

**GEORGE H. STOWELL FREE LIBRARY
CORNISH FLAT, NH**

BYLAWS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES

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(Revised 09/19/2023)

**GEORGE H. STOWELL FREE LIBRARY
CORNISH FLAT, NH**

BYLAWS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES

ARTICLE 1 - PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this instrument is to establish rules and by-laws for the governing of the George H. Stowell Free Library ("Library"), Cornish, New Hampshire, and for the conduct of meetings of the Trustees ("Trustees"). The requirements of RSA 91-A: 1, et seq., are incorporated by reference herein.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 2 - NAME

- 2.1 Name - The "George H. Stowell Free Library" is the name of the organization that was established by vote of the 1910 town meeting and provides library service within the Town of Cornish, NH. The current library building has been in use since 1910 (the building was dedicated in 1912).
- 2.2 Powers and Duties - The Library possess the power and authority and assumes the duties and responsibilities provided under the laws of the State of New Hampshire.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 3 - MISSION STATEMENT

- 3.1 The George H. Stowell Free Library (the "Library") will perpetuate George H. Stowell's interest in the intellectual welfare of the town and its people. The Library is committed to providing resources adequate to serve the varied needs of the patrons of Cornish and to providing equal opportunity for everyone to access, share, and create information.
- 3.2. Our goals are to furnish library patrons of all ages with a variety of informational resources, to assist members of the community in their educational and cultural endeavors, and to preserve the heritage of the library for current and future Cornish residents. Freedom of speech, freedom of information, and the right to privacy are cornerstone principles for all library policies, programs, and services.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 4 – CORE VALUES

- 4.1 RESPECT – To treat all patrons and visitors with dignity.
- 4.2 ACCESS – Enable others in their personal endeavors while at the library, breaking down barriers that prevent people from accessing information. We strive to provide services to effectively bring information to the user in a form that is efficient and relevant, whether its purpose is for intellectual engagement or fun.
- 4.3 KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION – To assist the townspeople with their intellectual interests through the use of multimedia and traditional print formats to engage the reader in the intellectual pursuit of knowledge for its own sake as well as for the betterment of the individual and society.
- 4.4 STEWARDSHIP – To be innovative in the ways and methods by which individuals acquire knowledge and utilize the library services.
- 4.5 PASSION – To assist others to the best of our abilities, seeking answers to questions, and aiding in the greater good of the people with enthusiasm and a positive attitude.
- 4.6 TEAMWORK – To work together, celebrating and utilizing the benefits of the diversity of our experiences.
- 4.7 COMMUNITY – To create an environment for people to join together in their quest for knowledge, whether personal, academic, or social and to provide the type of materials that people read for fun and entertainment, for the sense of intellectual engagement, and as part of the joy of the creative process.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 5 – LIBRARY POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 To assemble, preserve, and administer books and other educational material in order to promote and stimulate knowledge, wisdom, culture, and pure enjoyment for all citizens.
- 5.2 To provide a place where inquiring minds may encounter the original and critical ideas so necessary as correctives and stimulants in a society that depends for its survival on free competition in ideas.
- 5.3 To present lectures, films, or related programs from time to time that might add to the enlightenment or recreation of the community.
- 5.4 To cooperate with other public and school libraries by providing books and educational materials through interlibrary loan.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 6 – LIBRARY PROPERTY

- 6.1 All library materials held by the Library, whether print materials, CD-ROM's, videos, periodicals or other types of materials available for the public to borrow, are deemed to belong to the Library regardless of the person or institution who purchased or donated the materials.
- 6.2 In accordance to N.H. RSA 202-A: 24, “any person who shall willfully or maliciously deface, damage, or destroy any property belonging to or in the care of the library, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and forfeit the use of the library. The cost of damages (up to 3 times the cost) may be recovered in an Action in the superior court.”

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 7 – WHO MAY USE THE LIBRARY

- 7.1 The library will serve all residents of the Town of Cornish. Persons residing outside the geographical area but owning property, attending schools, or employed in Cornish may borrow books, audio books, videos and periodicals.
- 7.1.1 Adult residents of Plainfield and Meriden may borrow books, audio books, videos and periodicals. (By vote of the Library Trustees on January 8, 2018.)
- 7.2 All library material shall be available to all members of the public who are entitled to borrow materials whether in person or by Interlibrary Loans (except for reasonable restrictions on reference materials, rare or expensive materials, or computer materials).
- 7.3 Adult non-residents may borrow books through Interlibrary Loan from their hometown library that will be honored at this library.
- 7.4 Children may borrow materials from the library under their own name after the age of six. Children under six must borrow materials under their parents' name but may otherwise use the facilities of the library. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for any lost fees or fines that the child may incur.
- 7.5 The Librarian may deny any person use of the library or its services for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return books or pay penalties, destruction of library property, disturbances of other patrons, or any other objectionable conduct on library premises.
- 7.6 Visitors shall be welcome to use the facilities and resources of the library for reading and research as long as they abide by library policies and conduct themselves in a proper fashion. They may not check out items.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 8 – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

8.1 The business and affairs of the Library shall be managed by a Board of Trustees (the “Board”), consisting of three members. Those wishing to be on the board must run for office and be elected by a general vote at the annual Town Meeting. Trustees must be residents of the Town of Cornish and are elected for a term of three overlapping years. The Board of Trustees will assign to each trustee the duties of Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer at the March meeting of the Board of Trustees. If vacancies occur, the Board of Selectmen appoints members to fill those positions, with recommendations from the Trustees. If at any point in the future, the Board expands the number of members, the number shall remain as an odd number in accordance with N.H. RSA Section 202-A: 6. Trustees are to conduct themselves in accordance to the New Hampshire Public Library Code of Ethics (see Appendix C.)

8.2 TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Become educated on current library trends, including best library practices and multimedia options for knowledge acquisition,
- Represent the library in a positive manner in both public and private forums,
- Participate in continuous self-assessment, including willingness and commitment to serve the Library to the fullest capacity.
- Advise the Treasurer where necessary regarding the investment of funds and other matters pertaining to the finances of the Library,
- Prepare and maintain a manual which shall set forth all pertinent policy decisions (other than personnel policy) adopted by the Board of Trustees,
- Maintain a list of all pending policy issues,
- supervise the buildings and grounds used by the George H. Stowell Free Library and prepare and keep current a list of items requiring service or repair,
- Prepare and keep current an inventory of items requiring an expenditure of capital,
- Consult with the Librarian at least annually concerning any of the foregoing items and with respect to the maintenance of the Library buildings and grounds,
- Encourage and promote the use of Library services and programs to all age groups throughout the community,
- Recruit, appoint, supervise and review performance of the librarian,
- Appoint all other employees of the library and determines their duties and wages in consultation with the librarian,
- Establish, review and revise all policies, including but not limited to personnel, material selection/use and the use of the building,
- Enforce all local, state and federal laws that pertain to the library, library employees and the accessibility of materials to the public,
- Prepare the annual budget in consultation with the librarian,
- Present and defend the budget to the Selectmen,
- Have sole authority to determine budget lines for expenditures and move monies from one budget line to another,
- Review budget on a regular basis and approve expenditures for unforeseen circumstances,

- Provide adequate insurance to cover the building equipment, collection materials, and their replacement costs,
- Adopt, review and revise bylaws, rules and regulations for the board's own transaction of business and for the governance of the library,
- Develop and approve the mission statement for the library; contribute to and approve the development of short and long term goals for the library.
- Actively participate in and contribute to the meetings and work of the board,
- Support all decisions made by the board,
- Act as a member of a board and assume individually only those duties delegated by the board,
- Acquire full knowledge and awareness of local, state and federal laws pertaining to the governance of a public library,
- Seek training opportunities for enhancing the performance of trustee duties and responsibilities,
- Advocate for the library and library service in the community, state and nation, and
- Participate in state and national library organizations.

8.3 TERM – The term of office of a library trustee shall be for three years and shall end on the day of the annual Town election. The members of the board shall have staggered terms, so that there is a level of consistency within the board. In the event of a vacancy in the office of trustee prior to the expiration of the term of that trustee, the remaining Board members shall provide a recommendation of an individual to fill the vacant Board seat to the Town Selectman. The appointed successor will remain in office for the unexpired term of the trustee who vacated the office.

8.4 OFFICERS - The Board of Trustees shall elect annually (after the town election and appointment onto the Board), from their own number, a chairperson, a treasurer, and a secretary. In an effort for the activities of the Board to be transparent and best serving the Board, the Library, and the community as a whole, consideration should be given to rotating positions and decided upon during the annual transition of members.

8.3.1 CHAIRPERSON – The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, authorize calls for any special meetings and other duties generally associated with the position. The Chairperson shall, in conjunction with the Librarian, conduct an orientation session for all new Library Trustees and shall distribute to such Trustees all relevant documents and information. The President, before any projected vacancy, shall review names of prospective Trustees with the Board and shall present to the Board of Selectmen a list of candidates in order of preference. The President is further responsible for insuring that the Librarian receives an annual performance review.

8.3.2 TREASURER – The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of such funds, record books and valuable papers constituting the property or business of the

Board of Trustees as may come into his possession as Treasurer, shall keep the funds of the Library in a banking institution in the name of the Library and shall render at each regular business meeting a report setting forth the receipts, disbursements, and the balance of the funds so held. The Treasurer shall keep accurate books of account and shall collect such monies as may from time to time be paid to the Trustees of George H. Stowell Free Library, and shall keep and disburse the same pursuant to contracts and obligations of the Library, or as otherwise ordered by the Board of Trustees.

- 8.3.3 SECRETARY – The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees and record the proceedings thereof, shall notify the members of the Board of Trustees of all meetings in accordance with the By-laws and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may from time to time require.

8.4 – CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- 8.4.1 Any potential conflict of interest on the part of any member of the Board shall be disclosed in writing to the Board and made a matter of record through an annual procedure and also when interest involves a specific issue before the Board. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made, any abstention from voting, and the actual vote itself.
- 8.4.2 As elected officials, the Trustees are governed by N.H. RSA 669:7. Trustees may recuse themselves from any vote in which there is a conflict, perceived or actual. In those cases, the Trustee shall also refrain from any discussion or participation on the issue in question. Questions regarding conflicts of interest shall be presented to and decided by the Chairperson of the Board.
- 8.4.3 Trustees shall comply with N.H. RSA 202: A -11, 14, & 17 in terms of best practices of the capacity of a volunteer Trustee of the Library. Trustees shall not be paid as employees of the library during their tenure as a Trustee.
- 8.4.4 Any matter that involves an employee who is also an immediate family member of a Trustee shall be considered to create a conflict of interest.
- 8.4.5 The Librarian may not be a Library Trustee.

8.5 – FINANCIAL POWERS OF THE BOARD

- 8.5.1 The Board shall approve a yearly budget and shall cause annual financial statements to be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures. Such financial statements shall reported by the treasurer, be reviewed by the Board, and they shall be approved by the elected members of the Board and presented at their Annual General Meeting.

8.5.2 The financial year of the Library shall begin on January 1st and shall end on December 31st.

8.5.3 The Treasurer shall keep such records as may be necessary to prepare the Library's financial statements and shall supervise the operation of such bank accounts as shall from time to time be considered necessary. The Treasurer shall present a report of the financial position of the Library to each regular business meeting.

8.6 – TRUSTEE MEETINGS

8.6.1 REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS – Regular business meetings of the Board shall be held at least four times a year on the date, place, and hour to be fixed by the Board. The Chairperson should send agenda items to each member of the Board, at least two days prior to the meeting.

8.6.2 PUBLICITY – Notice of the regular meetings of the Board shall be publicly announced in two locations at least 2 days prior thereto.

8.6.3 ANNUAL MEETING – An annual meeting shall be held at the close of the Library's fiscal year, said year to run from January 1 to December 31. The proposed library budget and any annual reports of committees shall be rendered at this meeting.

8.6.4 ELECTION OF OFFICERS - The annual election of officers shall be at the regular monthly meeting of the Board held after the annual Town Meeting (elections). This meeting shall be an organizational meeting at which officers for the ensuing year shall be elected and such other matters shall be acted upon as are customarily required after the election of trustees

8.6.5 EMERGENCY MEETINGS - Emergency meetings may be called by the Chairman when there is a situation where immediate action is deemed to be imperative and in accordance with RSA 91 - A:2.

8.6.6 QUORUM – A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of a majority of the Board.

8.6.7 ORDER OF BUSINESS – The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items, which shall be covered in the sequence shown so far as circumstances will permit:

Call to order

Roll call of members

Disposition of minutes of previous meeting

Librarian's report

Treasurer's financial report

Old business

New business

Other business
Correspondence
Citizen comments
Next Meeting Date
Adjournment

8.6.8 - CONDUCT OF MEETINGS – All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, the Open Meetings Law (RSA 91-A:2), and the laws of the State of New Hampshire.

8.6.9 - PUBLIC COMMENT - In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, any citizen may attend a regular or special meeting or any other meeting where a quorum of the Board will discuss public business. Although the right of the public to attend a public Meeting under the Open Meetings Act does not include the right to participate in the meeting and address the Trustees, the Board, as part of its agenda, shall provide time at each regular monthly meeting for comments from the public. The Board, at its discretion, may limit and announce the amount of time for public comment.

8.6.9.1 In order to provide a fair opportunity to every person that desires to address the Board of Trustee, the following guidelines apply to public comments during library board meetings

- Comments must pertain to the George H. Stowell Free Library;
- All comments shall be made with civility and courtesy;
- All speakers will be asked to begin by stating their name and address;
- Speakers are not to address nor engage in dialogue with individual trustees during the public comment period. Comments are to be addressed to the Board as a whole;
- The Board of Trustees cannot answer specific questions in dialogue format;
- Acting as a Board, and only as a Board, the trustees will consider comments and questions and may direct staff members to provide information;
- No action shall be taken during this portion of the meeting on issues raised by the public unless deemed an emergency by the Board;
- The public is not normally invited to participate or contribute to the discussion or business on the agenda of a Board meeting. An exception is a person who has been invited (ahead of time or spontaneously) to speak, make a presentation, or in some other way provides information to the Board.

8.6.10 - MAJORITY VOTE – An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the Board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action of the Board.

8.6.11 - MOTIONS – Any officer may vote upon and may move or second a proposal before the Board.

8.6.12 - MINUTES –A draft of the minutes must be written within 5 days after a meeting and available for public inspection. A link to the Library Trustees' page can be found on the Town of Cornish website. The minutes will be posted on the Library Trustees' webpage. The Board shall also maintain a copy of the minutes for inspection by the public at the Library.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 9 – LIBRARIAN

- 9.1 LIBRARIAN - The Board, as required by law, shall appoint as Librarian (the "Librarian") a person duly qualified to act as such. The Librarian shall be appointed for a term of years pursuant to N.H. RSA 202-A:15. Trustees are not eligible for appointment to the position of Librarian.
- 9.2 DUTIES – The Librarian shall be an executive officer of the Board. The Librarian shall:
- Recommend to the Board the appointment of and specify the duties for any additional employees,
 - Be responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff and volunteers, consistent with policies established by the Board of Trustees,
 - Be responsible for the efficiency of the Library service to the public,
 - Be in charge of the operation of the Library under and in accordance with the terms established in the annual budget,
 - Attend meetings of the Board of Trustees upon request of the Board or the Chairperson,
 - Make such reports and carry out such other duties as may be assigned by the Board of Trustees, all subject to the supervision and approval of the Board of Trustees.
 - Be responsible for an adequate and proper selection of books,
 - Be responsible for its financial operation within the limits of the budgeted appropriation,
 - Be responsible for adhering to all applicable Library policies, and
 - Assist the Board in the formulation and submission of an annual budget.
- 9.3 PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS – The librarian shall make hiring recommendations to the Board. The Board shall appoint (hire) all employees after consultation with the Librarian.
- 9.4 The Librarian is expected to attend all Board meetings and may participate in the discussion and offer professional advice, but may not vote upon any question. The Librarian may seek to be excused from attendance by the Board in advance of the meeting at which the Librarian does not anticipate being able to attend.
- 9.4.1 REPORTS – The Librarian shall prepare and submit to the Board at each regular meeting a report of matters concerning the Library and of the activities of the Library during the prior months and shall submit an annual report of the activities and work of the Library for the calendar year.
- 9.5 BUDGET – The Librarian shall give input when the Library Board is considering the proposed annual budget for the operation of the Library. Upon approval by the Library Board, a budget shall be submitted to the Selectmen for inclusion in the Town budget.

(Adopted: January, 2019)

ARTICLE 10 – LIBRARY HOURS

10.1 The library will be open Monday from 4pm to 6pm, Tuesday from 3pm to 6pm, Wednesday from 3pm to 6pm, Thursday from 10am to 1pm, and Saturday from 9am to 1pm.

Adopted: January, 2022

10.2 The library will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Eve and/or New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, the Friday and Saturday of the Cornish Fair, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Eve, and Christmas Eve and/or Christmas Day.

ARTICLE 11 – USE OF THE LIBRARY AS A MEETING PLACE

11.1 Use of the library as a meeting place for local organizations is subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 12 – COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- 12.1 Collection management is a system-wide approach, allowing for the most effective and efficient use of staff time and funds.
- 12.2 The library will adhere to the tenants set forth in the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A) and the Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix B) adopted by the American Library Association. The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the librarian who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees.
- 12.2.1 Patron demand is a powerful influence on library collection decisions. The general public and all staff members are welcome to recommend materials for selection.
- 12.2.2 Patrons are encouraged to write their book purchase suggestions in the notebook provided or in their Koha account. All suggestions are subject to review by the librarian.
- 12.2.3 Circulation, patron purchase requests and patron holds are all closely monitored and may trigger the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items.
- 12.2.4 The Library should not attempt to collect materials at a comprehensive or research level for any subject area other than local issues.
- 12.2.5 A broad range of materials should serve the needs of the library's patrons.
- 12.3 Responsibility for Selection of Materials - The librarian is responsible for book selection guided by the library's collection development guidelines, suggestions from patrons, reviews in professional library publications, and popular book/authors from best seller lists.
- 12.4 The library recognizes that materials selected for the collection may be controversial and that any given item may offend any individual. Selections will be made, not on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and to serving the needs of library users in accordance with the library's stated goals.
- 12.5 Selection Criteria - The criteria considered in the selection of library materials include:
- Existing library holdings,
 - Patron demand,
 - Community interest and significance,
 - Individual merit as determined by documentation, awards, professional reviews and/or subject area experts,

- Budget,
- Quality of the physical format,
- Availability of the material or information elsewhere.

12.6 Points considered in the selection of materials:

12.6.1 Objectionable language and vivid descriptions of sex and violence when dealt with realistically within the context of the book will not be criteria for rejecting the book.

12.6.2 The responsibility for children's choices in reading material rests with the parents and legal guardians. Selection of library material will not be limited by the possibility that it may come into the possession of minors.

12.6.3 Material is judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not by a part taken out of context.

12.6.4. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests of library patrons and books discussed on public media.

12.6.5. Due to limited budget and space, the Library cannot purchase all materials that are requested. Interlibrary loan may be used to obtain materials from other libraries in New Hampshire for patron use or when a request is outside the scope of the collection.

12.7 Gifts – The library accepts donations of books and other materials. The library retains the authority to accept or reject gifts with the understanding that the same standards of selection are applied to gifts and donations as to materials acquired by purchase. Gifts and donations become the sole property of the library, and the library staff makes all decisions as to the use, housing, and final disposition of the donations. The Library does not evaluate or appraise gift materials for tax purposes.

12.8 Maintaining the Collection - The library staff follows the CREW method of collection maintenance. CREW stands for Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding.

12.8.1 Weeding: A current, useful, and accessible collection is maintained through a continual evaluation and discarding/replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent on current demand, accuracy, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. The responsibility and authority for weeding print and non-print material rests ultimately with the librarian, who may delegate weeding tasks to other members of the library staff.

12.8.2 The CREW method gives six general criteria for considering weeding an item from the library's collection. These have been summed up with the acronym MUSTIE:

M= Misleading--factually inaccurate
U= Ugly--worn beyond mending or rebinding
S= Superseded by a new edition of by a much better book on the subject
T= Trivial--of no discernible literary or scientific merit
I= Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the library's community
E= Elsewhere--the material is easily obtainable from another library

12.9 Disposal of Discarded Material: Weeded materials may be disposed of at the discretion of the librarian, either through book sales, donations, or proper trash disposal.

12.10 A patron may request reconsideration of material in the library by completing the Request for Reconsideration form available from the librarian (Appendix D). After the form is submitted and has been reviewed by the trustees, they will arrange a meeting with the patron making the complaint.

(Adopted: January, 2019)

ARTICLE 13 – CIRCULATION PROCEDURES

- 13.1 Every patron must have a registration card on file before borrowing books and materials.
- 13.2 People using the library are not restricted to the number of books, audio recordings, magazines, or movies taken from the library.
- 13.3 All library materials shall be properly checked out prior to leaving the building.
- 13.4 ILL requests to other libraries may be limited to 1 or 2 at a time until a borrowing record is established, or, may be withdrawn if ILL materials are not returned in a timely fashion.
- 13.5 Loan periods - Books and audio books circulate for a four-week loan period. DVDs circulate for a one-week loan period. Books, audio books, and magazines may be renewed for one additional loan period if they are not on reserve for another patron. Exceptions to the above may be made at the discretion of the Librarian.
- 13.6 Renewals – Materials may be renewed through Koha, at the library, or by phone. Phone renewals may be done by leaving a message on the answering machine. If items are over 4 weeks delinquent, staff will inform the patron that the items must be renewed in person before further renewals or check outs may take place.
- 13.7 Placing Items on Hold - Items may be placed on hold by patrons through Koha, at the circulation desk, or via phone. A staff member will call or email the patron when the item is ready. Items will be held for one week, after that they will be passed on to the next patron or returned to the shelf.
- 13.8 Lost or Damaged Books
- 13.8.1 Koha notifies patrons via email when they have books/materials coming due. Failure to respond to this notification by returning or renewing the item may result in the loss of sign-out privileges.
- 13.8.2 Patrons with lost or damaged books are expected to pay the replacement cost. The librarian will determine the cost and notify the patron via email or telephone.
- 13.8.3 Any patron whose account is delinquent may have borrowing privileges revoked until the replacement cost is paid. Further, if any household member is delinquent, the library reserves the right to restrict the family's card and privileges.
- 13.8.4 The library reserves the right to restrict or terminate library borrowing privileges for the household of any patron who is chronically overdue with materials and/or returns materials in poor condition.

ARTICLE 14 – EXHIBITS AND DISPLAYS

- 14.1 Exhibits and displays are encouraged but are shown at the owner’s risk
- 14.2 Announcements of music and drama events, civic programs, and similar items may be displayed in the library if space is available and approved by the librarian.
- 14.3 No materials, leaflets, or posters that advocate the election of a candidate, political or otherwise, shall be displayed in the library.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 15 – GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

- 15.1 Books and other materials will be accepted on the condition that the library has the authority to make whatever disposition it deems advisable. All materials so acquired must be designated as a gift. The wishes of the donor will be respected whenever feasible.
- 15.2 Gifts of money, real property, and/or stock will be accepted if conditions attached thereto are acceptable to the Board of Trustees.
- 15.3 Personal property, art objects, portraits, antiques, and historical objects will be accepted at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
- 15.4 The library will not store materials that are not outright gifts.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 16 – BOOK DISCARD PROCEDURES

- 16.1 Books will be weeded after review of the present collection and accumulated donations using the MUSTI guidelines.
- 16.2 Books will be removed from the Koha online catalog, stamped DISCARD with the call numbers blacked out, and will be available in the on-going Book Sale section for purchase at the posted book sale prices.
- 16.3 The librarian and the trustees will dispose of the books that remain.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 17 - POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS

17.1 The G. H. Stowell Free Library offers direct, unfiltered access to the Internet and wireless Internet (Wi-Fi), as a basic service and does not place restrictions on who may use the Internet at the library. This policy and its guidelines apply to the library's Internet computers, the library's Wi-Fi, and patrons accessing these services.

17.1.1 Library patrons use the public computers and the Internet at their own risk.

17.1.2 The library's Wi-Fi access is not a secure connection. Wi-Fi users are responsible for protecting their own data.

17.1.3 The library cannot censor access to material nor protect users from information they find offensive or controversial.

17.1.4 Not all sites on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Users should evaluate Internet sources just as they do printed publications, questioning the validity of information provided.

17.1.5 The library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through the Internet, or any consequences thereof.

17.1.6 The library is not responsible for any damage to patron data that is being accessed with library equipment, or for any damage to patron devices plugged in to library electrical outlets, equipment, or connected to the library's public Wi-Fi.

17.1.7 Patrons are responsible for anything purchased via the Internet and for payment of said items. The library will not be responsible for these costs and will not involve itself in the ordering of these materials.

17.1.8 Patrons are responsible for damage to library hardware or software due to inappropriate actions or while using the computers. Willful and malicious damage to equipment will result in suspension of library services and/or prosecution of criminal charges [RSA 202-A:24]

17.1.9 Privacy on the public Internet terminals cannot be guaranteed due to provisions of the Patriot Act.

17.2 Access to the Internet will be provided during normal business hours. The same guidelines that apply to the library's Internet computers apply to those accessing Wi-Fi on a library laptop or their personal device.

17.2.1 Those accessing the library's public Internet connection are expected to use these resources in a responsible manner, consistent with the educational, informational and recreational purposes for which they are provided.

- 17.2.2 Internet access may be used for legal purposes only. Patrons must obey all applicable federal, state and local laws including, but not limited to, copyright, licensing and content restrictions.
- 17.2.3 Patrons shall not view, print, distribute, display, send or receive text or graphics that may be construed as obscene under Chapter 650 of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated.
- 17.2.4 Patrons shall not view, print, distribute, display, send or receive text or graphics that may be construed to be child pornography under Chapter 649 A or 649 B of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated.
- 17.2.5 Patrons shall not disseminate exhibit or display materials to minors that may be considered harmful to minors under Chapter 571 B of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated.
- 17.3 Internet users who are registered as G. H. Stowell Free Library patrons will check-in at the desk prior to using any library electronics.
 - 17.3.1 Guests will need to provide name, address and contact information prior to using any library electronics.
 - 17.3.2 User's will be required to read and "Accept" the library's Internet policy before they are allowed to proceed.
 - 17.3.3 Sessions are limited to one hour unless no one else is waiting. Users may print pages to a printer for a fee. (See the library's current Fines & Fees Schedule).
 - 17.3.4 Users may download material onto the computer's hard drive for temporary use.
 - 17.3.5 Users may download material from the library's public computers onto their own storage media.
 - 17.3.6 The library does not guarantee that all forms of storage media will be compatible with our public computers.
- 17.4 The library reserves the right to terminate or restrict the user's Internet privileges for abuse of these conditions or for unauthorized user of the library's Internet connection.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 18 – WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS

- 18.1 The G. H. Stowell Free Library provides wireless Internet access as a service for users with wireless enabled laptops, mobile devices, or tablets.
- 18.2 Patrons utilizing the wireless connection agree to comply with all provisions of the Library’s Public Internet Access and Appropriate Use Policy.
- 18.3 Wireless Internet users are asked to refrain from displaying materials on their personal computers, mobile devices or tablets that may be interpreted as intimidating, hostile, offensive or inappropriate. to passersby. Transmission, reception, or display of any material or communications in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited, including but not limited to unauthorized duplication of copyrighted material and/or access or dissemination of threatening or obscene material or of material protected as trade secrets.
- 18.4 The Library’s wireless connection is unencrypted and unfiltered; therefore, use of the wireless connection is done at the patron’s own risk.
- 18.5 By using this connection, patrons acknowledge that hacking and security concerns are an inherent risk associated with any wireless service.
- 18.6 Patrons expressly agree that they knowingly assume such risk, and further agree to hold the Library harmless from any claim or loss arising out of, or related to, any such instance of hacking or other unauthorized use of access into the patron’s computer, mobile device or tablet.
- 18.7 The Library accepts no responsibility for any software downloaded and/or installed, email opened, or sites accessed while patrons are using the Library’s wireless Internet connection.
- 18.8 Any damage done to the patron’s equipment or self from accessing the Internet from the Library’s wireless access point is the sole responsibility of the patron; and the patron indemnifies and holds harmless the Library from any such damage.
- 18.9 The Library accepts no responsibility regarding the ability of patron-owned equipment to connect to the wireless network and will not change settings on patron equipment, unless expressly invited to do so as part of a user’s request to troubleshoot and/or resolve the device’s connectivity issues with the library’s network.
- 18.10 Patrons shall agree to hold harmless, indemnify, and unconditionally reimburse the G. H. Stowell Free Library of any damage, liability, costs, claims, or expenses that the Library may incur that arises in any manner from any use or misuse of the Internet by a patron.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 19 -RESPONSE TO THE USA PATRIOT ACT OF 2001

- 19.1 The Board of Trustees recognizes the confidentiality of information sought or received and materials consulted borrowed or acquired by a Library user, as defined in the New Hampshire State Law RSA 201-D: 11: Library User Records; Confidentiality. Nevertheless, all public libraries must deal with the dilemma of having the responsibility of protecting the privacy of patrons while responding to National security concerns.
- 19.2 The George H. Stowell Free Library strives to create a library environment that is crime free, a safe place, a place for learning and pursuit of knowledge and information on any topic, and a place where patrons can ask any question and discuss any topic; therefore, the Library will do its utmost to uphold the privacy and confidentiality of patrons' free access to information. The Library will rely on existing laws and Library policies to control behavior that involves public safety or criminal behavior.
- 19.3 The USA Patriot Act of 2001 or HR-3162, became Public Law 107-56 in response to the events of 9/11/01. The full title of the law is: Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001.
- 19.4 The Act may provide law enforcement broader discretion when investigating information accessed and transmitted by patrons with regards to national security concerns. Access to patron information under the Act may include, but not be limited to, the following records: Database Search Records, Circulation Records, Computer Use Records, Inter-Library Loan Records, and Reference Interviews
- 19.4.1 The library's Database Search Records through OPAC are not tracked by individual users.
- 19.4.2 The library's Circulation Records are tracked by number of books signed out, not by individuals who sign them out.
- 19.4.3 Inter-Library Loan Records: Patrons may borrow items not owned by the George H. Stowell Free Library from other libraries worldwide via Inter-Library Loan (ILL). The Library tracks items currently being borrowed and generates a paper record with patron information. Once the materials are returned and all appropriate fines and/or fees are paid, the paper record is discarded.
- 19.4.4 Reference Interviews: A reference interview occurs when a patron looking for information approaches a Library staff member and the staff member questions or interviews the patron in order to narrow down the specific information needed. No paper record is kept during the interview that has any patron information on it.
- 19.5 Law Enforcement Requests - The library staff will cooperate with law enforcement and

comply with the law when served with a legal subpoena or warrant. The staff will strive for operational continuity in the event that workstations, servers, or backups are removed or made inoperable by such service.

- 19.5.1 Any law enforcement official requesting information should be referred to the librarian. The librarian will ask to see official identification and photocopy the ID.
 - 19.5.2 Any law enforcement official presenting a subpoena should be directed to the librarian; who will, in turn, forward the subpoena to legal counsel.
 - 19.5.3 If any law enforcement official presents a warrant, do not interfere with the officer's search and seizure of the information sought in the warrant.
 - 19.5.4 Contact the librarian immediately if she is available. If not, contact her as soon as possible.
 - 19.5.5 Keep a detailed record of the legal requests and give that record to the Librarian.
 - 19.5.6 The Librarian will keep a record of all legal requests and of all costs occurred by any search and/or seizures.
 - 19.5.7 If a "Gag Order" is in affect, report the contact only to the Librarian. A search warrant presented under the US Patriot Act typically contains language restricting the dissemination of information about the search warrant. This language is referred to as the "gag order."
 - 19.5.8 If a "Gag Order" is not in effect, the Librarian will notify the Trustees of the Library, the City Attorney and the American Library Association.
- 19.6 Emergency Disclosures of Information - If in the normal course of business, the Library staff observes behavior or receives a communication that may be reasonably construed to be a threat of imminent danger to life and limb of the general public or the staff, they should contact local law enforcement agencies immediately. They should then contact the Librarian and fill out an Incident Report.

(Adopted: June, 2019)

ARTICLE 20: SECURITY & SAFETY POLICY

- 20.1 The George H. Stowell Free Library strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its staff and patrons.
- 20.2 A phone shall be accessible to staff from the circulation desk in case of an emergency.
- 20.3 Proper lighting in the building and on the library grounds shall be kept on at all times.
- 20.4 Shrubs and trees shall be maintained at reasonable heights so as not to provide any hiding spots around the library exits.
- 20.5 All walkways and steps shall be shoveled and sanded regularly during the winter to provide usable alternate exits in case of emergency.
- 20.6 The janitor shall check the fire alarms and extinguishers yearly.
- 20.7 The library will have a first aid kit available in case of medical emergency.
- 20.8 All cleaning chemicals will be kept in a non-public area.
- 20.9 Childproof outlet covers will be used on all outlets that children can reach.
- 20.10 The building shall be checked nightly at close, including the bathroom, to ensure that all patrons are out of the building.
 - 20.10.1. The building will be locked every night at closing and all windows will be closed and locked.
 - 20.10.2. Should a staff member stay late, the staff leaving should make sure the library doors are securely locked.
- 20.11 Should a staff member encounter a belligerent patron, or someone who makes the staff member feel uncomfortable and threatened, they are encouraged to call the local police for assistance.
- 20.12 Situations that warrant immediate police involvement include:
 - 20.12.1. If an individual physically harms another person or threatens to do so;
 - 20.12.2. If an individual damages property or threatens to do so;
 - 20.12.3. If an individual is using or possesses illegal drugs or is drinking alcohol or is publicly intoxicated;
 - 20.12.4. If an individual views or prints child pornography;

- 20.12.5. If an individual engages in an act of public indecency, which includes masturbation, fondling another person, intercourse of any kind, or public nudity. (Breast-feeding is NOT included in this definition.)
- 20.13 The police should be notified of problem patrons even if the situation does not escalate to violence. This helps them to track people who may become problematic.
- 20.14 Should a volatile patron leave the library, the staff member in charge should lock the doors and keep them locked until a police officer arrives to see to the situation.
- 20.15 A patron may be asked to leave the building if they verbally or physically threaten a staff member or other patron; should a patron refuse to leave; the police may be called to remove the person.
- 20.16 A patron who has an episode that requires police involvement will be sent a follow up letter from the Board of Trustees.
- 20.16.1. The letter may require them to have a police escort should they wish to use the premises again.
- 20.16.2. The library also reserves the right to terminate a patron's right to enter the library should the problem persist.
- 20.17 Patron Appeal Procedure - Revocation or denial of library privileges may be appealed if the individual files a written notice of appeal with the librarian within 10 days after receiving notice of the revocation or denial. Such notice shall be sent to Librarian, c/o George H. Stowell Free Library, P. O Box 360, Cornish Flat, NH 03746
- 20.17.1. Within 10 days of receipt of the notice of appeal, the patron shall schedule a meeting with the librarian to resolve the issue of the library privileges being revoked or denied.
- 20.17.2. If a resolution cannot be reached with the librarian, the individual may make a written request to the librarian, within 10 days of meeting with the librarian, asking that the Library Board of Trustees address the matter at a board meeting. The individual requesting the appeal may attend the board meeting and make a short presentation after which the board shall decide the matter. The determinations of the Library Board of Trustees shall be final.
- 20.18 When library personnel have a reasonable belief that a crime has been committed, they should make every effort to preserve any direct evidence of that crime and turn it over to the librarian who shall consult counsel about divulging such information to law enforcement.
- 20.19 The following may be troublesome but are NOT reasons to call the police:

- 20.19.1 Violations of library policy such as cell phone use, eating, or talking in quiet areas.
 - 20.19.2 Abusive comments by library users that do not include threats of physical harm.
 - 20.19.3 Adults viewing sexually explicit materials that are NOT child pornography. (Our policy states we can ask them to leave, but it is not illegal, and not a police matter.)
 - 20.19.4 Homelessness or offensive bodily hygiene.
- 20.20 Weapons Policy - It is recognized that the employees and patrons of the Library have the right to, and should be ensured, a working environment that is free of dangerous weapons that may jeopardize their health, safety, and welfare. This policy is enacted to protect, preserve and promote the health, safety, welfare and quality of life for the employees and patrons of the Library.
- 20.20.1 The library requests that no weapons, either concealed or visible, whether it is a handgun, rifle, shotgun, BB gun, pellet gun or any other type of firearm, or any knife with a blade length of 3 inches or more, be carried while within the library building. Even those who have permits to carry a concealed weapon are asked not to do so within the library.
 - 20.20.2 Duly sworn Law Enforcement Officers of the State of New Hampshire, a County Sheriff, an officer of a municipal agency in New Hampshire or of a Federal Enforcement Agency, or, any other duly sworn Law Enforcement Officer, are exempt from this policy.
 - 20.20.3 Whenever a person is seen carrying a weapon in the library and the staff or other patrons feel threatened or uncomfortable, the staff may report the situation to law enforcement so the police can determine the lawfulness of such weapons being carried.

(Adopted: May, 2020)

ARTICLE 20: SECURITY & SAFETY POLICY (continued from previous page)

20.21 Child Safety Policy - The George H Stowell Free Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment that encourages children to visit the library. Library staff are available to assist and support children in using the library. For the purposes of this policy, children are defined as being under the age of 13. Library staff are not responsible for children who are left unattended on the library premises. Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied and supervised by someone over the age of 12.

20.21.1 Library staff do not provide child care, supervise unattended children, or assume responsibility for the actions and safety of children. Caregivers are responsible for the safety and behavior of their children. Like all library users, children are expected to behave appropriately and abide by the library's rules and regulations. Disruptive children who violate the rules and regulations may be asked to leave the library premises. Parents will be contacted by the staff; however, should the parent be out of touch, the staff may contact the police department.

(Adopted: September 19, 2023)

ARTICLE 21 – PANDEMIC POLICY

21.1 Purpose - to establish the protocol to be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a pandemic, the library may be required to operate on limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness, including service restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of local public health officials. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or other physical crises. It is important to ensure that core business activities of the library can be maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff, reduced hours or extended building closure, due to a pandemic.

21.2 Definitions -

Pandemic Plan - A pandemic plan differs from a general emergency preparedness policy or procedure. With an emergency preparedness policy, there is an assumption that staff will return to the building or begin rebuilding, almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm, or if there is a utility shortage). Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, and limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for an extended period of time.

Pandemic - A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. (World Health Organization <https://www.who.int>)

Appropriate Staffing Level - For the purposes of this policy, Appropriate Staffing Level refers to the minimum number of qualified staff necessary to provide service safely and efficiently, as determined by the Librarian or his/her designee.

21.3 Library Closure

21.3.1 Public Health Mandate - The George H. Stowell Free Library will close due to a pandemic in the event of a mandate order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level. If community spread rises over 20 active cases, and, in conjunction with these recommendations, the trustees will meet to make the decision whether to go to curbside or to close.

21.3.2 Discretionary Service Level Changes - At the discretion of the Librarian, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain appropriate staffing levels or if unable to maintain adequate social distancing for health and safety. In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Librarian or designee will maintain communication with staff and the Library Board of Trustees.

21.4 Staffing - Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as one healthy employee available at the library during all open hours with a maximum 3-hour workday and 10-hour work week per employee. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level will result in reduced hours or closing the library. In

providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Librarian or designee.

- Increased safety measures for staff (wearing of gloves, wiping down work areas, etc.);
- Social distancing practices in public areas;
- Reduction of open hours;
- Cancellation of all programs and special events;
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours;
- Closure of the library.

21.4.1 If the Library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the established Personnel policy. In the event of closure for less than 30 days, employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours. For building closures and/or service restrictions in excess of 30 days, the Library Board of Trustees may furlough staff in consultation with the Librarian for business necessity. If the Library is closed or hours reduced, healthy employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours. When appropriate, work tools (e.g., laptops, supplies, etc.) will be checked out to employees by the Librarian or designee for work-at-home assignments.

21.5 Communication- In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours must be announced in a timely manner. Library staff should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which includes posting on the library website, on ConnectCornish, and on the library front door.

21.6 Prioritization of Services - Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- Information services for the public, both in-person and online;
- In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Librarian or designee will prioritize service-related tasks and assign the daily work plan to staff.

21.7 Interim Service Plan - The Pandemic/Interim Service Plan will provide guidance to the Librarian or designee in instituting phased services, according to local health conditions, state and regional recommendations, and the safety needs of the staff and the public. This plan recognizes that in a pandemic, the management of services may require dynamic response and may not be linear in their implementation.

(Adopted: January 4, 2021)

ARTICLE 22 – CHALLENGED MATERIALS

- 22.1 The library trustees of the George H. Stowell Free Library believe that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject material of which one does not approve, one cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.
- 22.2 The Library selects materials based on the criteria specified within this policy. In its selection of library materials, the Library and its Board of Trustees endorse and support the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A) and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association (Appendix B). They subscribe to the principles put forth in the ALA Labels and Rating Systems, the ALA Resolution on the Removal of Challenged Materials, Freedom to View Statement, and Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials. Copies of these items are in the appendix.
- 22.3 Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from, relocated, or restricted within the collection may complete a Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form which is available from the librarian.
- 22.4 The challenged material will remain in the collection while it is being reviewed.
- 22.5 The request shall be reviewed by the librarian and the material will be evaluated based on the complaint. The librarian will then issue a written decision to the challenger within 30 days.
- 22.5.1 This decision may be appealed to the Library Board of Trustees. The challenger's appeal will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Library Trustees. Decisions of the library trustees are final and are made within 60 days of receipt of the appeal.

(Adopted: August 9, 2021)

ARTICLE 23 - ACCIDENT PROCEDURE POLICY

23.1 Policy

- 23.1.1 In the event of staff or patron accident, the first concern of staff members responding to the accident should be that the victim receives prompt and appropriate attention for any injury.
- 23.1.2 Library staff members are not trained to assess injury or provide first aid.
- 23.1.3 Staff members should not attempt to determine the extent of injury or need for medical attention, but rather defer to the judgment of other medical professionals. It is appropriate, therefore, when a staff member is responding to an accident to inquire about the well-being of the injured person.
- 23.1.4 Library staff should not rely entirely on the victim's self-assessment but, if in the staff member's judgment an injury may have occurred, seek medical attention for the victim as soon as possible.
- 23.1.5 Any accident or incident resulting in possible injury, however slight, should be promptly documented.
- 23.1.6 When anyone is injured at the library or on its grounds (and once aid has been called, staff will complete an incident report.

23.2 Procedures

- 23.2.1 There is a stocked first aid kit at the circulation desk.
- 23.2.2 Staff members are trained in anti-choking procedures and basic first aid.
- 23.2.3 In an instance in which a staff member feels the possibility of injury may exist, staff will offer to call the Cornish Rescue Squad. (or dial 911)
- 23.2.4 If the victim declines, staff will reiterate the offer and ask if s/he is sure no assistance is needed. If possible, do so with another person present.
- 23.2.5 If, in the staff member's judgment, the victim has suffered an injury, the staff member should tell the victim they will call the Rescue Squad (or dial 911), and do so, regardless of the victim's protests to the contrary, as failure to assess an injury promptly may result in increased liability for the town.
- 23.2.6 If a victim's ability to walk or drive has been affected, staff will offer to make a call for alternative transportation. Under no circumstance should a library staff member volunteer to provide transportation for the victim.

23.2.7 Complete an incident report (see Appendix E) that describes the event; the day, time, and location of the injury; the name of the persons(s) involved; the contact information including the address and phone number of injured party or parties; their assessment of what happened to cause the accident, and the intent of subsequent action, if any, the victim may plan to take (i.e. care at home, follow up with primary care physician, etc.).

23.2.7.1 If the accident is not witnessed or reported immediately, but instead is later reported by the victim, that information including either a summary of a telephone conversation or the actual email should be sent to the Administrative Assistant of the Select Board as soon as possible and within 24 hours of receipt of the information.

23.2.7.2 Any subsequent correspondence from the injured person pertaining to the accident or incident should be forwarded to the Administrative Assistant of the Select Board upon receipt.

(Adopted: April, 2023)

ARTICLE 24 – LIBRARY BEHAVIORS - The Library must be a welcoming place for all. Accommodations must be made for patrons of all ages, from toddlers to elders, including those with mobility challenges. Welcoming and encouraging patrons to come into the library is always a driving principle to be respected in all policies.

24.1 The purpose of the library's food and drink policy is to prevent attracting insects, rodents, or other pests from coming into the library where they might begin to infest or damage library materials.

24.2 Food and drink guidelines:

- Library users should be mindful of helping to keep the library and library materials clean.
- Weather permitting, it is preferred that any food or drink be consumed outside the library building.
- Recognizing that there are times when food will be in the library, library users are asked to clean up after themselves and, when necessary, to ask for assistance from the library staff to help do so.
- Groups using or sponsoring events in the library are responsible for cleaning up after the event.

(Adopted: September 19, 2023)

ARTICLE 25 - AMENDMENTS

25.1 These By-laws and policies may be altered or amended at any regular meeting of the Board or at any special meeting duly called for such purpose; provided that notice of the subject matter of any proposed amendment shall be delivered in hand or mailed to each Trustee at least fourteen (14) days prior to such meeting; and provided further that no such alteration or amendment shall become effective unless two (2) Trustees vote in favor thereof.

(Adopted: June 2019)

APPENDIX A: 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.

Adopted June 19, 1939. Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

APPENDIX B: THE FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society, individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

APPENDIX C: LIBRARY TRUSTEE CODE OF ETHICS

As elected or appointed public officials, trustees of New Hampshire public libraries have an obligation to meet the highest legal, moral, and ethical standards in their conduct and decisions. The following principals are to be used as a guide to achieve this goal:

- Sustain the core freedoms of our democracy by providing equal access to a broad diversity of viewpoints, beliefs, information, and the various forms of media.
- Abide by all state and federal laws that apply to New Hampshire public libraries.
- Observe the provisions of the Right-to-Know Law (RSA 91-A) by ensuring that all meetings are open to the public except as provided within the law; records of all meetings (including discussion and support materials) are available for public review; the subject matter of e-mails and phone calls to a quorum of the board DO NOT take the place of public meetings.
- Avoid real or perceived conflict of interest when making decisions for or about the library that may involve issues of personal gain for self, family, or friends.
- Keep confidential information confidential.
- Function as a whole unit; individual trustees cannot assume sole authority for comment or actions unless delegated to do so by the Board.
- Remain objective when dealing with staff or patrons and use Board established channels of communications to ensure consistent, rational resolution of library matters.
- Abide by Board established public information policies and refer requests to the library Librarian when appropriate.
- Adhere to all Board established library policies, rules, and procedures.
- Promote a positive atmosphere of service and achievement throughout the library.
- Respect the Librarian as the professional administrator of day-to-day operations and procedures; DO NOT undermine the authority of the Librarian's supervision of staff; administer regular performance reviews of the Librarian according to library personnel policies.
- Protect the integrity and purpose of the library as a community institution; challenge proposals or actions that are illegal or contrary to the mission; challenge any Board member whose actions betray the public trust, violate the law, jeopardize the integrity of the library or cause dissension within the library.
- Study all laws pertaining to libraries; prepare for board and committee meetings; take training to maintain current knowledge in order to effectively serve the library.
- Attend meetings regularly or resign so that a more active member can be appointed

(Adopted January. 2019)

APPENDIX D: REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

TITLE: _____

AUTHOR: _____

PUBLISHER: _____

REQUEST INITIATED BY: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE _____

DO YOU REPRESENT: _____ YOURSELF

_____ AN ORGANIZATION/GROUP (Name) _____

1. To what in the work do you object? (Please be specific. Cite page #s) _____

2. Did you read the entire work? _____ If not, what parts? _____

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading this work? _____

4. For what age group would you recommend this work? _____

5. What do you believe is the theme of this work? _____

5. Are you aware of judgments of this work by literary critics? _____

6. What would you like your library to do about this work?

_____ Do not lend it to my child.

_____ Return it to the staff selection committee for reevaluation.

_____ Other. Explain _____

_____ What work would you recommend to convey a picture and perspective of the subject treated?

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX E: ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name(s) of Injured/Involved: _____

Date and Time of Accident/Incident: _____

Contact Information of Person(s) Involved (name, phone #, email address):

Description of Accident/Incident: _____

All Staff Members Present: _____

Witnesses: _____

Contact Information of Witnesses: _____

Person Making Report: _____

This form must be submitted immediately to the librarian.