

Talcott Free Library District Policies

Table of Contents

Library Mission Statement (<i>Updated 07/2018</i>)	2
Library Vision Statement (<i>Added 07/2018</i>)	2
BYLAWS	3
Article I - Regular Meetings	3
Article II - Public Comment	3
Article III - Board of Library Trustees	3
Article IV- Officers & Terms	3
Article V - Committees	4
Article VI- New Trustees	4
Article VII- Trustee Vacancy, Notice and Appointment	4
Article VIII - Parliamentary Procedure	4
Article IX - Order of Business	5
Article X - Authority to Spend.....	5
Article XI - Duties of the Library Director	5
Article XII - Evaluation of the Library Director	5
Article XIII - Amendments	5
Article XIV - Records	5
Article XV - Bylaws and Policies Review.....	5
GENERAL POLICIES	6
Policy on Meetings of the Board of Trustees (<i>Adopted 01/2026</i>)	6
Public Comment Policy (<i>Adopted 2013, Amended 01/2026</i>)	8
Financial Policy (<i>Adopted 01/2026</i>)	9
Borrowers (<i>Updated 06/2025</i>)	14
Circulation (<i>Updated 06/2025</i>)	15
Computer Use	15
Copy and Fax Equipment (<i>Updated 05/2022</i>)	16
Library Hours (<i>Updated 12/2019</i>)	16
Reference Service (<i>Updated 11/2019</i>)	16
Overdue Materials	17
Lost Materials (<i>Updated 11/2019</i>)	18
Interlibrary Loans (<i>Updated 03/2019</i>)	18
Gifts And Memorials (<i>Updated 04/2022</i>)	19
Intellectual Freedom	21
Challenged Materials.....	21
Withdrawal Of Materials (<i>Updated 11/2019</i>)	22
Materials Selection.....	22
Program Room	24
Study Rooms (<i>Approved 8/2021</i>)	26
Community Information Posting Policy (<i>Added 03/2025</i>)	27
Banner Use On Front Of Building (<i>Updated 8/2023</i>)	28
Bloodborne Pathogens Policy	30
Internet Policies (<i>Updated 11/2019</i>)	32
Internet Filtering Policy.....	33
Wireless Policy.....	34
Conduct Policy (<i>Updated 11/2019</i>)	36

Miscellaneous.....	38
Volunteers (Updated 05/2016)	40
Appendix	41



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Library Mission Statement (*Updated 07/2018*)

We are a strong community partner that provides a friendly, safe space for generations young and old to strengthen their knowledge and enrich their lives.

Library Vision Statement (*Added 07/2018*)

To be a thriving hometown library with a friendly, inviting space that provides resources for our community to use to participate, connect and discover the world around us.

BYLAWS

Article I - Regular Meetings

The regular meeting of the Talcott Free Library District (Board) shall be open to the public and noticed in advance. At the beginning of each fiscal year the Board shall determine regular meeting dates and times. The Library Director shall then post the schedule of meetings in the library and on the library's website. Both notices shall have the dates, times, and places of such meetings.

Article II - Public Comment

The Board shall provide the opportunity for public comment in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Article III - Board of Library Trustees

The term of office for members of the Trustees shall be for four years. The Board of the Talcott Free Library is charged with the responsibility of the governance of the library. The Board will hire a skilled Library Director who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the library.

Trustees are not compensated for their services but may be reimbursed for travel and other expenses related to library business. Reimbursement for Trustee expense are pursuant to board policy.

Article IV- Officers & Terms

The officers of the Library Board shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Those officers shall be elected for 2-year terms at the first regular meeting on or after the third Monday in the month of May. In the event of a trustee resignation, an appointment to fill the unexpired term of that office will be conducted pursuant to 75 ILCS 16 §30-30 and Board policy.

President

The President shall preside at all board meetings, appoint all standing and special committees, serve as ex-officio member of all committees, and perform all other such duties as may be assigned by the Board. The President shall be the only spokesperson for the Board in all advisory or disciplinary action directed to the staff.

Vice President

The Vice President, in the absence of the President, shall assume all duties of the President. The Vice President will be responsible for reviewing bylaws and policies every two years.

Secretary

The Secretary shall keep minutes of all board meetings, record attendance, and record all votes. The secretary shall perform all other such clerical duties as may be assigned by the board. By law, the secretary is the local election official for all elections involving the Library District.

Treasurer

The treasurer shall keep all financial records of the board. The normal depository of all financial records shall be the library. The treasurer shall have charge of the library funds and income, sign all the checks on the authorization of the board, and report at each meeting the state of the funds. In the absence of the treasurer or when they are unable to serve, the President or Vice President may perform the duties of the treasurer. The treasurer shall be bonded in the amount to be approved by the board and according to statute requirement.

Article V - Committees

Committees may be established by a majority vote of the full Board of Trustees.

Each committee shall have a clearly defined purpose, scope, and duration.

Committees may be:

Standing Committees, which operate on an ongoing basis to oversee recurring matters (e.g., Finance, Building and Grounds, Policy, Policy and Personnel).

Ad Hoc Committees, which are temporary and created for a specific task or project, dissolving upon completion of their assigned function.

Article VI- New Trustees

New Trustees shall receive onboarding orientation pursuant to Board policy.

Article VII- Trustee Vacancy, Notice and Appointment

Vacancies shall be filled in accordance with Illinois law (75 ICLS 16/30-25) and pursuant to Board policy.

Article VIII - Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order (revised) shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the

Board, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

Article IX - Order of Business

The Board shall provide an order of business for conducting regular meetings.

Article X - Authority to Spend

The Board shall develop policies governing library expenditures and bidding processes in accordance with Illinois law. (75 ICLS 16/40-45)

Article XI - Duties of the Library Director

The Library Director is hired by the Board, and shall administer Board policies and perform duties as directed by the Board.

Article XII - Evaluation of the Library Director

The Director shall be evaluated annually by the Board.

Article XIII - Amendments

Bylaws can be amended at any regular meeting by a majority vote of Trustees present,

Article XIV - Records

General Administrative Records

The library shall maintain records in accordance with the Local Records Act (ILCS 205/\) and other applicable laws.

Circulation Records

The Library shall protect the confidentiality of circulation records in accordance with Illinois law. (75 ILCS70/1) and pursuant to Board policy.

Requests for Public Records

The Library shall comply with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and established Board policies.

Article XV - Bylaws and Policies Review

Bylaws and policies shall be reviewed every two years. The review process shall be initiated and managed by the Board Vice President.

GENERAL POLICIES

Policy on Meetings of the Board of Trustees (Adopted 01/2026)

I. Purpose

- A. This policy establishes the procedures for scheduling, noticing, and conducting meetings of the Board of Library Trustees. Its purpose is to ensure consistency, compliance with Illinois law, and transparency in the governance of the Talcott Free Library District.

II. Regular Meetings

- A. Regular meetings of the Board of Library Trustees shall be held on the third Monday of each month at the Talcott Free Library District, unless otherwise ordered by the Board.
- B. The schedule of regular meetings shall be established annually and made available to the public in compliance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.02).

III. Special Circumstances

- A. The Board President may, under special circumstances, change the meeting venue or cancel a meeting.
- B. Notice of any change or cancellation shall be provided to trustees, posted publicly at the Library and on the Library's website.

IV. Special and Emergency Meetings

- A. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President and shall be called by the President upon the request of three Trustees.
- B. Notice of special meetings must be given at least 48 hours in advance and include the agenda, consistent with the Open Meetings Act.
- C. Emergency meetings may be called if circumstances require immediate action, and notice shall be provided as soon as practicable.

V. Quorum

- A. A quorum, defined as a simple majority of the duly appointed trustees, is required for the transaction of business at any meeting.
- B. Any Trustee who is unable to attend a meeting will contact the President and Library Director to indicate that they will be absent. Due to the fact that a quorum is required for each meeting, this contact should be made as far in advance as possible.

C. If a quorum of the members of the public body is physically present as required by OMA, a majority of the board may allow a member of the board to attend the meeting by other means if the member is prevented from physically attending because of: (i) personal illness or disability; (ii) employment purposes or the business of the public body; or (iii) a family or other emergency. "Other means" is by video or audio conference.

VI. Agenda and Meeting Materials

- A. The Library Director, in consultation with the Board President, shall prepare the agenda.
- B. Any Trustee wishing to have an item placed on the agenda will contact the Board President in sufficient time preceding the meeting have the item placed on the agenda.
- C. Agendas will be posted at least 48 hours prior to each meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
- D. The Board packet for the meeting will be distributed to the Trustees no later than 48 hours before the meeting, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

VII. Order of Business

A. The following Order of Business shall be followed at all regular meetings of the Board.

Call to Order

Record Attendance

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Correspondence

Secretary's Report: Approval of minutes as received or corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Library Director's Report: Approval of bills payable

Committee Reports

Unfinished Business

New Business

Adjournment

VIII. Public Participation

A. All meetings of the Board shall be open to the public, except for closed sessions permitted by the Open Meetings Act.

B. A public comment period will be included on each agenda to allow input from community members in accordance with the Board's policy on Public Comment.

IX. Minutes

- A. Minutes of all meetings shall be prepared, reviewed, and approved by the Board.
- B. Approved minutes will be made available to the public, and will be retained in compliance with applicable statutes.

Public Comment Policy (Adopted 2013, Amended 01/2026)

I. Purpose

- A. The Board of Library Trustees of the Talcott Free Library District values input from members of the public and provides an opportunity for individuals to address the Board at its public meetings in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.06(g)). Public comment allows residents and other interested persons to express their views on matters concerning the Library District.

II. Rules Governing Public Comment

A. Eligibility and Identification

1. Any person may address the Board during the designated public comment period, subject to these rules.
2. Speakers are requested to provide their name and municipality of residence (or business location, if applicable) on the sign-in sheet prior to the start of the meeting.

B. Time Limits and Order

1. Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes.
2. The total time allocated for public comment shall not exceed twenty (20) minutes unless otherwise authorized by the President.
3. The President shall recognize speakers in the order of the sign-in sheet and may reasonably limit repetitive comments to ensure that all wishing to speak have an opportunity.

C. Decorum and Relevance

1. Speakers are expected to maintain decorum and to confine their comments to matters within the jurisdiction of the Library District or to issues on the agenda.
2. Personal attacks, abusive language, or disruptive conduct will not be permitted.
3. Individuals who disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting may be ruled out of order and asked to yield the floor.
4. The President may direct that disruptive or repetitive conduct cease and may call a brief recess if necessary to restore order.

D. Written Comments

1. Individuals who are unable to attend a meeting may submit written comments to the Board c/o the Library Director at the Library prior to the meeting.
2. Written comments received before the meeting will be shared with all Trustees and will be kept on file at the library.
3. The Board is not required to read written comments aloud during the meeting; however, the receipt of such comments will be acknowledged in the official minutes.
4. Written comments received after the deadline established by the library may be considered at the next regular meeting.

E. Record of Public Comment

1. The minutes of each meeting shall note that a public comment period occurred and may include the speaker's name, the number of speakers, and the general subjects addressed.
2. The minutes need not include a verbatim record of public comment.
3. The Library will retain any written submissions as part of its public correspondence files consistent with the library's records-retention schedule.

III. Implementation

- A. These rules shall be posted at least once at a public meeting after adoption and thereafter included in the Library's Policy Manual. The Board reserves the right to amend these rules as necessary to ensure compliance with law and orderly public participation.

Financial Policy (Adopted 01/2026)

I. Purpose

- A. This policy establishes financial management principles and procedures to ensure the responsible stewardship of the Library's resources, safeguard public funds, and promote transparency and accountability.

II. Guiding Principles

- A. Compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and accounting standards.
- B. Stewardship of public funds for the benefit of library users and taxpayers.
- C. Separation of financial duties to reduce risk of error or misuse.
- D. Accurate, timely reporting to the Board of Trustees and the public.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Library Board of Trustees

1. Approves the annual budget, levy, financial policies, and investments.
2. Reviews monthly financial reports and annual audit.

3. Authorizes financial institutions and advisors.
- B. Treasurer
 1. Acts as custodian of library funds.
 2. Executes the investment program under Board authority.
 3. May present financial and investment reports at each Board meeting.
- C. Library Director
 1. Supports the Treasurer by implementing day-to-day operations.
 2. May be delegated administrative responsibility for investment procedures.
 3. Ensures compliance with internal controls and reporting.
- D. Staff
 1. Follow established financial procedures for cash handling, deposits, and purchases.

IV. Budgeting

- A. The Director prepares a working budget annually for review by the Board or a designated committee, and approval by the Board.
- B. The budget must reflect library goals, strategic priorities, and available resources.
- C. Mid-year adjustments require Board approval.

V. Accounting and Reporting

- A. The Library maintains records consistent with governmental accounting standards.
- B. Monthly Financial Reports
 1. Revenue and expense statement compared to budget.
 2. List of bills paid and payable.
- C. An independent audit or financial review shall be conducted annually as required by law.

VI. Internal Controls

- A. Segregation of Duties: The Director creates checks and payments and forwards to the Treasurer, or designated Board member, for signature.
- B. Bank Reconciliation: The Treasurer reviews the reconciliations quarterly.

- C. Cash Handling: All fines, fees, and donations are receipted, counted, and deposited promptly.

VII. Purchasing and Expenditures

- A. Bid Limit: Purchases or contracts exceeding \$25,000 require completion of the formal bid process in compliance with Illinois law.
- B. Director Authority: The Director is authorized to spend amounts as allocated in the Working Budget without further Board approval, provided all expenditures comply with Illinois bid requirements and Library Bylaws.
- C. Board Approval of Payments: The Board does not pre-approve individual payments before checks are distributed but votes to confirm them at the next monthly meeting. Concerns will be addressed by the Director, which may include seeking refunds.

VIII. Payroll

- A. Payroll is processed on a regular schedule as established by the Board.
- B. Personnel records are maintained securely and confidentially.
- C. Board approval is required for new non-budgeted positions, salary schedules, and benefit policies.

IX. Banking and Investments

- A. Purpose and Scope: This section governs the management of all public funds of the Library in compliance with the Illinois Public Funds Investment Act (30 ILCS 235).
- B. Responsibilities & Delegation of Authority: The Treasurer is responsible for administering the program under Board authority. The Board may delegate day-to-day administrative responsibilities to the Library Director.
- C. Standard of Care: All Library investment activities shall follow the "prudent person" standard: investments must be made with judgment and care, not for speculation, but with consideration for capital preservation, liquidity, and income generation.
- D. Objectives: The following objectives, in order of priority, shall guide all investments:
 - 1. Legality: Compliance with Illinois law.
 - 2. Safety: Preservation of capital with diversification.
 - 3. Liquidity: Maintaining sufficient liquidity for current and foreseeable obligations.
 - 4. Yield: Achieving a reasonable market rate of return.

- 5. Simplicity of Management: Minimizing administrative burden.
- E. Guidelines: Investments shall be limited to U.S. government securities, FDIC-insured deposit accounts, or fully collateralized deposits. Authorized instruments include Certificates of Deposit, Treasury Bills, participation in the Illinois Funds, and other investments permitted by state law.
- F. Reporting: The Treasurer shall report investments, fund balances, and account status at each Board meeting and quarterly by type, book value, income earned, and market value.
- G. Internal Controls: The Treasurer shall maintain internal controls and written procedures to safeguard against loss, theft, or misuse of funds.
- H. Authorized Dealers: Only financial institutions, advisors, and managers approved by the Board may provide investment services.
- I. Conflicts of Interest: All officers and employees must avoid conflicts of interest or activities that impair impartial decision-making.

X. Reserves and Fund Balance

- A. The Library will maintain a reserve equal to 3–6 months of operating expenses when possible.
- B. Fund balance classifications will follow GASB standards.

XI. Grants and Donations

- A. All grants must be approved by the Director and/or Board before submission.
- B. Restricted gifts must be tracked and used in accordance with donor intent.

XII. Credit and Debt

- A. The Board authorizes the use of credit cards for Library business by the Director and designated staff. All use must be supported by receipts and limited to official Library purposes.
- B. The Library shall not incur debt without Board approval.

XIII. Property Sales and Disposition

- A. The Library Board of Trustees must authorize the sale, donation, or disposal of any real or personal property owned by the Library.
- B. Real property may be sold or otherwise conveyed only after the Board adopts a resolution declaring the property no longer necessary or useful for library purposes, in accordance with the Illinois Local Library Act (75 ILCS 5/5-7).
- C. Surplus or obsolete personal property (such as furniture, equipment, or computers) with a value of less than \$1,000 may be declared surplus and

disposed of by the Director, provided the disposition is reported to the Board at the next regular meeting.

- D. Sale proceeds shall be deposited in the Library's appropriate fund as determined by the Board and used for library purposes consistent with law.

XIV. Capitalization and Fixed Assets

- A. The Library shall maintain an inventory of all capital assets, including land, buildings, furniture, equipment, and technology.
- B. For accounting and audit purposes, items shall be capitalized when they
 1. Have an individual cost of \$5,000 or more, and
 2. Have a useful life of more than one year.
- C. Capital assets shall be recorded at cost (or fair market value if donated) and depreciated according to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)
- D. The Director shall ensure that all capital purchases are properly documented and reported to the Treasurer for inclusion in the fixed-asset inventory.
- E. The Board or a designated committee shall periodically review the Library's capital asset schedule and depreciation methods to ensure accuracy and adequacy for audit and insurance purposes.

XV. Reimbursement of Expenses

- A. Trustees, employees, and volunteers shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred while conducting authorized Library business.
- B. Prior approval must be approved in advance by the Director for all staff activities that may require expense reimbursement. Similar activities by a Trustee must be approved by the Board.
- C. Reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:
 1. Registration fees for conferences, workshops, and training.
 2. Mileage at the current IRS standard rate for travel using personal vehicles.
 3. Lodging and meals associated with approved Library business.
 4. Necessary supplies or materials purchased for Library use.
- D. Original itemized receipts are required for all reimbursements. Credit-card statements alone are not acceptable.
- E. Reimbursement requests must be submitted on the approved form (see Appendix) with receipts attached within 30 days of the expense.
- F. Maximum allowable reimbursement, by category, are as follows:
 1. Travel (transportation, tolls, train, bus fare and/or mileage as allowed by IRS regulations) - \$500.00.

- 2. Lodging - \$500.00.
 - 3. Meals - \$50.00 per day.
 - G. The Library will provide a stipend for the Director's cell phone at a rate approved by the Board.
 - H. The Director is authorized to approve staff and volunteer reimbursements; trustee reimbursements require Board approval.
 - I. All reimbursements must comply with the Illinois Local Government Travel Expense Control Act (50 ILCS 150/).
- XVI. Financial Transparency
- A. Monthly financial statements and the annual audit shall be available to the public.
 - B. The Library shall comply with all state reporting obligations.

Borrowers (Updated 06/2025)

All residents and owners of property in Talcott Free Library's district are eligible for library services. Library cards will be issued, without charge, for a period of three (3) years. Proof of residence or ownership within the district is required in the form of a driver's license and tax bill, tax receipt, or an envelope addressed to the person, delivered by the U.S. Post Office. Children aged five (5) to fifteen (15) years may register and be granted a library card with the written consent of a parent or guardian. This card is the responsibility of the parent and child.

A NON-RESIDENT card may be issued upon registration and payment of a tax-based fee, valid for one year. This card has all reciprocal borrowing privileges and is valid at all participating PrairieCat libraries. Upon request additional cards will be issued to each family member also residing at the same address as the original card recipient. Original and subsequent cards are the responsibility of the patron and will be subject to replacement policy.

A REPLACEMENT FEE of \$1.00 will be charged for lost or damaged cards. If more than two replacement cards are issued, a fee of \$5.00 will be charged.

TALCOTT FREE LIBRARY HONORS ALL VALID CARDS of member libraries of PrairieCat, just as our card is honored at all PrairieCat member libraries.

THE USE OF THE LIBRARY OR ITS SERVICES MAY BE DENIED FOR DUE CAUSE.

See our conduct policy.

Circulation (Updated 06/2025)

Adult and juvenile books, books on CDs, musical CDs, CD ROM multimedia books, and puzzles circulate for three (3) weeks with two renewals allowed, unless the material is on reserve or is a reference material. Renewals may be requested via email or phone, or may be done through the library website or app.

MAGAZINES circulate for one (1) week. The most current issue of weekly magazines will not be circulated until the next issue arrives.

DVDs circulate for one (1) week and may be renewed once. TV Series and multi-set DVDs circulate for two (2) weeks. If adults choose to allow their children to take out videos, they may indicate their consent on the registration form. Up to 10 DVDs may be circulated at any one time.

Computer Use

Computers are available for public use. The Talcott Free Library reserves the right to limit, refuse, and/or ban any patron from using the library computers based on the conduct policy.

Copyright laws forbid duplication of copyrighted software. There is a per page charge for printing from a library computer. Use of personal patron discs and flash drives are allowed.

Copy and Fax Equipment (Updated 05/2022)

A fee will be charged per sheet and size of paper used.

Members of the public wishing to use the fax machine will be charged per page for transmissions and as well as for requests received.

Library Hours (Updated 12/2019)

The library will be open six days per week. The library will be open three evenings per week. The hours will be set at the discretion of the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.

The library will be closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

July 4th

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

December 24th and 25th

After 12:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve day

If a holiday falls on a Sunday the library will be closed on the following Monday.

Reference Service (Updated 11/2019)

The Talcott Free Library serves a diverse public with unique individual needs and levels of ability to conduct research independently. At times of peak activity within the library, it is mandatory that rules for providing reference assistance be established. The most recent standards document, *Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries*, provides the model for this reference policy. The board of trustees and library director of Talcott Free Library encourage staff of all levels to pursue continuing education opportunities which will enable them to better meet the needs of the library's patrons. All staff members receive in-house training regarding appropriate responses to patron questions, including reference questions. This training includes reference interviewing techniques, reader's

advisory service, and bibliographic instruction. All staff members are taught to treat each question asked with respect insofar as the level of assistance required and the topic of the question. Names of users and the transactions which occur between users and the staff are confidential and not discussed outside a professional context. Reference service and materials are available to all persons who reside within the jurisdictional boundaries of the library regardless of the age, race, sex, social, or economic status of the patron. Reference service and materials are available during all hours the library is open and are provided in response to all forms of inquiry including but not limited to patrons in the library, the telephone, fax, electronic form, and TTY. The reference questions of patrons visiting the library are given the highest priority. All requests for information receive an answer or status report within one working day. Questions which cannot be answered with onsite resources are referred to another agency. Such referrals are verified and/or mediated by library staff.

In the instance of legal, medical, investment, or tax reference questions, the staff may only guide the patron to the material available on the topic of interest. The staff may not evaluate or interpret the information provided nor may the staff define the meaning of terms, offer investment advice, select income tax forms, or serve as a surrogate for a professional in any of the fields listed above. If all materials within the library are beyond the understanding of the patron, the patron will be advised to consult with their professional from the above listed fields for additional information or advice. Some Reference materials may be circulated for a short period of time and under circumstances determined by the Director.

Overdue Materials

Talcott Free Library does not charge overdue fines on late materials. However, patrons are responsible to return items on time and to pay for lost and damaged materials.

- Items that are 21 days or more overdue are considered lost; billing notices shall be produced and sent for such items and patron's library card will be blocked until the items are paid for or returned
- If an item is not returned within 90 days of the overdue date, the item will have already been replaced or withdrawn from the collection, and the library will no longer accept the item for return and the replacement fee must be paid to unblock the card.
- If a lost item is returned 90 days or more after the overdue date, the replacement fee will not be refunded or waived.
- The guardian listed on a juvenile card is responsible for all fees on the juvenile's card.
- Notices will be sent according to the following schedule:
 1. Friendly reminder notice 7 days after the due date
 2. 1st overdue notice 14 days after due date
 3. Bill notice 21 days after due date
- Overdue notification is a courtesy and the library is not responsible for the borrower's failure to receive overdue notifications.

Lost Materials (Updated 11/2019)

All lost materials are assessed at the replacement value and are not to exceed the cost of the materials. A processing charge of five dollars (\$5.00) is included in the cost of the item if lost or damaged severely enough to be replaced.

Interlibrary Loans (Updated 03/2019)

When patrons want material that is not available within the Talcott Free Library, we ask other agencies to provide it. This is the process of interlibrary loan. Materials borrowed through interlibrary loan have a circulation period which is determined by the lending library, not the Talcott Free Library. We are happy to borrow materials from other libraries for you, but we ask that you respect the date by which those materials must be returned to their home libraries. When the Talcott Free Library is lax in returning materials borrowed through interlibrary loan, the library can

lose the privilege of borrowing materials in that way for any of its patrons. It is crucial, therefore, that materials borrowed through interlibrary loan be returned in a timely manner. Habitual failure to do so may result in individual loss of the privilege in order to preserve the privilege for other library patrons.

ILL materials are fined at \$.50 per day. Only Adult patrons (16 years+) may request interlibrary loans and there is a maximum of 10 loans requested and checked out at any given time

Gifts And Memorials (Updated 04/2022)

Donations are considered outright and unrestricted. The Library reserves the right to accept or decline any gift, donation, endowment, bequest, or trust. All donations are accepted with the understanding that it may someday be necessary that they be altered, sold, or disposed of in the best interest of the library. The library cannot commit itself to perpetually housing a donation.

Books and Other Library Materials

The Library welcomes gifts of print and non-print materials with the understanding that the item(s) will be added to the collection only if they meet the same criteria for inclusion in (and withdrawal from) the collection as purchased materials.

Donated materials are considered the sole property of the Library and the Library does not accept responsibility for notifying donors of the disposition of donated materials. Gift materials not added to the collection may be given to the Friends of Talcott Library for resale, donated to other libraries or organizations, recycled or discarded.

Monetary and Real Property Gifts

We welcome donations of money and encourage unrestricted gifts so that contributions can be used in ways that best support the Library's mission and the needs of the community. Monetary gifts will be utilized by the library to purchase materials or equipment, support library programs, or in other ways the director and/or Board deem appropriate.

The Library welcomes gifts of cash for the direct purchase of library materials and will try to accommodate the subject or title preferences of the donor in so far as they meet standards established in the Collection Development Policy.

Memorial gifts

The honoree's name will be added to a memorial plaque for gifts in the amount of \$50 or more. An acknowledgement letter shall be sent to the person(s) or family of the person being honored for all amounts.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts of furniture, art, plants, other tangible personal property, and professional services may be accepted or declined by the Board with advice and counsel from the Library Director. Any conditions attaching to the proposed gift, including, but not necessarily limited to, the type of recognition provided and the location, disposition, handling or display of the article, will be considered by the Board. Any such conditions which the Board regards to be inappropriate or impractical may provide a basis for rejection of the gift or for further negotiation with the donor.

Valuation of Non-Monetary Gifts

Neither the Director nor the Board will issue a written or verbal statement to the donor regarding the deemed value of non-monetary gifts. It will be the donor's decision to determine the value of the donation or utilize an independent appraiser. Should the donation be stocks or bonds, the Treasurer will contact a bank or broker to determine the value of the gift.

Gift Recognition

The Library acknowledges the great value of private gifts and donations to the Library's development and growth and the importance of recognizing those donations. For gifts made to the Library, the following procedures apply:

1. All monetary donations shall be recognized with an acknowledgement letter.
2. If a donor does not wish to be publicly recognized, that wish will be honored.

3. Gifts may be acknowledged by a bookplate in library materials.
4. By arrangement with the Library Director and Board, additional special recognition may take place for significant contributions.
5. Donor Boards: Donors' names are included on the Library's donor boards for various levels of giving.
 - Copper Level: \$1,000 - \$4,999
 - Silver Level: \$5,000—\$9,999
 - Gold Level--\$10,000+

Other Types of Recognition: Other than as denoted above, recognition of gifts by affixing donor plates to materials, equipment, shelving, or furniture, or by naming areas of the Library for donors, is contrary to the stated policy of the Board.

Intellectual Freedom

The responsibility of the Talcott Free Library is to serve all the community, not to promote or censor political, moral, philosophical or religious opinions. Our Library Director and the librarians make every effort to read adequate reviews and select materials appropriate to the needs of the community.

Challenged Materials

It is recognized that a district resident may find an item personally objectionable. Residents of the community should be encouraged to bring their concerns regarding any specific title or item in the library's collection to the attention of the Library Director in either an informal discussion or through a formal complaint process.

If, after discussing patron's concerns with the library director, patron is still unsatisfied, they will be asked to submit a *Request for Reconsideration* form to the Library Director, who will bring it to the attention of the Board. With the *Request for Reconsideration* form will be copies of the Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to Read Statement (see appendix). These materials have been adopted by the American Library Association and Talcott Free Library.

After Board consideration, a written decision will be made to the patron within a month after the next Board meeting. In the event that the decision to keep a specific book does not satisfy the person making the complaint, the Board further adopts the statement on Non-Removal of Challenged Materials. (See appendix).

Withdrawal Of Materials (Updated 11/2019)

Talcott Free Library is not a library of historical records, except in the area of local history. To ensure a vital collection of continued value to the community, materials which have outlived their usefulness, are in poor condition, or contain outdated information are withdrawn.

Materials Selection

The Board expresses approval of and accepts the principles stated in the Library Bill of Rights, adopted by the Council of the American Library Association and the Freedom to Read statement.

Authority and responsibility for library material selection is delegated by the Board of Library Trustees to the Director, and under his/her direction, to the staff.

Books and other library materials/resources are selected on the basis of educational, informational, cultural and recreational value. The materials are selected with consideration for the current and future needs of the district community. It also seeks to bring awareness of those cultures, traditions and ideas not represented in the local community.

The library represents a significant percentage of the community whose language is English. Other languages will be considered as need demands. The same criteria used in selecting English materials will apply to any special language collection.

All new and gift materials under consideration should meet high standards of quality, be up to date and accurate. Opposing views on controversial subjects shall be represented. The library does not sanction a particular belief or view, nor is

the selection of any given item equivalent to an endorsement of the author's viewpoint.

The librarian will make use of professional resources to aid material selection and will apply the same rules when weeding the collection, accepting gifts, or purchasing materials.

The collection should be a combination of materials requested by popular demand plus materials selected to create a well-rounded collection. The physical book or other item must be attractive and durable. E-Books will follow the same criteria as below.

Nonfiction Criteria: The library acquires materials of both permanent and current interests. Books/Materials are selected according to the merits of a work in relation to the needs, interest, and demands of the community. Each item is evaluated in its entirety and not on the basis of a particular paragraph, section or chapter. General criteria for non-fiction materials include the following: authoritativeness of the writer(s); accuracy of information; impartiality of opinion or clearly stated bias; subject matter and scope; adequate breadth and depth of coverage; reading level; relevance of subject to the library's users; availability of same or similar materials in library consortium; organization, indexing and style; ease of use; popular demand; durability, and cost.

Fiction Criteria: Works of contemporary fiction, literature, and classic works of enduring value are included in the collection. Fiction is selected according to the following criteria: popular demand; reputation of author; interest and originality of the plot; style of writing; literary merit; inclusion in newspaper and review journals; availability of similar materials in library consortium; cost. Genre fiction includes mysteries; romances; espionage; horror; thrillers; science fiction and fantasy. Westerns are selected in proportion to demand and circulation.

Duplicate copies of fiction and non-fiction materials are purchased according to patron demand, or expected demand. Special efforts are made to complete existing series, to purchase award winning titles, and to represent regional authors.

Children's Criteria: Materials should be chosen using the same criteria as adult materials. Textbooks will not be selected. The library's collection will be a supplement to rather than a substitute for school libraries.

In general, materials for children through grade 5 will be placed in the Children's Department. Fiction for young people grades 6 through 12 will be placed in the Young Adult area. Some titles may be represented in more than one collection.

(Updated 03/2023)

Audiovisual and Non-print Criteria: Materials should be evaluated regularly to reflect possible use by patrons. Instructional, educational and literature-based media should complement the collection. Entertainment DVD's may be purchased to enhance the popular materials collection.

For adults, spoken-word may be purchased on CD or Audio E-books with preference given to unabridged titles. The same is true for children's and young adult materials. *(Updated 03/2023)*

Periodical Criteria: For both adults and children periodicals should cover a wide range of interests and views. Local newspapers will be purchased in print form.

(Updated 11/2019)

Program Room

Guidelines for Use *(Updated 03/2022)*

Library programs have first priority.

The program room is available for meetings and programs to:

1. Meetings of municipalities, agencies or departments of local government located within the library boundaries;
2. Meetings of organizations whose purposes are educational, cultural or civic in nature and/or classified as a non-profit 501 (c)(3);

3. Businesses or groups within the district boundaries in need of space to conduct a meeting.

The library's program room may not be used for:

1. The sale or promotion of commercial products or services, except in conjunction with a library-sponsored event or program. This includes informational or educational offerings held for the ultimate purpose of soliciting sales or commercial products or services;
2. Social meetings or private parties, including, but not limited to birthday and graduation parties, and showers;
3. Groups who have no members residing within the library district;
4. Any illegal activities.

Permission to use the meeting rooms does not imply endorsement of an outside organization by the library and groups may not state or imply library sponsorship when publicizing the event. Any communication and advertising must clearly state: Event not sponsored by Talcott Free Library. All meetings must be open to the public.

Policies for room use:

- Room capacity may not be exceeded for any reason at any time.
- Room closes 10 minutes before library closing.
- Groups must provide notice of cancellations and may not assign a reservation to other individuals or groups.
- The Library reserves the right to change or cancel reservations.
- Groups must check in at the circulation desk to be let into the room.
- Adult supervision is required for students below high school age.
- Groups must moderate noise and voice levels, so others are not disturbed. Library staff will issue a warning to occupants causing disruptions. Repeated disruptions may result in the suspension of privileges.
- Cleaning up the room, including disposing of trash and cleaning whiteboards and tables, is the responsibility of the persons using the room.
- The Library retains the right to monitor all activities conducted on the premises to ensure compliance with Library regulations. Library staff must always have free access to the room.
- Failure to comply with the stipulations in these policies may result in the inability to reserve the room in the future. All patrons must follow the Conduct Policy.

- Each group/organization using the room shall be responsible for damage to the room and its contents, including any library equipment used. A charge will be assessed for any special cleaning or repairs made necessary.

Talcott Free Library complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act by making reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities and all patrons holding public meetings are responsible for complying with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which require that a meeting or materials at a meeting be provided in an accessible format in response to a request.

Study Rooms (Approved 8/2021)

- May be booked online (preferred method), by phone, or in person during normal open hours up to 4 weeks in advance or used FCFS if available.
- May be booked for 2 hours with one renewal if no one is waiting and there are no other reservations.
- May not exceed room capacity for any reason at any time.
- Rooms close 10 minutes before library closing.
- Applicants must provide notice of cancellations and may not assign a reservation to other individuals or groups.
- The Library reserves the right to change or cancel Study Room reservations.
- Patrons must check in at the circulation desk to be let into the room. Doors are locked at all times. See staff to re-enter.
- Groups must moderate noise and voice levels, so others are not disturbed. Library staff will issue a warning to occupants causing disruptions. Repeated disruptions may result in the suspension of study room privileges.
- Cleaning up the room, including disposing of trash and cleaning whiteboards and tables, is the responsibility of the persons using the Study Room.
- The Library retains the right to monitor all activities conducted on the premises to ensure compliance with Library regulations. Library staff must always have free access to Study Rooms.
- Failure to comply with the stipulations in these policies may result in the inability to book Study Rooms in the future. All patrons must follow the Conduct

Policy.

Community Information Posting Policy (Added 03/2025)

The Talcott Free Library District provides a community bulletin board and pamphlet display area to serve the needs of the library and the Talcott community. Use of the community bulletin board and pamphlet display area is governed by this policy established by the Library Board of Trustees and any applicable rules or regulations adopted by the library. The Director, as the executor of the policy for the Board of Trustees, may exercise reasonable discretion in determining what use is "in the best interest of the library" and is authorized to act accordingly, including limiting the use of the community bulletin board and pamphlet display area by individuals whose activities interfere with library operations, or adversely affect public safety.

PRIORITY FOR USE

The primary purpose of the community bulletin board and pamphlet display area is to promote and supplement the services, activities, and programs of the library. As such, the library will have first priority of use.

Nonprofit organizations based in the district will be given priority.

All other bulletin boards and display areas are exclusively for library use.

LIMITS OF USE

The community bulletin board and pamphlet display area is for the distribution of library information, information pertaining to government agencies/programs and nonprofit community events and services only. Community events are defined as those occurring within or immediately adjoining the boundaries of Talcott Free Library District. The library may request proof of nonprofit status.

The following types of items will not be displayed:

-Items that violate any local, state, or federal law, including, but not limited to, those concerning copyright, fraud, privacy, or pornography.

The library reserves the right to refuse or remove and dispose of any notice, or handout which does not comply with these policies and guidelines.

PROCEDURES

Displays on the community bulletin board will be on a first come, first served basis. Limited to one posting per month.

Items for potential display on the community bulletin board and pamphlet display areas must be delivered to the circulation desk and will be reviewed by staff or the executive director, as needed.

Display items must of a reasonable size in relation to the space available and will not be accepted if they detract from the effective use of the space.

Items that have been on display longer than four weeks or past the date of the event will be removed unless arrangements are made in advance and approved.

Copies of fliers should be limited to 20 or fewer.

ENDORSEMENT

Posting of a notice does not imply endorsement by the library staff or the Board of Trustees of any product, service, activity, event, or viewpoint displayed in the posted item.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Violation of the Community Information Posting Policy may result in a loss of public posting privileges.

DAMAGES AND LIABILITY

The library is not responsible for making arrangements for any posted items to be returned and accepts no responsibility for the loss of or damage to any item displayed.

APPEAL AND REVIEW

The Board of Trustees of the Talcott Free Library District will review this policy periodically and reserves the right to amend it at any time.

Any appeal for changes to, or exceptions to, any portion of this policy will be considered. An individual wishing to file an appeal shall submit it to the Director in writing, who will then discuss it with the board, and respond in writing.

Banner Use On Front Of Building (Updated 8/2023) Guidelines

Banners may not be hung on the building or porches nor mounted on library property for non-library run events.

Bloodborne Pathogens Policy

While normal library operations are not likely to involve circumstances exposing employees or users to bloodborne pathogens, the Talcott Free Library complies with Illinois Department of Labor regulations and therefore the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations relating to occupational exposures to bloodborne pathogens that have been incorporated by administrative actions.

Exposure Determination: No particular job classification of the Library has occupational exposure (meaning “reasonably anticipated...contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from the performance of an employee’s duties”), however, emergencies may occur with staff or patrons, particularly youth or elderly patrons, to which library employees in all classifications may be called upon to respond with assistance. Or emergencies with “out of control” individuals (e.g. biting, spitting, etc.) could present an individual threat.

Universal Precautions: All potential circumstances of exposure must be taken into account by the Library and its employees to protect against exposures. Hepatitis B (HB V), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and other bloodborne pathogens found in human blood and other body fluids cause life-threatening diseases. In emergency or other such circumstances, when contact with blood or other potentially infectious material may result, the Library’s approach to infection control requires all human blood and body fluids to be treated as if known to be infectious for HIV, HB V, and other bloodborne pathogens. Engineering and work practice controls shall be used to eliminate or minimize employee exposures, and if a possibility of exposure remains, personal protective equipment shall also be used.

Exposure Control Plan: At any time within the Library environment that human blood, human body fluids, or other potentially infectious materials are presented, the area contaminated shall be immediately cordoned off and quarantined, even if the entire library must be closed to accomplish this completely. Personal

protection clothing, such as gloves, gowns, masks, etc., shall be provided and used in the cleanup and safe disposal of contaminated waste such as diapers, blood-tinged materials (e.g. Band-Aids, gauze, cotton clothing, etc.), etc. If advisable, a professional hazardous/contaminated cleanup firm shall be contacted and retained for complete cleanup and decontamination. The quarantine shall be effective until complete cleanup and disposal is obtained. Hand-washing facilities are provided by the Library and must be used by the employees as soon as feasible, including following the removal of personal protective equipment. A complete record of all incidents, exposures, cleanup, and disposals shall be kept as required by the regulations.

Training and Immunizations: The Library shall provide directly or through System, State, or associational programs, annual in-service training/educational programs for all affected employees. Any employee who has an occupational exposure shall be offered, at no charge, the hepatitis B vaccine series, in accordance with the regulations. Following the report of an exposure incident, the Library will make immediately available to the exposed employee or employees a confidential medical evaluation and follow-up as provided in the regulations.

Internet Policies (Updated 11/2019)

To fulfill its mission, Talcott Free Library provides access to a broad range of information resources including those on the Internet. Information and resources on the Internet enhance those already held in the Library and often go beyond what is locally available. The Library makes this service available as part of its mission to inform, educate, and provide cultural enrichment to people of all ages throughout its service area.

Access to the Internet is compatible with the Library's endorsement of the Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations and the Freedom to Read statement. Internet access is also compatible with the Library's materials selection policy, long-range plan goals and strategies, and role as a government documents depository. Length of usage and accessibility to these computers will be determined if others are waiting to use computers.

Library staff will provide assistance with Internet use within the guidelines established in reference procedures but cannot offer extensive personal instruction. Formal instruction or information about the Internet may be offered by the Library at designated times.

Users may not add, delete or modify the equipment or programs in any way. Users must comply with all local, state and federal laws while using the Internet at the library. Users who violate any laws (including, but not limited to, those concerning copyright, fraud, privacy or obscenity), while using the library's Internet access, may have their computer privileges revoked.

Talcott Free Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Users are cautioned that the accuracy, completeness and currency of information found on the Internet vary widely. Users should use critical judgment in relying on information found on the Internet. The Library assumes no liability for any damage

or injury arising from the use of Internet resources accessed from the library. As with other library information sources, all Internet resources accessible through the Library are provided equally to all Library users and treated with confidentiality. Some of the material at these sites may be considered controversial or inappropriate for children. Parents or legal guardians, not Library staff, are responsible for supervising Internet use by their children.

Internet Filtering Policy

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), some websites may be blocked due to a third party filter. All Talcott Free Library computers must comply with CIPA in order to qualify for the E-rate program due to their accessibility to minors. Please see more information below.

Children's Internet Protection Act

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) was enacted by Congress in 2000 to address concerns about children's access to obscene or harmful content over the Internet. CIPA imposes certain requirements on schools or libraries that receive discounts for Internet access or internal connections through the E-rate program – a program that makes certain communications services and products more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. In early 2001, the FCC issued rules implementing CIPA and provided updates to those rules in 2011.

What CIPA requires

Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy that includes technology protection measures. The protection measures must block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) obscene; (b) child pornography; or (c) harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors). Before adopting this Internet safety policy, schools and libraries must provide reasonable notice and hold at least one public hearing or meeting to address the proposal.

Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt and implement an Internet safety policy addressing:

- Access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet;
- The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- Measures restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them.

Wireless Policy

The wireless network is only available during normal library hours. The wireless network will shut off automatically when the library closes.

Security Issues

Once you login, all further communications are passed through the Internet without encryption. We cannot guarantee the security of any personal information submitted over the wireless connection after you login.

Special Notes

In accordance with the Child Information Protection Act (CIPA), wireless web browsing must comply with our Internet policy. To help enforce this policy, all wireless computers are filtered.

Use of file sharing programs is not allowed.

The wireless service is only for web surfing. The wireless network does not support the use of POP3, IMAP or other e-mail services. If you need to check your e-mail, please do so from the web.

If you normally use a different Wi-Fi network (with a different SSID) your computer may not find our network automatically.

Only 802.11n (compatible with b, g and n wireless cards) is available. Bluetooth, and other wireless protocols are not supported.

Only HTTP and HTTPS communication to standard ports (80, 443) is supported. FTP, POP, and nonstandard HTTP and HTTPS ports cannot be used with the service.

Conduct Policy (Updated 11/2019)

The Talcott Free Public Library is dedicated to providing access to knowledge and information through reading, writing, and quiet contemplation, providing patrons the right to use materials and services without being disturbed or impeded, and providing patrons and employees a secure and comfortable environment. The Public Library Act provides the Board of Library Trustees with the general power to carry out the spirit and intent of the Act in establishing and maintaining the library and providing library services and the specific power to “exclude from the use of the library any person who willfully violates an ordinance or regulation prescribed.”

Examples of conduct and actions not permitted anywhere on the library’s property include, but are not limited to:

- Smoking, including the use of smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes; possessing, consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Use, possession, or smoking of marijuana.

The Board of Library Trustees of the Talcott Free Public Library establishes its conduct policy as follows:

Section 1

A patron who engages in any activity which materially disrupts the use of library facilities, collections, or services by patrons or materially disrupts the ability of the staff to perform its duties shall cease such activity immediately upon request by library personnel.

Section 2

In such instances involving minors, identification will be requested and the incident may be reported to the parent or guardian.

Section 3

If, following a request, the patron fails or refuses to comply or responds to the request in an abusive fashion, they will be required to leave the library premises

immediately for the balance of that calendar day. If they fail to leave, the police will be summoned.

Section 4

Library personnel will record instances in which patrons are required to leave the library in a ledger maintained by the library for this purpose. Upon 2 recorded instances in which a patron is required to leave the library premises within a thirty-day period, the Director shall bar the patron from use of library premises for a period of thirty days. Parents or guardians of minors will be notified in writing after the 1st recorded instance in which a minor is required to leave the library and advised of the consequences of any further recorded instances.

Section 5

Parents wishing to appeal such action may do so upon written request to the Board of Library Trustees.

Section 6

In the event a patron barred from the use of the library attempts entry to the Library during any such period of exclusion, the police will be summoned and informed of the prior action.

Section 7

In the event the patron persists in abusive conduct or disruptive behavior following such a period of exclusion, the Director shall report to the Board of Library Trustees such conduct following prior exclusion and the Board will consider a long-term exclusion of the patron.

Section 8

Any activity or conduct that is in violation of federal, state or local laws is prohibited on library premises.

Section 9

Protesters will be allowed around the building as long as they ensure that walkways to the entrance of the library and parking are not impeded. Protesters may not block the entrances to the building.

Miscellaneous

Exhibits

Occasionally, exhibits from sources within the community may be allowed in the library. All exhibits considered for space within the library must support the mission of the library and not cause disruption of the regular flow of library work and service. Such exhibits will remain in place for not longer than four weeks, with set up and removal being the responsibility of the exhibitor. The library assumes no liability for damage or loss relating to any exhibit set up for public viewing in the library and will take no extraordinary measures to insure its safety.

Accidents

If staff member or a patron is involved in an accident at the library, an accident report must be filled out. The report will be filed at the library and a copy will be given to the patron (see appendix).

Controlled substances

The use, distribution, dispensation, sale, unlawful manufacture, or possession of any drugs, alcohol or controlled substance for non-medical reasons on the premises of the Talcott Free Library is prohibited. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken in cases where violation occurs. Persons who are under the influence of alcohol or any nonmedical drugs are prohibited on library premises.

Property Sales

Notice of Sale of surplus property shall be posted in the library for at least two weeks prior to sale. The library may establish a minimum acceptance price and refuse inadequate bids. Public sale of all real estate having a value of one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) or more may be held only after publication of such notice once each week for two successive weeks in the local newspaper.

Capitalization

The Library will capitalize Building and Land Improvements which have a useful life of over one year and a dollar cost of \$5000.00 or more.

The Library will capitalize Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment which have a useful life of over one year and a dollar cost of \$1000.00 or more.

Volunteers (Updated 05/2016)

The Talcott Free Library recognizes the value of community volunteers. Utilizing volunteers in the Library provides an opportunity to generate community interest in the Library and needed assistance for staff.

Volunteers will work under the direction of library staff. There are a variety of tasks volunteers may be asked to do as individual capabilities are considered.

Volunteers need to meet the following general requirements:

- Maintain effective working relationships with others
- Capable of working in congested and limited working spaces
- Able to perform assigned tasks with a minimum of supervision
- Have regular hours, determined by staff and volunteer

Volunteers receive no monetary compensation.

Volunteers are requested to notify the Library in the event that they will be absent for their regular volunteer time.

Volunteers will be required to sign a "Volunteer Agreement" which will also contain emergency information. This form will be filed with the Director.

Appendix

Request for Records

Please be encouraged to email the director with your request instead of using this form.

Date _____

Requestor's Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone Number _____

Requestor's Email Address _____

RECORDS SOUGHT: List records requested below. Please be specific.

Requestor's Signature

Request for reconsideration of a resource

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City State/Zip _____

Phone/Email _____

Do you represent self? ____ Or an organization? ____

Name of Organization _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

___ Book (e-book)

___ Audio Recording

___ Movie

___ Digital Resource

___ Magazine

___ Other

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

1. What brought this resource to your attention?

2. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

3. What concerns you about the resource?

4. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

5. What action are you requesting the library consider?

Freedom to Read Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative

when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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

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

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

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.

A Joint Statement by:
American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:
American Booksellers for Free Expression

The Association of American University Presses

The Children's Book Council

Freedom to Read Foundation

National Association of College Stores

National Coalition Against Censorship

National Council of Teachers of English

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

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

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

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights.

Challenged Resources: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined written policy for collection development that includes a procedure for review of challenged resources. Collection development applies to library materials and resources in all formats, programs, and services.

Article I of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights states, "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation." Article II further declares, "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."

Freedom of expression, although it can be offensive to some, is protected by the Constitution of the United States. The "Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" states:

Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be fair and just in defending the library user's right to read, view, or listen to content protected by the First Amendment, regardless of the creator's viewpoint or personal history. Library workers should not permit their personal biases, opinions, or preferences to unduly influence collection-development decisions.²

This applies with equal force to library resources and services provided to students and minors.³

The Supreme Court has held that the Constitution requires a procedure designed to critically examine all challenged expression before it can be suppressed.⁴ Therefore, libraries should develop a procedure by which the governing body examines concerns and challenges about library resources. This procedure should be open, transparent, and conform to all applicable open meeting and public records laws. Challenged resources should remain in the collection, and access to the resources remain unrestricted during the review process. Resources that meet the criteria for selection and inclusion within the collection as outlined in the institution's collections policy should not be removed. Procedures to review challenges to library resources should not be used to suppress constitutionally protected expression.

Any attempt, be it legal or extralegal, to regulate or suppress resources in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged. Attempts to remove or suppress materials by library staff or members of the library's governing body that are not regulated or sanctioned by law are considered "extralegal." Examples include actions that circumvent library policy, or actions taken by elected officials or governing board members outside the established legal process for making legislative or board decisions. Actions taken by library governing bodies during official sessions or meetings

pursuant to the library's collection development policy, or litigation undertaken in courts of law with jurisdiction over the library and the library's governing body, and actions taken by legislative bodies are considered a "legal process."

Content filtering is not equivalent to collection development. Content filtering is exclusive, not inclusive, and cannot effectively curate content or mediate access to resources available on the internet. Filtering should be addressed in an institution's policy on acceptable use of the internet. Acceptable use policies should reflect the Library Bill of Rights and "Internet Filtering: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," and be approved by the appropriate governing authority.

1 "Libraries: An American Value," adopted February 3, 1999, by the ALA Council.

2 "Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development"; and June 25, 2019.

3 "Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 under previous name "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.

4 *Bantam Books, Inc. v. Sullivan*, 372 U.S. 58 (1963).

Adopted June 25, 1971, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; January 10, 1990; January 28, 2009; July 1, 2014; and January 29, 2019.

The quoted language in this interpretation from "Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" (adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development"; and June 25, 2019) was updated to reflect the June 2019 revision. This change was voted on by the Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Statement of Non-Removal of Challenged Library Materials

WHEREAS, The Library Bill of Rights states that no library materials should be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval, and

WHEREAS, constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line, and

WHEREAS, any attempt, to be legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged in the process, and

WHEREAS, the Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on the question before speech can be suppressed, and

WHEREAS, the dissemination of a particular work which is alleged to be unprotected should be completely undisturbed until an independent determination has been made by a judicial officer, including an adversary hearing.

THEREFORE, THE PREMISES CONSIDERED, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of the Talcott Free Library declares as matter of final principle that no challenged library material should be removed from any library under any legal or extra-legal pressure, save after an independent determination by a judicial officer in a court of competent jurisdiction and only after an adversary hearing, in accordance with well- established principles of law.

Talcott Free Library ACCIDENT/EMERGENCY/INCIDENT Report

Staff: Please complete this report for any accidents, injuries, emergencies, conflicts or other incidents out of the ordinary involving patrons or staff. Please provide as much detail about the occurrence as possible. Then submit the report to the Library Director.

REPORTED BY:

DATE, TIME AND PLACE:

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT OR INVOLVED: _____

LIBRARY PATRONS PRESENT OR INVOLVED (include names addresses and phone numbers):

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT IN DETAIL (use other side or additional sheets if necessary):

Was an outside agency called? If so which agency? _____

Responding officer? _____ What was the result? _____

Was any library property damaged? If so, please describe.

Staff member filing this report:
