

Portland Library

20 Freestone Avenue

Portland, CT 06480

860-342-6770

Meeting Rooms

Statement of Purpose

The Board of Directors of the Portland Library views the use of the library meeting rooms as a library service. The rooms shall be available to the library community in its broadest sense and shall reflect the educational, cultural, social and recreational role the Library plays.

The Library Board subscribes to Article IV of the Library Bill of Rights, which states that facilities shall be made available to the public served by the given library on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Availability

The Portland Library has five meeting rooms available for public use:

Mary Flood Room---capacity 90 people

Wagner Room---capacity 25 people

Van Beynum Room---capacity 15 people

Conference Room---capacity 8 people

Buck Room---capacity 6 people

The size of the group seeking use of the room will determine which room is made available to them. A larger room will not be booked if a smaller room is available which will comfortably accommodate the group. Individual study and tutoring may take place only in the Study Rooms (Buck Room and Conference Room), with the exception that the Van Beynum Room may also be used for this purpose if those rooms are not available. Please see Tutoring Policy

- a. Meeting rooms are generally available during hours when the library is open to the public.
- b. Groups using the Mary Flood Room may be allowed to stay beyond the time at which the library is open to the public, providing that a representative of the group is trained by library staff in closing procedures. Any extra cost associated with improper closing shall be at the expense of the group. Critical Town Meeting groups using a room other than the Mary Flood room may stay beyond closing time only if they move their meeting to a designated area where they can monitor people entering and exiting the building.
- c. As the Mary Flood Room is the polling place for Portland's elections, there will be no use of the Flood Room during the time that elections and referenda take place, and for a period, agreed upon with the Town Clerk, prior to these events, to accommodate set up and security of the voting equipment.

Application for Use of Meeting Rooms

Definition: **Critical Town meetings:** Meetings of the Board of Selectmen, The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetlands Commission, and other municipal commissions.

In case of conflict, the priority in booking for meetings:

- 1) Critical Town Meeting with the exception: a previously scheduled library program when another venue can appropriately accommodate the Town group.
- 2) Library and library affiliated groups or programs
- 3) Portland non-profit and Civic organizations or groups whose activities will benefit the citizens of Portland
- 4) Non-profit and civic organizations not relating to Portland

a. The meeting rooms shall be available for booking to groups or individuals on a first come, first served basis, in accord with the following guidelines:

The Critical Town Meeting groups shall request their regular meeting dates after Thanksgiving and before December 15th, for the subsequent calendar year.

Scheduling

Scheduling of the meeting room use for all groups, excluding the Library and the Critical Town Meetings, shall be requested according to the following time table:

1. For the period from January through March, the earliest date at which a group may request a booking is December 16th of the prior year.
 2. For the period from April through June, the earliest date at which a group may request a booking is the February 16th prior to the period.
 3. For the period from July through September, the earliest date at which a group may request a booking is May 16th prior to the period.
 4. For the period from October through December, the earliest date at which a group may request a booking is August 16th prior to the period.
- b. Booking and inclusion in the Library's calendar cannot be guaranteed unless requests are received at least two weeks prior to use. Excepting use of the study rooms for individual study, meeting room requests by first-time use by a group should be received no later than one week prior to the date of use.
- c. To book a room, a representative of the group must fill out and sign a meeting room application form. **Fax, or written application, sent by mail, e-mail, or hand-delivered, is required. The Library shall respond to requests within three business days of receipt.**

d. Groups who have booked a room must notify the Library as soon as possible in advance of the meeting date if they decide not to use the room.

e. No fees are charged for use of the meeting rooms during library hours, but donations are welcome, and will be deposited into the Memorial Fund.

Limits:

a. Except for Critical Town Meetings and library-sponsored programs, groups shall be limited to regular bookings of no more than once a month. Groups with no Portland affiliation are limited to three uses of the larger meetings (Mary Flood or Wagner Room) between the respective periods from January to June and July to December.

b. The library reserves the right to limit the number of group meetings being held concurrently to two.

Eligibility

a. The rooms shall be used only for non-commercial, tax-exempt, cultural, civic, professional, educational or governmental purposes.

b. The study rooms may be booked by individuals or tutors for quiet study. See also: Tutoring policy for application and guidelines.

c. Groups of juveniles under the age of 18 may use the meeting rooms only with verified adult supervision, including one adult per each group of ten (10) juveniles present. An individual of high school age may use a study room for individual private study without adult supervision.

d. The use of a room by any group or individual does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's or individual's policies or beliefs by the Library or the Town of Portland.

e. Political rallies for the purpose of supporting or opposing a specific candidate shall not be held in the Library.

f. The Library reserves the right to seek references of any group before booking the room.

g. Meetings that interfere with normal library use shall not be permitted. In the case of a safety concern, the Library Director shall have the discretion to close the Library.

Guidelines and Responsibilities

a. Supervision and Responsibility for order

The organization using the meeting room is responsible for supervising the meeting and ensuring that meeting attendees shall adhere to **the Library's Behavior and Environment Policy**.

Attendees and their children shall comply with **Child Behavior and Supervision Policy**. A child or children accompanied to the library by a user of a meeting room may not be left unattended in the library or in a meeting room. Failure to comply with or enforce compliance with either or both Behavior and Environment Policy and Child Behavior and Supervision policy may result in a cancellation of the event and/or a denial of future use of a meeting room.

- b. Groups using the meeting rooms will be responsible for arranging
 - 1. Restoring the room to the same condition in which it was found;
 - 2. Costs arising from any damage or loss during use;
 - 3. If the kitchen is used, leaving the kitchen in clean, orderly condition.
 - 4. **Set up of AV equipment** may be performed by the Library providing it is requested at the time of application and staff are available at the appropriate time.
- c. Applicant supplies a request for set up of the room at the time of application. Groups may be asked to set up for their meeting including arranging chairs, tables, etc. A statement of sponsorship must appear in all advertising and press releases using the following phrase: “This program is sponsored by (organization’s name) and will be held in the _____ meeting room of the Portland Library.”
- d. Groups may serve refreshments during meetings. In the Mary Flood Room, the kitchen area may be utilized but it must be left in a clean and orderly condition. Alcoholic beverages may not be served in the Library. **The Library is a Smoke-free building.**
- e. Groups, excepting Critical Town meeting groups, may not store materials at the Library. No group may use the Library as its mailing address.
- f. Materials shall not be affixed to wall surfaces without prior written permission.
- g. The Library shall not be responsible for damage or loss to equipment, supplies, exhibits or exhibit materials, or any other items owned by an individual or group and used in the meeting rooms.
- h. The Library reserves the right to enter a meeting room at any time during Meetings.
- i. Groups using the rooms must fill out an attendance form and make it available to the library staff.
- j. Groups using a room that is not secure must leave promptly before the Library closes.
- k. Tutors using the study rooms for the first time shall receive a copy of the Tutoring policy.
- l. Users of the library’s audio-visual equipment must be trained in advance and will be held responsible for any damage to hardware.
- m. Liability

1. The library reserves the right to require that groups or individuals provide a certificate of comprehensive general liability insurance with minimum coverage of one million for property damage and personal injury arising of use of the facility.
 2. The applicant shall be required to pay in advance, either through a cashier's check or a surety bond, the cost estimated by the Director of any security measures which are reasonable or necessary for the meeting.
- n. Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the Library Director or his/her designee.
- o. A copy of this policy will be given to the group representative.
- p. The Library Board and the Town of Portland or their employees or agents are not liable for any claims arising out of the use of this facility.
- q. Failure to act in accord with this policy may result in cancellation of a meeting and/or future denial of meeting room privileges for any group or individual.

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