrower responsibilities and liabilities.
- i) Borrower will be responsible for all materials associated with the Library HotSpot and will pay for the loss or damage to the device/components including.
- j) Replacement cost or repair charges will be assessed if the device or any of its associated materials are not in working order and good condition when returned.
- k) Borrowers will be subject to the standard policy regarding submission to a collection agency for collection of unpaid fines and fees.

### C. Reference Policy

- 1. The library will provide information in the form of short answers to specific questions and guidance in locating material for patrons in person, on the phone, by email, and through the mail.
- 2. The library will assist patrons on how to use library services and on basic research methodologies.
- 3. The library will provide bibliographic verification of items both in and outside of the library collection and will assist patrons in obtaining materials through interlibrary loan.
- 4. The library may refer patrons to other agencies and libraries in pursuit of needed information and resources.

### D. Equipment and Internet Use Policies

- 1. Internet Access
  - a) The Meigs Decatur Public Library provides Internet access as a means to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the library's service area.
  - b) Access to the Internet is available to all patrons; however, this service may be restricted at any time for use not consistent with the guidelines.



2. Internet Guidelines

- a) Users may use the Internet for research and the acquisition of information to address their educational, vocational, cultural, and recreational needs.
- b) Internet use is offered in thirty (30) minute sessions on a first-come, first-served basis; each user is allowed one session--if there is no patron waiting for the service at the end of a session, the user can have another session.
- c) Users will respect and uphold copyright laws and all other applicable laws and regulations; they will not use it for illegal purposes.
- d) Users will respect the rights and privacy of others by not accessing private files.
- e) Users agree not to incur any costs for the library through their use of the Internet service.
- f) Users shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses or other malware over the Internet.
- g) Users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws and can lead to prosecution. The user will be held responsible for his/her actions using the internet. Unacceptable uses of the service will result in the suspension or revocation of Internet use privileges.
- h) The Meigs Decatur Public Library employs a content filter in cooperation with the regional library system.
- i) The library cannot assure that data or files downloaded by users are virus-free. The library is not responsible for damages to equipment or data on a user's personal computer from the use of data downloaded from the library's Internet service. The use of the Internet and e-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the proper authorities.

3. Wireless internet access

- a) Free Wifi access is available for use on patrons' private devices.

4. Photocopier access

- a) A fee schedule of 25 cents per B/W copy and 50 cents per color copy is assessed.

## E. Facilities Use Policy

1. Hours of operation

- a) The library is open 45 hours per week as set by the director.

2. Americans with Disabilities Act compliance

- a) The library director in cooperation with the trustees ensures compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3. Meeting Room Policy

- a) The meeting room is available to individuals or organized groups within or serving Meigs County with the prior approval of the library director.
- b) The fact that a group is permitted to meet at the Library does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the Library staff or trustees.
- c) The room may be reserved no more than ninety days in advance.
- d) It is understood that library programming will have first priority in room use.
- e) There will be no charge for use of the meeting room.
- f) No admission may be charged by the group.
- g) Refreshments may be served and shall be provided by the group. No smoking is allowed.
- h) The people using the room shall leave it in neat, clean, orderly condition; if not, the group/individual will be given notice that continued offense will result in denied access to the meeting room.
- i) The Library is not responsible for any equipment, supplies, materials, clothing, or other items brought to the Library by any group or individual attending a meeting.
- j) The Library trustees and staff do not assume any liability for groups or individuals attending a meeting in the Library.

F. Code of Conduct

1. Unattended children

- a) The Meigs Decatur Library encourages visits by young children and it is our desire to make this important visit memorable and enjoyable for the child.
- b) All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied, at all times, by a parent or responsible adult in the library. Library staff will not assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children in the library. Failure to comply with this policy can result in a suspension of library services at the discretion of the library director.

2. Disruptive Behavior

- a) The use of the library may be denied for due cause as judged by the library director in consultation with the board of trustees. Due cause may include but is not limited to: failure to return library materials or pay outstanding fee/fine balances, destruction of library property, disturbance of other patrons, possession or brandishing of a weapon, loitering, excessive noise, harassment, or other conduct deemed to be disruptive by the library director.
- b) If an unaccompanied minor is asked to leave the library, she or he may wait with a staff person until a parent arrives.

## G. Community Partnerships

1. Friends of the Library
  - a) A Friends of the Library group is established as an independent volunteer non-profit organization to assist the library director with specific projects and fundraising.
  - b) [The bylaws of the Friends of the Library](#) can be found in Appendix 2.

## H. Public Relations

1. Public relations authority and responsibility
  - a) All requests for public comment will be approved by the library director in coordination with the president of the trustees.
2. Social media
  - a) The Meigs Decatur Public Library will utilize social media as a means of engagement with the public. Social media will be employed to update the community on current programs and offerings of the library and in other ways that promote the mission and goals of the library.
  - b) The library director or designee is responsible for the administration, content, and monitoring of all social media platforms used by the library.
  - c) In addition to the library director and designee, at least one additional trustee will have the login information and administrative rights to all social media platforms.
  - d) Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on the Library's social networking sites. While the Library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored and reviewed for content appropriateness. The library director reserves the right to review all comments and postings and delete comments that are inconsistent with the content created by the Library staff. Staff may block the person who posts inconsistent comments or other material from posting any further information to the Library's social media sites. Comments or postings that fall within any of the following categories will be deleted by Library director and/or lead to a warning and then a ban on posting by an individual who violates these guidelines:
    - (1) Obscene, sexist, homophobic, racist or otherwise bigoted content.
    - (2) Personal attacks, insults, threatening, or inappropriate language.
    - (3) Potentially libelous statements.
    - (4) Plagiarizing or posting copy-righted material without permission or authority from the copyright holder, upon request of the copyright holder.

- (5) Private, personal information published without consent.
- (6) Comments, postings, and/or hyperlinks not related to the content created by the Library staff.
- (7) Commercial promotions or spam, including selling, soliciting, or mass distribution of materials.
- (8) Organized political activity.
- (9) Photos or other images that fall in any of the above categories.
- (10) Advertisements and solicitations not expressly permitted by the Library.
- (11) harassing, abusive or unlawful behavior.
- (12) No following or cyber stalking.
- (13) Harassing comments or postings against Library staff or other social media users.
- (14) Harassing comments or postings that include profane or obscene statements or images, threatening physical harm toward another person, and engaging in behavior with the sole intent of harassing another person.

3. Website

- a) A current website will be maintained by the library director to inform the public of library events, hours of operation, news, and library policies.

## IV. Collection Development Policy

### A. Mission

1. The collection development mission of the Meigs Decatur Library is to curate materials that serve the best interest of the community and aid patrons in their pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

### B. Goals

1. In consultation with library trustees, the library director will establish annual and/or quarterly goals for collection development. These goals will be part of the regular evaluation process of the library director.
2. The library director and trustees will engage the public to help establish the direction of collection development.
3. New resources will be promoted in the community and to patrons.
4. Collection development will serve the needs of Meigs County, the surrounding region, and all patrons.

## C. Responsibility for Selection

1. The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the library director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the trustees.

## D. Weeding

1. An up-to-date, attractive and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the library director and is authorized by the Board of Trustees. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner and under the same authority as donated materials.
2. Weeding goals will be included in the annual or quarterly goals of the library director.

## E. Censorship, access, and challenged materials

1. The Library Bill of Rights and The Freedom to Read Statement
  - a) As stated in "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.
  - b) The trustees of the Meigs Decatur Library endorses ["The Library Bill of Rights"](#) (Appendix 3) and ["The Freedom to Read Statement"](#) (Appendix 4).
2. Challenged Materials
  - a) The Meigs Decatur Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the goals and principles stated in this policy.
  - b) Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that the materials may come into the possession of children.
  - c) Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library materials will be sequestered, except to protect it from damage or theft.

- d) Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitable materials.
  - (1) Patrons requesting that materials be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a "[Statement of Concern About Library Resources](#)' (appendix 5) form, which is available in the library. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Meigs Decatur Public Library trustees.
  - (2) The criteria that the trustees use to evaluate such a request must respect the policy guidelines above, The Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement.

## F. Gifts and Donations

1. The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. If they are not needed because of duplication, condition, or dated information the director may dispose of them as he/she sees fit.
2. The same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased materials are applied to gifts.
3. Memorial gifts of books or money are also accepted with suitable bookplates placed in the book. Specific memorial books can be ordered for the library on request of a patron if the request meets the criteria established by the Board. It is desirable for gifts of or for specific titles to be offered after consultation with the library director. Book selection will be made by the director if no specific book is requested. The Meigs Decatur Public Library encourages and appreciates gifts and donations.
4. By law, the library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.

## V. Management and Personnel Policies

### A. Authority of Library Trustees

1. The duly appointed library board of trustees shall have all management rights, authorities, and responsibilities as stated in Tennessee Library Laws.
2. The library board shall select, appoint, and when necessary for valid reasons, dismiss the director of the library.
3. The library board shall provide an effective orientation for new directors to assure that the director understands
  - a) the policies and processes related to the daily operation of the library,
  - b) reporting and budgetary requirements that assure accountability and compliance with the law,

- c) the expectations of the board in regard to administrative processes and protocol, particularly as they relate to conducting effective and efficient board meetings
  - d) rules and requirements for state certification and any assistance which is provided by the Library to acquire and maintain appropriate certification.
4. The library board shall conduct annual appraisals of the library director's performance, at which time personal and management goals can be discussed and negotiated.

## B. Authority of the Library Director

1. The library director shall be charged with the sole administration of the library.
  - a) The director shall be responsible to the library trustees in matters pertaining to and concerning the library; be present at board meetings and prepare and present such reports and meeting documents as requested.
2. The director is responsible for administering the library within the established budget and shall maintain financial records in an efficient manner; present periodic reports to the library board and to the municipal governing body; prepare the draft of the annual budget to be presented to the library board, and assist trustees with presentation of the adopted request for appropriation to the municipal governing body.
3. The director shall hire and supervise any additional staff and volunteers. Regular meetings with staff and/or volunteers for training and interpreting board policy will be held.
4. The director will be responsible for preparing annual performance assessments for library staff and volunteers.
5. The director shall have the responsibility for collection development for all materials in the library; this includes setting goals in consultation with the trustees, selection, ordering, processing, weeding, and inventory of the collections according to the guidelines in the policy.
6. The director will recommend changes in or additions to library policies as needed.
7. The director will perform preparatory work to assist the board with regular library planning.
8. The director will maintain necessary professional certifications and pursue professional development.

## C. Performance Policies

1. Performance Evaluation
  - a) The library board shall conduct annual appraisals of the library director's performance, at which time personal and management goals can be discussed and negotiated.
  - b) The library director will perform evaluations of staff.

2. Equal Opportunity Employment
  - a) It is the policy of the Meigs Decatur Public Library to provide an equal employment opportunity for all qualified and qualifiable persons. Equal employment opportunity shall be according to the provisions of State and Federal laws and regulations.
3. Disciplinary Policy
  - a) An employee of the Meigs Decatur Public Library may be dismissed for any reason. This includes but is not limited to: incompetence, misconduct, inattention to assigned duties, or unapproved absences from work.
  - b) Normally termination would be a final step which would follow:
    - (1) a substandard performance appraisal,
    - (2) verbal and/or written warnings,
    - (3) suspension, and/or extended probation.
  - c) It is important that complete and clear records be maintained of all disciplinary processes for the protection of the employee and the library.
  - d) The Library wants each employee to be successful in his/her job and will work with employees to eliminate deficiencies.
  - e) While notice of intent to terminate can be expected, the Meigs Decatur Public Library reserves the right to dismiss an employee without notice in cases involving theft, drug or alcohol abuse, criminal activity, or in instances of significant misconduct.
4. Drug-Free Workplace Policy
  - a) In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited while performing work for the Meigs County - Decatur Public Library, whether that work is carried out in the workplace building or not. All employees shall abide, as a condition of employment, by the terms of this notice and shall notify the library director or board within five (5) days of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace.
  - b) Failure to comply with the above requirements shall be grounds for appropriate personnel action against such employee up to and including termination, or such employee may be required to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.
5. Sexual Harassment Policy
  - a) Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Title VII (federal law). Sexual harassment, either verbal or physical, is an unlawful employment practice and will not be tolerated by the Meigs Decatur Public Library.



- b) The Meigs Decatur Public Library accepts and adheres to all definitions and procedures outlined in the law as regards sexual harassment. Any employee who engages in sexual harassment will subject themselves to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
6. Resignation and Retirement Policy
- a) A library employee wishing to resign or retire from employment must notify the director or the library board as soon as practicable. The library requests a minimum notice of two weeks. For the library director a notice of at least one month is preferred.
  - b) The employee must submit a formal, written resignation statement giving the exact date that employment is to be terminated. Between the time of notice and the time when employment ends a final performance appraisal will be conducted.
  - c) If the employee is entitled to benefits (such as earned, unused vacation) a lump sum payment can be made to the employee.
7. Grievance Procedure
- a) It is the intent of the Meigs Decatur Public Library that every employee shall have the opportunity to express concerns relating to the physical surroundings in which the employee works, procedures and conditions of the specific position, relationships with fellow workers or supervisors, and library rules as they apply to staff. A concern or grievance should follow the procedure below:
    - (1) If possible, discuss the problem with the director. In the case of the director having a concern, this should be discussed with the board president.
    - (2) If the director is part of the problem, or if the board president is part of the director's problem, the concern/grievance should be submitted in writing for the library board and be delivered to the director, who will deliver the statement to the board president. The board president will, in turn, present the concern to the full board at the next or a special board meeting.
    - (3) The board's representative will respond to the employee within five (5) days of the board meeting at which the issue is discussed, either providing a determination, solution, or a strategy for how the board will address the issue over time.

## D. Salary and benefits

- 1. The salary and benefits of the director and all staff is established by Meigs County.
- 2. Refer to the Meigs County Employment Handbook for details on salary, benefits, and leave. Expectation are noted in this policy

3. Bereavement Leave
  - a) Library employees are eligible for three (3) days bereavement leave without loss of pay or sick leave credit in the event of the death in the immediate family, defined as spouse, children, brother, sister, or parents of either the employee or the employee's spouse.
4. Military Leave
  - a) Library employees who are duly enrolled members of the National Guard, State Guard, or any other organized reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States shall be allowed a military leave of absence which has been ordered. The leave, under normal circumstances, will not exceed fourteen (14) days excluding Sundays and legal holidays.
  - b) A copy of the order requiring attendance at military training sites shall accompany all requests for a military leave.
  - c) The library can assure no loss of wages if the employee wishes to turn all earnings from the training period in to the library board. Benefits are not affected by a military leave as long as the leave stays within the fourteen day parameter.
5. Jury Duty
  - a) In the event a library employee is called for jury duty, the library will release them and assure no loss of wages. If fees and expenses paid to jurors do not equal or exceed wages normally paid by the library, these fees can be turned in to the library board and the employee will be paid their wages as usual.

## E. Facilities

1. Responsibility for building maintenance
  - a) As the Meigs Decatur Public Library is owned by Meigs County, the Meigs County government is responsible for library maintenance.
  - b) The Facilities and Grounds Committee of the board of trustees will consult with the library director and make reports regarding necessary building maintenance to the trustees and to county government, when necessary.
  - c) The facilities will be evaluated to ensure handicap accessibility and hazards by the facilities and grounds committee on a regular basis. The findings of these evaluations will be reported to the trustees and Meigs County government.

## F. Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Plans

1. Medical Emergency
  - a) In the event of an emergency call 911.
  - b) The AED will remain in working order and library staff and volunteers will be trained on the proper use of the AED.

2. Fire
  - a) Call 911 to report the fire.
  - b) Alert all building occupants by voice and/or alarm system of the situation to start evacuation procedures. Thoroughly check the bathrooms, book stacks, meeting rooms, etc.
  - c) Standby at the gathering point of the courthouse veterans memorial until released by the fire department.
  - d) Staff will assist disabled patrons by helping them out of the building. If getting them out of the building is not possible take them to the nearest exit where the fire fighters can easily get to them.
  - e) The library director or designee will do a final check for employees or patrons in the building prior to exiting away from the danger area.
3. Weather Radio
  - a) The library will have an active weather alert radio that has a battery backup.
4. Tornado
  - a) A Tornado Watch is issued when there is a potential for tornadic activity in the area. Staff should alert patrons of the watch. No other action is necessary and you should continue work as usual.
  - b) If a Tornado Warning is issued staff will alert patrons and escort them to shelter immediately in the interior restroom.
  - c) Remain in designated area until the all clear is given.
5. Inclement weather
  - a) In the event of inclement weather or the forecast of inclement weather, the library director may alter the hours of operation for the library. In the event of a change in operating hours, public notice will be made.
  - b) Notice to trustees chair will be made as soon as possible.

## VI. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Meigs Decatur Library Board of Trustee By-laws

#### Article I

##### Name

This organization is the Meigs Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees of Meigs County Tennessee. This Board is established according to the provisions of Title 10 of the Tennessee Code Annotated, and is exercising the powers and assuming the duties granted to it under said statute.

Mission: This Board is organized to foster and promote library development and library services in Meigs County.

#### Article II

##### Membership

**Section 1. Appointment and Terms of Office.** The Board shall consist of seven (7) members, all members of Meigs County. In accordance with TCA 10-3-103, Library Board members may serve for two (2) consecutive terms of three (3) years. Member appointments shall be staggered. At the end of two (2) consecutive terms, a board member must be off the board for at least three (3) years.

When the terms are completed or is vacancies arise the Board Chairman shall send letters of recommendation for Board members to the office of the Meigs County Mayor. The new member shall be appointed by the Meigs County Commission.

**Section 2. Meeting Attendance.** Members shall be expected to attend all meetings except as they are prevented by a valid reason. Three unexcused absences within one fiscal year shall cause the board to contact the appointee and the Meigs County Commission be notified.

#### Article III

##### Officers

**Section 1. Officers.** The officers shall consist of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer.

**Section 2. Duties of Officers.** Officers will perform the usual prescribed duties for their offices according to Robert's Rules of Order and the Tennessee Code Annotated.

#### Article IV

##### Meetings

**Section 1. Regular Meetings.** The regular meetings shall be held of the third Tuesday every other month starting with January at 5:30 pm in the library. All Board meetings shall be held in compliance with Tennessee's Open Meeting Law (TCA8-44-108). Special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson or any two members. Special meetings must follow the same rules as a regular meeting.

**Section 2. Quorum.** A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of four (4) members of the Board present in person. After the establishment of a quorum, an affirmative vote of the majority of all members present at that time shall be necessary to approve any action before the Board.

**Section 3. Minutes.** Minutes of all meetings shall, at a minimum, indicate board members present, all business, all motions (except those that were withdrawn), and the results of all votes taken. Board minutes shall be retained on file with the Board Chair, kept in the library and sent to the Ocoee Regional Library. These shall be made available for public view if requested. The minutes shall be available for public view electronically if requested.

**Section 4. Elections.** Election of officers shall take place the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the fiscal year.

**Section 5. Amendments.** Any of these by-laws may be changed, amended or repealed at any regular meeting by a majority of all members present, provided each member has been duly notified in writing (or electronic e-mail) ten (10) days in advance of the intent to do so.

#### Article V

#### Library Director

The library director shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees and shall be responsible to the Board. The library director shall be considered the executive officer of the library under the direction and review of the Board and subject to the policies established by the Board. The director shall act as a technical advisor to the Board. The director shall be invited to attend all Board meetings (but may be excused from closed sessions) and shall have no vote. Performance reviews of the director shall be preformed annually in July.

## Appendix 2. Friends of the Library By-Laws

## Appendix 3. The 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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

"Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, June 30, 2006.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> (Accessed July 29, 2021)

## Appendix 4. 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:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

"The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed July 29, 2021)

## Appendix 5. Statement of Concern About Library Resources