

POLICY STATEMENT CONCERNING USE OF MEETING SPACE AT HANNIBAL  
FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Adopted: November 10, 2014; amended June 20, 2023

Hannibal Free Public Library maintains two Meeting Rooms as well as other programming space throughout the building. Provision of meeting space is intended to further the Library's mission by facilitating the exchange of diverse information and ideas. The Library recognizes that public meetings foster the enrichment of personal lives, the development of the human spirit, the cultivation of the pursuit of education, and the promotion of reading and literacy. The Library welcomes groups and organizations to reserve one or both of its Meeting Rooms when they are not needed for Library activities.

The primary purpose of meeting space is for Library activities, including meetings and programs conducted by or presented by Library staff, the Friends of the Library, GFWC Woman's Club of Hannibal, or other organizations affiliated with the Library. Space for one-on-one and small group literacy tutoring, whether volunteer, paid by the school district, or privately paid, has priority use of the Meeting Rooms after Library activity needs are met. City government activities also have priority use of the Meeting Rooms.

When a Meeting Room is not being used for a Library, literacy, or City government activity, the space is made available to groups and organizations for general information, and for educational, cultural, and civic needs, including activities such as discussion groups, panels, forums, town hall meetings, lectures, conferences, seminars, and public meetings. Public use of one or both Meeting Rooms is intended to host organized meetings. The Rooms are not available for the public to use for party-type functions, routinely scheduled monthly or weekly club meetings, political rallies, religious ceremonies, corporate meetings, private interviews, personal meetings, etc.

In keeping with its role as a limited public forum, Hannibal Free Public Library has traditionally provided free meeting space for community groups when space is available. The fact that an organization is permitted to meet at the Library does not constitute an endorsement of the organization's beliefs by the Library, its staff, or the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees. Sponsorship or co-sponsorship of programs must be approved in advance by the Library Director.

Meetings and programs held in library meeting rooms must be free, open, and of potential interest to the residents of Hannibal. Access is provided on equal terms, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups. No event or presentation shall be held at the library without an age-appropriate designation affixed to any publication, website, or advertisement for such event or presentation.

The Library reserves the right to revoke or modify permission to use its meeting space, or to modify conditions imposed on its use, in order to adapt to the operational needs of the Library or the priority needs of Library users. Applications may be denied on the basis of

availability of space, frequency of use or requests for space by other groups and organizations, or, for other activities that are in conflict with the primary purpose of the Library or with any regulations set forth in this and public behavior policy statement of the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees. In addition, the Library reserves the right to reschedule a public meeting should the space be required for Library use. The Library also reserves the right to revoke permission previously granted if the meeting is later deemed not to comply with the Policy Statements. The Library further reserves the right to refuse future bookings to groups that fail to appear on scheduled meeting dates and/or do not abide by the Policy Statements. Access to the Meeting Rooms and/or Library property may be denied at any time if the conduct of the group or any member of the group is disruptive or harmful to the facility, library materials, exhibits, furnishings or other individuals.

Persons or outside groups refused the use of the Library's Meeting Rooms or persons or outside groups whose privileges to use meeting space have been revoked, shall be informed of the right to appeal in writing to the Library Board of Trustees. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the Library Board within 10 days after notice of the refusal to use the Meeting Rooms or the revocation of use of the Meeting Rooms.

The Library Director may authorize additional rules that are consistent with this policy statement and assist in its implementation. The Library Director or designee will determine how to effectively post this policy. Depending on the location, it may be posted in its entirety, or broken into logical segments and partly posted. In either case, the concepts contained within reflect the decision and will of the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees of the Hannibal Free Public Library shall be the final authority in granting or refusing permission for the use of meeting space.

## **A. USERS OF THE LIBRARY'S MEETING SPACE**

- A1. Meeting space is reserved for **Library activities**, including meetings and programs conducted, sponsored, or co-sponsored by the Library, the Friends of the Library, GFWC Woman's Club of Hannibal, or other organizations affiliated with the Library. These activities, while typically occurring during open hours of operation, may be scheduled to begin and/or end before or after the library is open. Library activities are not required to be open to the public although many are open. The Library may also reserve one or both Meeting Rooms to allow time to rearrange furniture, etc. The Library may specify certain room set-ups in the Woman's Club Room during certain times of the year.
- A2. One-on-one and small group **literacy tutoring**, whether volunteer, paid by the school district, or privately paid, have priority use of the Meeting Rooms after Library activity needs are met. Upon occasion, tutoring sessions may be moved by the Library between rooms and/or to tables in

the Children's Room or Teen Zone. Tutoring sessions must occur during open hours of operation. They must conclude at least 15 minutes before the Library closes. Tutoring sessions are not open to the public.

- A3. Meetings held by governmental departments within the **City of Hannibal** also have priority use of the Library's Meeting Rooms. City government meetings may be scheduled to begin and/or end before or after the library is open. City government meetings are not required to be open to the public.
- A4. Once the space needs in 1-3, above, are met, the Library's Meeting Rooms shall be made available free of charge to **outside groups** whose memberships and/or intended audiences are composed primarily of residents of the City of Hannibal. An outside group is defined as six or more people; it may be formally organized as a not-for-profit 501(c)3, or it may be less organized as a local club. Meetings shall be open to the public. Use of the Library's Meeting Rooms shall not result in financial gain for the group or its members.
- A5. **Commercial use** of the Library's Meeting Rooms is generally not permitted. However, a commercial entity or professional practitioner may use one or both of the Library's Meeting Rooms to provide an educational program open to the general public related to his or her field of expertise. In such a case, an educational opportunity offered by an expert provides benefit to the public. During such a program, no attempt shall be made to sell, at the time of the program or in the future, a specific product or service offered by the entity or practitioner or any other commercial interest. Therefore, the individual or entity offering the program may not hand out business cards or brochures promoting any business, product, or service, and may not solicit personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) from the program participants, either as a part of a pre-registration process or during the program itself.
- A6. Musical recitals and individual practice sessions are **not permitted**. Fundraisers are not permitted. Also not permitted are political rallies, religious ceremonies, corporate meetings, private interviews, personal meetings, etc. The Library's Meeting Rooms may not be used for birthday and anniversary parties, weddings, memorial services, funerals, or other personal celebrations. Similar events sponsored by the Library, the Friends of the Library, the GFWC Woman's Club of Hannibal, or any other group affiliated with the Library are permitted.

**B. MEETING SPACES AT HANNIBAL FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

	Capacity	Library Use	Literacy Tutoring	City Govt.	Clubs & Orgs.
Woman's Club Room: standing or seated on floor	150*	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Woman's Club Room: auditorium seating (chairs only)**	110*	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Woman's Club Room: classroom or seminar seating (tables and chairs)***	50*	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Trustees Room (round table)	15-20	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Ware Room	10	xxx			
Children's Story Area	65	xxx			
Adult Table in Children's Room	4	xxx	xxx		
Magazine Room****	12	xxx			
Teen Zone****	20	xxx			
Building's Maximum Capacity	300*				

\*Maximum Capacities were established by the City of Hannibal's Fire Department on August 4, 2014.

\*\*The Library can provide 40 chairs only.

\*\*\*The Library can provide 12 tables and 40 chairs only. The Room is crowded with 10 tables.

\*\*\*\*Small groups of 2-10 people may use the Magazine Room or Teen Zone as long as their use is not disruptive.

**C. BOOKING THE ROOM(S)**

- C1. The Library's Meeting Rooms are heavily used. Literacy tutors and representatives of outside groups are encouraged to contact the Library by phone to inquire about the availability of the Meeting Rooms on the desired dates. Whenever possible, meeting room inquiries should be made at least two weeks in advance of the requested use date.
- C2. At the time of the phone inquiry, when available, the Meeting Room(s) will be reserved tentatively. The tentative booking will be held for 72 hours (3 days) to allow the tutor or outside group time to submit an application in writing and the Library Director or designee to approve or decline the reservation.
- C3. Meetings of outside groups and literacy tutors shall be held during open hours of operation and shall be finished in sufficient time to clean up and vacate the building no later than closing time.

- C4. Meeting Rooms may be reserved by tutors, City government, and outside groups and organizations a maximum of two months in advance of a public meeting. Use is granted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- C5. Literacy tutors may book the room as frequently as space is available with the understanding that their bookings may sometimes need to be moved to another venue and/or cancelled by the Library.
- C6. Under normal circumstances, City government or an outside group may not book a meeting room more than two times a month or twelve times a year. The Library shall determine any exceptions based on the space available, the time and day requested, and intervals between meetings.
- C7. Groups are not permitted to assign their reservations to other groups or organizations.
- C8. Should it be necessary to reschedule a meeting, the Library will make every reasonable effort to assist the group in reserving another date. Library staff will notify the responsible party with as much notice as possible. Should the group or organization need to reschedule or cancel, the Library shall be notified with as much notice as possible. A minimum notice of twenty-four hours is highly desired.

#### **D. APPLICATION TO USE THE ROOM(S)**

- D1. Application to use the Library's Meeting Rooms must be made in writing on the form provided with this Policy Statement. It must be signed by an adult over 18 years of age, who shall be held responsible for the use of the Room. A copy of the fully executed application will be returned to the applicant with the Library's approval or denial of the use of the Meeting Rooms within a week of the original request whenever possible. Applications may be submitted by mail, fax, or in person. Emailed applications will not be accepted.
- D2. If the Meeting Room Application is not received within 72 hours (3 days) of the initial request, the tentative booking will be released.

#### **E. FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT & PERFORMANCE RIGHTS**

- E1. Tables and chairs are furnished in both Meeting Rooms.
  - E1a. Furnishings in the Trustees Room include a large round table, seating nine or ten people, a smaller side table, and chairs around the perimeter of the room. Since most of the furnishings found in the Trustees Room are antiques, they are not to be moved into the Woman's Club Room by outside groups unless permission is granted to do so by the Library. Unless moved by Library staff, the tables are to be left in position where found.
  - E1b. Furnishings in the Woman's Club Room include a desk, two fancy chairs, and a piano. These furnishings should not be moved by outside groups. Up to forty folding chairs, twelve banquet folding tables, eight smaller folding tables, and five square card tables can be

- requested. The Library prefers to have its own staff set up the Room; however, outside groups may rearrange these furnishings, but they must be returned to the locations where found.
- E2. Equipment or furniture belonging to any group shall not be stored at the Library. The Library is not responsible for theft of or damage to property brought into the Library's Meeting Rooms.
  - E3. Because of staffing, the Library cannot provide equipment for outside groups to use in its Meeting Rooms.
  - E4. The Library's public wi-fi is accessible in the Meeting Rooms. Outside groups wanting to use the public wi-fi should make an appointment with the Library to test their equipment prior to their program. Library staff are not always be available to troubleshoot.
  - E5. Nothing can be taped, tacked, or otherwise adhered to walls, floors, or furniture.
  - E6. The Library's movie license cannot be assumed for use by an outside group using the Library's Meeting Rooms. All necessary performance licenses must be obtained in advance by the outside group when it plans to show a film, play commercially recorded music or audiobooks at a program, conduct a play reading, etc.
  - E7. The Library's Meeting Rooms must be left clean, in good repair, and in the same condition as found. Any group that damages Library property will be liable for costs incurred in connection with such damage and may lose the privilege of using the Meeting Rooms in the future.

## **F. PUBLICITY**

- F1. Applicants shall not promote their event with the Library's name and address without a signed, approved Meeting Room Application.
- F2. In publicizing a meeting to be held in the Library Meeting Rooms, the sponsoring group must be clearly identified. The sponsoring group must assign an age recommendation for the stated purpose of their meetings. Failure to advertise the age recommendation as required by the 15 CSR 30-200.015 could result in the group being prohibited from using the space in the future.
- F3. Purposes, objectives or views of groups using the meeting rooms shall not be advertised in any way to suggest that they are endorsed by the Hannibal Free Public Library. Any publicity for the meeting must include the following statement: "This is not a program sponsored by the Hannibal Free Public Library."
- F4. The Library's telephone number, website, Facebook, or email addresses shall not be included on the publicity for an outside group's use of the Library's Meeting Rooms.
- F5. An outside group's program cannot be promoted on the Library's website or listed on its calendar of events.
- F6. A sign or poster promoting an outside group's program may be placed on the public bulletin board near the elevator with prior approval of the Library; otherwise no signage about the program is permitted in the building or on the property.

- F7. The Library may choose to photograph or film activities held in its Meeting Rooms for promotional and/or historical purposes. When possible, photo releases will be obtained although these are not required in a public program setting.
- F8. The news media is always welcome to record public activities held in the Library's Meeting Rooms. This statement applies to Library-sponsored programs, open sessions of Library Board meetings, and all outside group meetings. The Library requests that the news media exercise caution when recording children's programs in the Meeting Rooms to ensure the safety of the children attending the programs. The news media is not welcome to record literacy tutoring sessions, City government meetings, Library Board Executive Sessions, or Library staff meetings.

### **G. FOOD & REFRESHMENTS**

- G1. No food or refreshments shall be served in the Woman's Club Room. Light refreshments may be served in the Trustees Room, but groups may not prepare food on Library property. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited. The Library cannot furnish cups, plates, napkins, coffee pots, bottled water, ice, etc.
- G2. Groups are responsible for cleanup. Excessive amounts of garbage (beyond the capacity of the trash receptacle provided) must be removed to the Library's garbage cans (located outside through the Children's Room) by the room user.
- G3. The library will not accept deliveries on behalf of the group. Items left in the meeting rooms will be moved to lost & found or discarded.

### **H. SOLICITING, PETITIONING & DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE**

- H1. While on Library property, an outside group may not solicit personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) from the program participants, either as a part of a pre-registration process or during the program itself. Solicitation for signatures on petitions is not permitted in the Library building. The Library provides a spot on its property where petitioning is permitted.
- H2. Outside groups may not charge or solicit admission fees or collect donations of money or other property from the audience. No promotions or sales of services, products, merchandise, materials or other items are allowed. Permitted are sales of services, products, merchandise, materials or items, or solicitations for donations authorized pursuant to a library-sponsored program or event, or on behalf of the Friends of the Library, the GFWC Woman's Club of Hannibal, or any other group affiliated with the Library. For-hire literacy tutors are encouraged to collect tuition from their students away from Library property.

- H3. Distribution of personal or group literature, business cards, brochures and other materials is permitted in the Meeting Room during use by outside groups. The Library provides a spot on its property where leafleting is permitted. Otherwise, no distribution of literature is permitted in the building or on the grounds.
- H4. Persons or groups using the Meeting Rooms shall not leave printed materials in the library building or on the property without prior approval. The Library provides a literature rack where literature may be placed after approval by the Library Director or designee.

### **I. ACCESSIBILITY**

- I1. Meetings held at Hannibal Free Public Library shall be accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should someone contact the Library to request an accommodation at a meeting of an outside group, the Library will contact the group's representative to find out what accommodation will be made. If the group is unable to make a reasonable accommodation, the Library will cancel the group's Meeting Room reservation.

### **J. ADDITIONAL TERMS OF USE**

- J1. Library staff may enter the Meeting Rooms at any time and on any occasion except during Executive Sessions of the Library Board.
- J2. Attendance in the Meeting Rooms shall not exceed the maximum occupancy set by the Hannibal Fire Department.
- J3. Groups including minors must be supervised by at least one responsible adult 18 years of age or older. The responsible adult must apply for, sign, and take responsibility for the reservation. Groups larger than 20 must have sufficient adult supervisors to maintain a ratio of at least one adult per 20 minors.
- J5. Animals involved in Library-sponsored programs are permitted. Otherwise, with the exception of service animals as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, animals may not be brought into the Library building.
- J7. Programs in the Meeting Rooms that can result in damage to the building or furnishings are prohibited. Cooking and gardening demos are prohibited. Exploding chemicals are prohibited. Lit candles are prohibited, as is any use of an open flame.
- J8. The Library building is a smoke-, tobacco-, alcohol- and drug-free environment. Meeting Room users and attendees are not welcome when under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- J9. Any group using a meeting room is expected to conduct its proceedings in a quiet, orderly manner. Groups using the room are responsible for reasonable care of the room, and will be held responsible for any damage and the general condition of the room following use. Use of the Meeting Rooms and/or access to the Library property may be denied at any time if the conduct of

the group or any member of the group is disruptive or harmful to the facility, Library materials, exhibits, furnishings or other individuals.

- J10. Sponsoring individuals and outside groups shall agree to and shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless Hannibal Free Public Library and its appointed officials, boards, committees, agents and employees (collectively, the “Library”) against all suits, actions, demands, damages, and expenses of any nature which may be brought or made against the Library or which the Library may pay, sustain, or incur by reason of the use of library facilities by sponsoring individuals or organizations.

## **AUTHORITY**

This policy replaces the following policy:

Meeting Room, adopted March 13, 2006.

The Missouri Revised Statutes (RSMO) 182.230 (2013) provides that

Every library and reading room established under sections 182.140 to 182.301 shall be forever free to the use of the inhabitants of the city where located, always subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the library board may adopt in order to render the use of the library and reading room of the greatest benefit to the greatest number. The board may exclude from the use of the library and reading room any and all persons who willfully violate such rules. The board may extend the privileges and use of the library and reading room to persons residing outside of the city in this state, upon such terms and conditions as the board, from time to time, by its regulations, may prescribe.

This policy complies with the Secretary of State’s 15 CSR 30-200.015 Library Certification Requirement for the Protection of Minors, dated February 8, 2023.

This policy has been adopted by the Hannibal Free Public Library Board of Trustees under its statutory authority to determine and govern the use of the Library’s facilities.