

Meeting Rooms and Facilities Use Policy

Date Adopted by Trustees: October 3, 2023

Purpose of Meeting Room & Facilities Use

The Board of Trustees of the Nevins Library (hereinafter referred to as “Trustees”) have formulated these policies on meeting rooms and facilities use to insure that the people of Methuen have the greatest possible access to Library services, as well as educational and cultural opportunities sponsored by the Library and other civic, social and community groups.

Meeting Rooms are made available as a public service, and booking a room in no way constitutes an endorsement of the program or philosophy of the group or the individuals using the facilities. Advertisements or announcements implying such endorsements are prohibited. Groups and individuals may use the Library’s facilities for a variety of purposes. It is the purpose of the Trustees to provide space for activities which have a substantial nexus to the Methuen community. The Trustees reserve the right to place restrictions on meeting room use in the event that the time, place and manner of the proposed use is not consistent with the Library’s operations and goals.

Meeting Rooms, Library grounds and other Library spaces are available for educational, informational, artistic, recreational, civic and limited commercial purposes provided that such use does not interfere with regular Library services or programs and that those groups using the facilities conform to the rules of the Library’s policies. Failure to conform to the rules will result in cancellation of any meetings scheduled, and permanent revocation of a group’s privilege to use Library facilities. Attendees of meetings and events must also conform to the Library’s “Patron Behavior Guidelines” as posted on the Library’s website.

Exceptions to this Policy may only be made at the discretion of the Trustees as in its sole discretion deems in the interests of the Library and the community. The Library Trustees reserve the right to refuse the use of the facilities or to cancel any reservation when they deem the action in the best interest of the Library or the City of Methuen (hereinafter referred to as “City”). Regular Library service and Library-sponsored activities take precedence over all other activities and meetings/programs of any outside organization. If any proposed meeting is deemed likely to interrupt regular Library service, or if the attendance at any meeting will prove a disruption to Library patrons, either because of noise or parking limitations, the request for meeting space may be denied. The Trustees must determine that any proposed meeting or activity would be in compliance with all the rules and regulations set out in this document and in compliance with all Library policies and guidelines. In making said determination the Trustees may consider the contents of the application form, the history of the applicant’s use of Library facilities, the history of the applicant’s use of facilities elsewhere, and such other information as they may deem appropriate.

No non-Library organization or individual may book any meeting room(s) more than 12 times in any calendar year, and no meeting room may be booked more than twelve months in advance. Twice yearly (in January and September) the meeting room schedule will be evaluated to ensure no organizations are monopolizing space. While organizations are welcome to meet at the Library, they should in no way assume that they will meet in perpetuity at the Library, and the Library will not serve as headquarters, or provide the mailing address for any organization except the Friends of the Nevins Library.

The Library reserves the right to move meetings from one room to another based on the varying needs of the Library and different groups using the facilities. Groups which are booked for a monthly meeting may expect to be moved based on other reservations.

Any group meeting at the Nevins Library must be sponsored by a Methuen resident. The Methuen resident must sign the Meeting Room Request form, and be available to Library staff to address questions or concerns about the meeting. Limited exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Trustees in the case of providing space for a Methuen-based business for non-commercial purposes. Non-profit organizations and state agencies which serve the Methuen community may also request a meeting room.

All meetings and activities held at the Library or on the grounds must be open to the public, or be held by organizations which have membership open to the public. Private parties and fundraisers by invitation only are not permitted. No admission fee may be charged, except with the express permission of the Library Director in consultation with the Trustees, or unless the event directly benefits the Library.

Meeting Rooms Available

The Nevins Library has four public meeting rooms which are available for use. All rooms are ADA compliant, have wireless internet access, and have easy access to bathroom facilities. Each has slightly different policies governing use.

The Hall

The Hall seats over 150 people. It has a stage (no stage lighting installed) **and** an open floor plan¹. This room has a public address system, a podium, a piano, a screen, a digital projector and wireless internet access. There is a small kitchen area (no stove or hotplate) in the rear. The Hall may not be used for private functions, but is available for rent for public programs and some functions. A rental fee is charged for this space for afterhours use. Cleaning fees may be charged.

[Events while the Library is Closed](#)

¹ A balcony is also available in the Hall for non-public use. For example, it could be used as a camera location when filming an event.

\$400 for the first two hours (minimum) + \$100 per hour for each additional hour (including setup/cleanup time.)

Plus

\$75 per hour for each staff member on site (3 hour minimum)

Plus

\$150 cleaning fee if any food or beverage is served

The Trustees Room

The Trustees Room is a small conference room which seats 10 people. It has a coat closet, a whiteboard, a sink, and a coffee counter. There is no charge for use of the Trustees Room during Library hours.

The Garden Room

The Garden Room seats up to 40 people. It has a sink, a small area of laminated floor where refreshments may be served, and a wall projection area. Six folding tables with chairs, or up to 40 chairs may be used in this room. There is no charge for the use of the Garden Room during Library hours. Availability of this room is limited since it is frequently used for Library programs.

The Study Room

The Study Room is a small room at the back of the Children's Room which seats approximately 12 people. Normally there are two tables pushed together in a square in the center of the room, with chairs around them. Reconfiguration options in this room are limited. There is a whiteboard as well as a wall projection area.

General Guidelines & Policies

- 1) Designated Library staff members will make all reservations. Any Methuen resident at least 18 years of age who wishes to request a meeting room must fill out a Meeting Room Request form, and speak to designated staff if there are any questions or concerns.
- 2) A Meeting Room Request form must be filled out before a request will be considered. This form must be signed by a Methuen resident who will be responsible in the event of any problems, damages or cancellations.
- 3) **No applicant should consider that they have booked a room until their request has been confirmed by a designated member of the Library staff.**
- 4) Meeting rooms may be booked a maximum of 12 times per year by any one organization or individual, and may be reserved no more than twelve months in advance. Groups wishing to book multiple meetings may file one request form, but must fill out a new one when booking a new "batch" of meetings, and must update their request form annually.

- 5) Attendance is limited to the seating capacity of the room assigned. Seating capacity limits and fire codes are strictly enforced.
- 6) Applicants may request a certain room; however, the Library reserves the right to assign rooms. Assignments may be changed at the discretion of the Library Director and designated staff. Library and Friends of the Library activities take precedence over all other meetings. Outside meetings and programs may be “bumped” for Library use, although the staff will always attempt to give as much notice as possible to groups previously booked.
- 7) Use of the Library building during hours when the Library is normally closed is limited. Designated Library staff must be on site at all times when the building is in use. If facilities usage falls outside of regular Library hours, staff members must be compensated for their time by the organization which has booked the meeting room. Any after-hours use must be previously approved by the Library Director, and the Director has the right to decide how many staff members must be on site and what areas can be used, to ensure the security of the facility. Staff compensation rate is noted on page 2 of this policy.
- 8) Keys will not be issued to any person or group except Library employees.
- 9) In publicizing an event, the Library must not be listed as a sponsor unless express written permission from the Library director or their designee has been given to do so. Publicity may give the name and address of the Library as the meeting location, but may not use the Library’s phone number, or invite potential attendees to contact the Library for information. Use of the Library’s logo is also strictly prohibited without express written permission. Failure to adhere to this guideline may result in event cancellation and the revocation of future event reservations.
- 10) The Library is required to collect usage statistics. The applicant must check in at the Main Desk upon arrival, and check out at the Main Desk when leaving, in order to report the number of people in attendance at their activity.
- 11) Meetings and events must end 15 minutes before the Library closes in order for the building to be cleared. If any group is responsible for staff staying past closing time (except by pre-arrangement), the group will be billed for the cost of keeping the entire shift late. This charge will be a minimum of \$150.
- 12) Parking at the Library is limited; and when the Library is open, some spaces should be available for Library patrons who wish to conduct regular Library business and for staff. During busy times, the applicant and their attendees may be asked to park elsewhere. Alternate suggestions for parking will be provided at the time of the room booking.
- 13) Neither the Library nor the City will assume the cost for security for any organization which uses the Library facilities. The Library Director and Trustees, in consultation with the Methuen Police Department when necessary, will determine if security is needed for a group meeting. In making this determination, the Library may take into consideration the contents of the application form, the applicant’s history of meetings at the Library and elsewhere, and other information the Trustees or the Police deem appropriate. If so determined:
 - The applicant will assume the entire cost for security both inside and around the building. This may include hiring a Methuen Police detail to direct traffic on Route 28. In general, any event at which more than 100 people are expected may be required to hire a police officer to direct traffic.

- The applicant must make arrangements to hire a police officer directly through the Methuen Police Department. The Library will take no responsibility for hiring or paying for a traffic detail for outside organizations. Security must be provided by the Methuen Police Department; outside security firms are not allowed.
- 14) Applicants are responsible for the supervision of all children who accompany meeting attendees. Children must be supervised by an adult who must remain with them at all times. Children will only be allowed to use the computers if they have their caregiver's permission and supervision, and if the Library is open.
 - 15) Groups using the Library meeting spaces cannot solicit patrons for attendance, money, or other support, other than by requesting to have a flyer displayed or posted on a kiosk.
 - 16) Storage of materials prior to or following an event is not allowed. The Library and staff are not responsible for anything left on the premises at any time. The Library will not store anything for groups even if they meet regularly at the Library. The Library is not responsible for loss, theft or damage to any equipment or belongings brought in by an applicant or the people attending a meeting or event.
 - 17) Tutoring is allowed in the Library as long as it does not interfere with other users' enjoyment of the facilities. Due to the high demand for use of the meeting rooms, tutors are not allowed to book rooms.
 - 18) Schools requesting that Library staff proctor exams should refer to the Library's Exam Proctoring Policy found on the Library's website.
 - 19) Nothing may be affixed to walls, windows or ceilings, and no signs may be posted inside or outside of the building without the permission of the Library Director or, in their absence, the building supervisor. Helium balloons are not permitted.
 - 20) Library staff will complete room set up per the agreed-upon specifications as discussed during the room request process. Any Library equipment to be used must be requested at the time of the room booking. Applicant is responsible for any damage incurred to Library equipment and their own equipment, and may be charged a repair or replacement fee for damaged or lost Library equipment.
 - 21) Cancellation of a room reservation should be done as soon as possible, and at least 48 hours prior to the event. Please be considerate of staff time for set up of your event, and the potential for others to use the space. Failure to notify the Library of a cancellation, or repeated no-shows may result in the revocation of future privileges or the assessment of a fee to cover the Library's costs. Applicant is responsible for cancelling any outside services or groups that may have been booked (police detail, caterer, entertainment, etc.) In the event of the Library's cancellation of an event due to circumstances beyond its control (weather, power outage, etc.) every effort will be made to reschedule the event at a mutually agreeable time.
 - 22) Applicants are expected to treat Library users and staff with courtesy and follow the Library's "Patron Behavior Guidelines" which are posted on the Library website and can be provided to you on request. Library use requires that there be no excessive noise on the premises. Groups entering and exiting meeting rooms should be aware that Library patrons may be trying to read or study; they are asked to be respectful. Some groups wishing to use the meeting rooms for events that may be excessively noisy may not be allowed to book a room. Groups must cooperate with Library staff in trying to keep noise to a minimum.
 - 23) Applicants sponsoring events are responsible for the liability of participants, both those

active in the event and those in the audience. Neither the Trustees, nor the City, will accept responsibility for injury to persons or property that occurs on Library property. (See Indemnification & Insurance clause on page 8 of this policy.)

- 24) The Library is not responsible and assumes no liability for any damages suffered directly or indirectly by the individual, group, organization or participant due to the use of any information deemed sensitive, confidential or personal, including any communication sent or received.
- 25) The Library is not responsible and assumes no liability for data or files stored on its computers or any electronic device.
- 26) The Library is not responsible for any damage to any device or corruption of data, including damage caused by mechanical malfunction or contamination caused by virus or spyware infection while using Library computers or Library wireless internet.
- 27) Library staff reserve the right to inspect the room at any time during an event.
- 28) Library staff is not responsible for delivering messages to anyone attending a meeting or program in the Library.
- 29) Library staff has the full authority to insure that all the provisions of the rules and regulations are observed.
- 30) The Library reserves the right to refuse or revoke use to any group which has failed to comply with these meeting room policies, which has violated any stated conditions for use, or which has caused a disruption in regular Library operations. Any question of interpretation of this policy will automatically be referred to the Trustees and no further meetings will be booked for the group until a decision has been rendered at the Trustee's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Food/Refreshments

Applicants must make their own arrangements for food, beverages, and paper goods (including tablecloths.) Any caterer hired by the applicant must be approved in advance and should visit the building to review the available facilities. Some coffeemakers are available, but supplies must be brought by the applicant. Only light refreshments only may be served in the Trustees and Garden Rooms. The Hall may be used for larger meals and events. Please note that events in the Hall that have any food or beverages will require a minimum \$150 cleaning fee. The applicant must specify their plans for refreshments when requesting any room.

Applicants must tidy up following the event, such as placing all trash in the provided receptacles, wiping up spills, etc. If anything other than the normal cleaning is required after the room has been used, the applicant will be charged an additional cleanup fee of a minimum \$150 or the cost of cleaning the area if it is more than that. This includes carpet cleaning if necessary.

- Alcohol is not allowed on the premises.
- Smoking is not allowed on the premises.
- No open flame is allowed in the building or on Library property. (Sterno cans for heating food may be used with express permission of the Library Director, but such use may be restricted to licensed caterers.)

Audiovisual Equipment

The following audiovisual equipment is available for use by groups:

DVD Player	3 – Tripod Easels
Podium	Portable Sound System
Flip Chart (Bring your own markers)	Projection Screen (non-portable)
Projector	Laptop (Windows Operating System)
OWL (Video-Conferencing Camera & Microphone)	Whiteboard Easel (bring your own dry-erase markers)
Apple Port Adapter	Wireless Microphone
Microphone Stands	2 Hand held microphones
Simultaneous Translation Audio System	Assistive Listening System

In the case that equipment in short supply is requested by multiple applicants, then the equipment will be reserved for the applicant who submitted their request first; Library programs requiring the equipment will take priority.

The Library keeps its equipment in good operating order; however, the Library is not responsible for the failure of any equipment provided. Applicants are responsible for checking the equipment in advance of the meeting, and for reporting any equipment failure (i.e. bulbs need replacing, etc.) immediately.

Other Information

Clean Up Fees:

In the event that an applicant leaves a room very messy or dirty, a cleanup fee will be assessed, even if the applicant was not charged for the room. The minimum cleanup fee will be \$150 and more will be charged in the event that the cost of cleanup is excessive. The staff will determine if more than normal wear and tear resulted from an applicant's use of the room.

Payment:

Payment for Room Fees should be made prior to, or on the day of the event. Staffing fees must be paid on the day of the event to the staff member present. Upon request, the Library will invoice the organization for fees. Checks must be made payable to the Nevins Library. Requests for fee waivers must be addressed to the Trustees. Such requests must be made at least two months in advance of an event in order to give the Board time to consider the request.

Transporting Equipment

The Library can provide a two-wheeled dolly for assisting in moving food and equipment into the building, but applicants should not expect staff to assist.

Library Grounds

The Trustees and the City assume no liability for the use of the Library grounds or parking lots. Any activities held on the Library grounds must have the express permission of the Library Director. The grounds are open primarily to Library-related usage, and may be used by individuals on a limited basis for personal use as a public park. The parking lot and grounds may not be used for groups/parties during Library-open hours.

Snow Days/Emergency Closings

Occasionally the Library is forced to close due to weather or other emergency. Library closings are announced on Library social media and website. In the event of an emergency closing, the Library staff will make an attempt to contact applicants who have meetings or activities scheduled at the Library, but it is the responsibility of the applicant to ascertain that the Library is open by calling or checking Library social media or website. The Library will make an attempt to reschedule the event at a mutually agreeable time, but cannot guarantee any specific dates, unless a snow date has been previously arranged. One snow date per meeting/event may be requested. The Library is not responsible for any damages or problems caused by a cancellation due to an emergency or weather-related closing.

Indemnification and Insurance

All applicants using any of the meeting rooms or areas on the premises shall execute and deliver a written undertaking in a form prescribed by the Trustees by which such groups shall agree to hold the Trustees, the City and all Library staff, harmless from and to indemnify them against all costs, damages, losses, claims, expenses incurred, directly or indirectly, as the result of an applicant's use of a meeting space. Such costs, damages, losses, claims and expenses shall include, without limitation, any damage to the meeting room or any other part of the building, grounds or collections; the cost of employee overtime, if occasioned by the use of the premises; the cost of police protection, if deemed necessary by the Trustees; and any claim asserted by any third person against the Trustees, the City and/or any Library staff on account of any alleged injury causally related to the meeting, together with the defense costs including reasonable attorneys' fees.

The said written undertaking shall also constitute a release by the applicant and each and all of its members and guests of any claim against the Trustees, the City, and the Library staff for any injury to persons or damage to property suffered by such group or any of its members or guests during or as a result of the use of the meeting room, except insofar as such injury or damage is directly and solely caused by the negligence or intentional misconduct of any persons belonging or acting on behalf the Trustees, the government of the City of Methuen, or the Library staff.

The Trustees reserve the right to require any applicant group to supply a certificate of insurance from an insurer licensed to do business in Massachusetts, in such amount and in such form as the Trustees may reasonably deem appropriate, such amount not to exceed \$1million, naming the Trustees as an additional insured, and covering damage to the building, grounds and collections and injury to persons occasioned by the meeting. Such certificate shall evidence that the insurance it represents is

not cancelable except on at least ten (10) days written notice to the Trustees. In the event of such cancellation, the meeting or event shall be cancelled unless the applicant forthwith substitutes a new insurance certificate meeting the aforesaid requirements.