

Arkansas City Public Library

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES

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1.1 Library Mission Statement

The mission of the Arkansas City Public Library is to provide library resources and services to meet the changing recreational, informational, and educational needs of the public, to enhance individual and community life.

Reaffirmed by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004; April 10, 2017.

1.2 Library History

EARLY LIBRARY HISTORY

On March 7, 1892, the Fortnightly Club, consisting of “civic- minded ladies,” established a book collection for its members. In November 1896, this collection was opened to “a limited number who shall be called Library Members.” The Y.M.C.A. also sponsored a reading room, but it was not until April, 1900, that Miss Lillie R. Gilliland attempted to organize a library. She established a circulating library, called the Arkansas City Library, and it was situated in the Commercial Club Assembly Room. It had 75 members who paid \$1.00 each for a membership fee. The collection consisted of 500-600 volumes. At the end of the year the Commercial Club “failed to vote for any help for the Library,” and Miss Gilliland gave away or sold the books at this point.

After the demise of the “city library,” the St. Cecilia Club, a ladies’ musical society, produced concerts to raise funds for a public library. On April 15, 1904, after considerable promotion, the proposition “to establish and maintain a free public library” was brought to a vote but was defeated.

THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY

N. D. Sanders, “an enthusiastic advocate” of a library, entered into correspondence with Andrew Carnegie who responded with a generous offer of \$16,000.00 for a building. This was on April 10, 1906. (The amount was later increased to \$18,400, provided that “Council guarantee a corresponding increase in the maintenance fund.”) On June 28, 1906, the electorate voted to support a public library. The first Library Board was established July 11, 1906.

A site at Second Street and West Fifth Avenue was chosen and six lots were selected and purchased. The architectural firm of Smith and Shenck of Fort Worth designed the building. The contract was let for no more than \$16,000.00 to George E. Hopper, but the building was finished under the supervision of J. Y. Davis. The plumbing was done by James Bays, and decorating and interior finishing was contracted by Cooper & Heydorf Bros. The library board spent \$2,600.00 on the grounds, and the building cost was \$18,400.00. The Fortnightly Club donated 600 volumes to the 3,000 volumes purchased by the board, thus the library was opened with 3,600 volumes. The dedication was held on August 5, 1908. A. J. Hunt, president of the New Era Mill, gave the dedicatory address.

Miss Hattie Osborne, a Library Science graduate, was hired for six months starting July 1, 1908, to catalog the books and to train Mrs. A. B. Ranney, who served as Head Librarian for the next 24 years. At first, the library contained mostly donated books and periodicals, but by the end of 1910 the library owned 3390 books and 20 periodicals. Throughout the years, the library has been enriched by gifts and memorial donations of books, periodicals, art objects, and furnishings through the generosity of its supporters.

As the city grew, the library kept pace. During the Depression, circulation leapt to over 100,000 books per year, telling a silent tale of need fulfilled during those lean years. Building improvements were made through the years with the idea of maintaining the original style of the building but still keeping pace with the times. A new entrance was added in 1960, complete with glass vestibule. A mezzanine was built in 1965, which

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provided shelving for many additional books. Finally, the library holdings outgrew the facilities and in 1980, the Library Board acquired the old post office building at the corner of 5th Avenue and A Street. After extensive remodeling of the building, the library was moved to the new location in November 1980.

THE CURRENT LIBRARY

The old Post Office building, built in 1914, was vacated in the early 1970s when the Post Office opened a new building at Washington and A Streets, and the old building became the property of the Department of the Navy. For many years, the city administration and local citizens argued that this building would make a suitable new home for the library, which was “packed to the walls” with materials in its location on West 5th Avenue. In July 1978, the building was turned over to the City of Arkansas City by the federal government for the purpose of providing library collections and services.

After an extensive renovation that added a balcony area on the second level, an elevator, and public restrooms, the library moved to its new home in November 1980. The basement level was left unfinished at the time but has since been designated as the Youth Services Department. The whole building was renovated during 2002-2003 as a part of the Families First Recreation Initiative of the City of Arkansas City. This project provided \$145,000 for capital improvements to the existing library facility. The main and upper levels of the library have been newly carpeted and painted, and collections have been shifted to better serve the public. Additional furnishings were purchased, and small renovations made in order to create a more relaxing and welcoming atmosphere in the library.

Resources used: The Carnegie Legacy in Kansas (1985), Kansas State Library. "Library One of City's Proud Possessions" (1971, July 30), Arkansas City Daily Traveler, p. 6A. Notes from Phyllis Tilson, Arkansas City Public Library files. [Approved by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004; April 10, 2017.](#)

1.3 Library Strategic Planning

Strategic planning for the library should be conducted no less than every four years. This process will involve input from the Board, Director, and Staff. A comprehensive community analysis should be included, using statistical data, patron surveys and interviews, and city planning documents. The end result of strategic planning should be a document that outlines library goals and objectives for a specified period of time.

Approved by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004. Revised: July 13, 2015. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.4 Library Goals & Objectives

Library goals and objectives are determined on a periodic basis through the strategic planning process. These goals will be communicated to all library constituent groups and will be evaluated regularly by the library Board, Director, and Staff. Goals and objectives may be modified between each strategic planning process at the discretion of the Director with approval of the Board.

Approved by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.5 Library Board Bylaws

ARTICLE I Name

This organization shall be called “The Board of Directors of the Arkansas City Public Library,” existing by virtue of the provisions of K.S.A. 12-1222 and all acts amendatory thereof or supplemental thereto, with powers and duties enumerated in K.S.A. 12-1215 and K.S.A. 12-1225 of the laws of the State of Kansas. The Board of Directors may also be referred to as “Trustees” or “Board of Trustees” in correspondence, minutes, and other internal operational documents of the library.

ARTICLE II Mission

LIBRARY VISION

Our library vision is to connect people with information, as embodied in our motto “Opening the World to You.” We strive to be a window for our users, helping them to see and experience the world through our resources and services. Literacy is the passport to a universe of knowledge.

LIBRARY MISSION

The mission of the Arkansas City Public Library is to provide library resources and services to meet the changing recreational, informational, and educational needs of the public, to enhance individual and community life.

As a recreational and popular materials library, materials of high interest and demand are provided to persons of all ages. As an information and reference library, answers and materials are provided to the questions of individuals of all ages. As an educational and learning center, support and assistance are provided to patrons who are pursuing both formal and independent learning.

ARTICLE III Service Area

The taxing district of the public library corresponds to the boundaries of the City of Arkansas City. The primary service area of this public library includes the City of Arkansas City and its surrounding environs within Cowley County.

ARTICLE IV Board Members

The Library Board of the Arkansas City Public Library consists of seven (7) members appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Commission. Of the seven members appointed, “one shall serve for a term expiring the first April 30 following date of appointment, two for terms expiring the second April 30 following date of appointment, two for terms expiring the third April 30 following date of appointment, and two for terms expiring the fourth April 30 following date of appointment” (K.S.A. 12-1222). In addition to the appointed members, one Commissioner of the Board of Commissioners, upon appointment by the official head of the municipality and approval by the governing body (City Charter Ordinance No. 20) shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Board, which means that by virtue of the office or position, the Commissioner is a Board member. To be eligible for appointment to the Board, “all members appointed to a library board shall be residents of

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the municipality. Vacancies occasioned by removal from the municipality, resignation or otherwise, shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired term. No person who has been appointed for two consecutive four-year terms to a library board shall be eligible for further appointment to such board until one year after the expiration of the second term. Members of library boards shall receive no compensation for their services as such but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses in attending meetings and in carrying out their duties as members” (K.S.A. 12-1222). “Any member of the library board may be removed by the governing body for any one of the following:

1. Refusal to comply with library by-laws, library rules and regulations, or applicable statute or municipal law regarding the library;
2. Violation of the fiduciary duty owed to the library by the member;
3. Conviction of a misdemeanor or felony; or
4. Absence for three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the library board, or absence for six (6) regular meetings of the library board within a one-year period” (City Charter Ordinance No. 20).

ARTICLE V Officers

The officers of the Library Board shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, whose duties shall be those usually pertaining to these offices. Each officer shall be elected at the annual meeting in May and serve until their successors are elected.

ARTICLE VI Meetings

Meetings of the Library Board shall be held regularly, the day and time at which will be determined by the Board at the annual December meeting. Unless waived, written notice of each regular meeting shall be sent to each member of the Board not less than three (3) days prior to such meeting date. If unable to attend, members should notify the library director. Special meetings shall be called at any time by the President or at the written request of a majority of the members. Written notice stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which called shall, unless waived, be given each member of the Board at least two (2) days in advance of such meeting, and no business other than that stated in the notice shall be transacted at such meeting.

ARTICLE VII Quorum

Four members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. In the absence of the President and Vice President of the Board, the members present shall elect a presiding officer to conduct the meeting. Members with more than four consecutive absences from meetings will be considered inactive and informed in writing that a replacement on the Board will be sought.

ARTICLE VIII Committees

There also shall be special committees as may be required. Special committees shall be appointed by the President of the Board, unless otherwise ordered, and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to them by motion or resolution adopted.

ARTICLE IX Board Responsibilities

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The Board has the responsibility of making and directing the policy of the Library, in accordance with all times with the statutes of the State of Kansas. Its responsibilities include promotion of library interests, securing adequate funds to carry on the work satisfactorily, and the administration and control of library funds, property, and equipment.

ARTICLE X Library Director

The Board shall select a Library Director who shall be the chief administrative officer under the direction and review of the Board. The Library Director shall be responsible for the employment and direction of the staff in accordance with the personnel policy in the library's policy manual as adopted by the Board for the efficiency of the library's service to the public, for the operation of the library under the financial conditions set forth in the annual budget, and for other such responsibilities that are delegated to the Library Director by the Board. The Library Director shall attend all regular and special board meetings.

ARTICLE XI Review & Amendment of Bylaws

The Bylaws of the Arkansas City Public Library should be reviewed once every three years, or as necessary. These Bylaws may be repealed, amended, or revised at any regular meeting of the Board by a majority of a quorum of the Board of Directors, provided, however, that such proposed repeal, amendment, or revision shall first be submitted in writing at a regular meeting of the Board and sent to those members not present. Such proposal shall not be acted upon prior to a subsequent regular meeting of the Board, and notice of intended repeal, amendment, or revision shall be included in the notice of such meeting.

ARTICLE XII Parliamentary Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the proceedings of the Board.

Approved by ACPL Board: April 2, 2003. Reaffirmed: February 11, 2004; October 12, 2005. Revised: April 10, 2017.

1.6 Board Member Orientation & Training

Trustees are volunteers for the library who usually have full-time jobs of their own. It is the responsibility of the Director and the Board President to make sure that new trustees are given the information they need to be effective board members. Information about the ethical responsibilities of trustees and about continuing education and training opportunities for trustees should be included in the orientation. Orientation of new library trustees should begin as soon as possible after the new trustee is appointed. New trustees should meet with the Director and the Board President to learn about the following library topics:

- organization and governance
- funding and budgeting
- day-to-day operations of the library
- services to the community
- links to other resources and libraries
- roles of the Director and the Board
- the legal basis of the board
- officers and committees
- meeting location and schedule
- responsibilities and expectations
- goals, long-range plans, and projects in progress
- accomplishments

New members should be given a packet that includes:

- list of board members with names, addresses and phone numbers.
- bylaws of the board
- minutes of the previous year's board meetings
- staff list with contact information
- library policy manual
- library strategic plan, goals, and objectives
- statistical reports on circulation and other library services
- current budget and financial reports
- any library brochures or other public information distributed by the library.

It is critical for library board members to have training in board development, group dynamics, effective meetings, funding issues, library policy, advocacy, community partnering, technology planning and other topics. ACPL Trustees shall participate in continuing education activities as needed. If the board desires to set up a training session on a topic of concern to the trustees, they may contact the South Central Kansas Library System or Kansas Library Trustee Association for assistance.

Approved by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004; April 10, 2017.

1.7 Board Ethics

ACPL endorses the American Library Trustee Association’s “Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees.”

ETHICS STATEMENT FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEES

- Trustees shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity, and honor.
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the situation.
- It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever an appearance or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.
- A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1985. Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985. Amended July 1988, January 1989, February 11, 2004. Reaffirmed on April 10, 2017. Approved by ACPL Board: April 2, 2003. Reaffirmed: February 11, 2004; October 12, 2005.

1.8 Relationship of Board & Library Director

The Major Responsibilities of Kansas Library Board Members are:

- To employ a competent and qualified library director and work for sufficient financial support to provide qualified staff.
- To provide good working conditions and benefits for library staff members, opportunities for training and development, and recognition of staff achievements.
- To determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation and programs of the library.
- To know the community and make sure the library's programs reflect the community's needs.
- To create and monitor short and long-range priorities for the library and secure adequate funds to implement the library's objectives.
- To establish, support, and participate in planned programs to market the library's services to the community.
- To work for adequate financial support for the library, advocating for public support and participating in community fundraising.
- To assist in the preparation of the library budget and defend it at budget hearings.
- To monitor and finance the care of library facilities.
- To plan appropriately for library automation.
- To attend board meetings and make sure that accurate records are kept of all board proceedings and actions.
- To know local and state laws that impact the library's program and actively support needed library legislation.
- To be aware of the services of the Kansas State Library, the Kansas Library Association, the Kansas Library Network Board, and the Kansas Regional Library Systems.

And according to K.S.A 12-1225:

- To make and adopt rules and regulations for the administration of the library;
- with the approval of the governing body of the municipality, to purchase or lease a site or sites and to lease or erect a building or buildings for the use of the library;
- to acquire by purchase, gift or exchange, books, magazines, papers, printed materials, slides, pictures, films, projection equipment, phonograph records and other material and equipment deemed necessary by the board for the maintenance and extension of modern library service;
- to employ a librarian and such other employees as the board deems necessary and to remove them and to fix their compensation, except as provided in K.S.A. 12-1225b;
- to establish and maintain a library or libraries and traveling library service within the municipality or within any other municipality with which service contract arrangements have been made;
- to contract with other libraries established under the provisions of this act or with the governing body of a municipality not maintaining a public library for the furnishing of library service to the inhabitants of such municipality to the extent and upon such terms as may be agreed upon, and to contract with any school board to

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furnish library service to any school library or to use the library facilities of the public school to supplement the facilities of the public library;

- to receive, accept and administer any money appropriated or granted to it by the state or the federal government or any agency thereof for the purpose of aiding or providing library service;
- to receive and accept any gift or donation to the library and administer the same in accordance with any provisions thereof. If no provisions are specified, the board shall have the power to hold, invest or reinvest the gift and any dividends, interest, rent, or income derived from the gift in the manner the board deems will best serve the interests of the library;
- to make annual reports to the state librarian and the governing body of the municipality on or before January 31 of each year for the preceding calendar year, showing receipts and disbursements from all funds under its control, and showing such statistical information relating to library materials acquired and on hand, number of library users, library services available, and other information of general interest as the governing body requires;
- as to money received from sources other than a tax levy for library purposes, in its discretion, to place such money in a separate fund or funds, or to place the money in the fund to which the tax levy money is credited unless the grantor or donor directs how and for what purpose the money shall be handled and spent.

The Major Duties of the Library Director are:

- To manage the operation of the library's programs and services according to established library policies.
- To market the library's programs and services so that all community residents are aware of what the library has to offer, and the community leaders consider the library essential to the community's quality of life.
- To pursue library training and education that will result in the most effective library administration.
- To consult with the state library and library system consultants when professional assistance is needed.
- To hire and supervise staff according to policy and utilize the skills and initiative of the staff members to the library's advantage.
- To suggest needed improvements in compensation and working conditions for the staff.
- To develop the staff development and training programs for the director and the staff members.
- To help the board design an effective evaluation process for the director and staff and to maintain position appraisals and up-to-date personnel records for all staff.
- To recommend needed policies to the library board and maintain the library's written policies and procedures.
- To work with the board, the local government, and the community to increase the library's financial support.
- To maintain the library's financial records and give appropriate financial reports to the board.

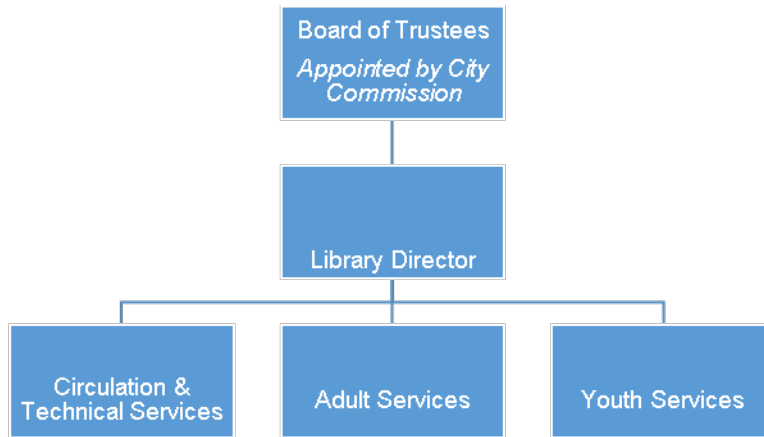
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- To obtain the level of formal education appropriate for managing the library.
- To be aware of and support library legislation in the state and the nation.

From the 2000 revision of the Kansas Public Library Standards and the Kansas Public Library Trustee Handbook. Approved by ACPL Board: April 4, 1973. Revised: February 11, 2004; April 10, 2017.

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1.9 Library Organization Chart



Approved by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004. Revised: September 8, 2014. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.10 Library Policies

Library policies:

- Provide a mechanism for library managers and staff to translate the library’s mission, goals, and objectives into actions.
- Serve as the primary tool for ensuring that all staff have the information they need to do their jobs effectively.
- Provide a way to ensure that all members of the public know what they can expect from the library and that they are treated equitably.
- Provide support for the library staff and the library governing body in the event of legal action.

Effective library policy manuals:

- Define current practice.
- Reflect the library’s priorities.
- Are current, comprehensive, and consistent.
- Can be accessed easily by all library staff and are user friendly.
- Are in compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations.
- Are developed and reviewed by all staff who will be affected by the policy content.

Adapted from Creating Policies for Results (2003) by Sandra Nelson and June Garcia. All ACPL policies will be reviewed at least once per year by the Board and the Director, with input from Staff when appropriate. A schedule for library policy review will be presented by the Director for approval by the Board. Approved by ACPL Board: February 11, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

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1.11 City of Arkansas City

Public libraries in Kansas are by statute governed under city, county, township, district, or regional jurisdiction. Library boards are the legal entities charged with formulating policy and providing personnel and resources for the operation of the library. Municipal governments are charged with funding the operational budgets created and recommended by local library boards. The unique relationship created by library law in Kansas means that library boards are separated from partisan politics and should consider only the creation and implementation of library services for their community in the work they do on the board.

The relationship of local government to the library board must be one of mutual respect. The Board has the official authority to construct the library's budget, but they also have a political responsibility to justify the library's expenditures. The public library trustees of ACPL are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Commission.

The ACPL Board and Director must maintain an open and cooperative working relationship with the City of Arkansas City. Services provided to the Library by the City include, but are not limited to parking lot maintenance, snow removal, and recycling pick-up. Policy questions may be directed to the City Manager. Procedural or financial questions should be addressed to the Director of Administration and/or the City Clerk. The City Attorney also serves as the library's counsel unless other representation is requested by the Board. The library is included as a part of the annual city audit and will provide the necessary documentation to the firm selected by the City for said task.

Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Revised: April 10, 2017.

1.12 Regional Library System

The Arkansas City Public Library became a member of the South Central Kansas Library System (SCKLS) on June 17, 1967. As a consequence of SCKLS membership, Kansas Administrative Regulation (KAR) 54-1-8 states that "libraries participating in a regional system of cooperating libraries shall permit any citizen of the territory comprising the system to borrow materials and receive services without charge, subject to reasonable library rules."

As a SCKLS member, ACPL receives an annual grant-in-aid from the system, is eligible to use SCKLS services and programs, and can apply for SCKLS library grants subject to grant guidelines. To be eligible for the SCKLS grant-in-aid, the library is required to maintain and report the number of registered borrowers who reside outside the boundaries of the library's taxing district and the number of interlibrary loans provided to other libraries.

A representative of ACPL must be appointed by the Board to serve as the official SCKLS Representative. The representative may be a library Board member or the Director. This person will attend meetings of the regional library system and monitor system activities and vote on behalf of the library as a whole. If the designated representative cannot attend a meeting, someone may be sent in his/her place with a proxy statement for voting purposes.

Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.13 Kansas State Library

The Kansas State Library provides information services for state and local governments, for local libraries and their users, and for people who communicate with the library in the Capitol Building or at its other service locations.

The Kansas State Library ensures excellent library service for all Kansans through:

- research services to state government
- government-related information service to librarians and other Kansans
- leadership in library development throughout the state
- information services to people who are blind or disabled
- improving the reading skills of adults through literacy programs
- leadership in library information technology
- continuing librarian education, and
- administration of state, federal, and grant-funded library programs.

ACPL is required to report yearly library statistics to the Kansas State Library as a part of the state grant-in-aid process. Assistance with legal issues related to public libraries is also a primary service provided by the state library. ACPL is committed to maintaining a positive and beneficial relationship with the Kansas State Library on behalf of our community of users.

Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.14 Confidentiality of Library Records

ACPL maintains trust with members of the public and makes reasonable and responsible effort to ensure that information about library users and the individual information that they use remains confidential. Library user records are protected by law as a consequence of the library's written policy stating that they are confidential, as described under K.S.A. 45-201, et seq. All library employees and volunteers will be trained to uphold the library's policies on confidentiality. No information may be disclosed regarding or including:

1. A library user's name (or whether an individual is a currently registered borrower or not).
2. A library user's address.
3. A library user's telephone number.
4. The library's circulation records and their contents.
5. The library's borrowers' records and their contents.
6. A library user's computer usage or sign-up records.
7. The number or character of questions asked by individual library users.

The frequency or content of a library user's visits to the library or any other information gathered by the library will not be given, made available, or disclosed to any individual, corporation, institution, government, or law enforcement agency without a valid warrant or court order. No information will be shared with any outside entity for telemarketing purposes, but the library reserves the right to use patron contact information in its own fundraising or information gathering activities.

Approved by ACPL Board: May 12, 1999. Revised: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

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1.15 Respect for Human Diversity

ACPL affirms its commitment to the value of human cultural diversity. We pledge to:

- Create a welcoming environment where the multicultural character of our clientele and staff is recognized and valued.
- Develop policies which foster a respect for and awareness of diversity.
- Advocate for equal access to library services regardless of the race, gender, age, religion, language, socio-economic status, ethnicity, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation of the patron.
- Develop a multicultural collection and provide access to information that is relevant to the experiences, cultures, and historic contributions of a diverse population.
- Plan and conduct activities and programs incorporating multicultural themes, including intergenerational programs.
- Form alliances with community and regional organizations, institutions, agencies, and businesses in order to reach diverse user populations.
- Serve as a clearinghouse for resources/information concerning diversity.

Adapted from the Blue Earth County Library Policy Manual, Adopted October 2000, Revised June 2001.

Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.16 Library Ethics

ACPL endorses the American Library Association’s evolving “Code of Ethics”, which “translates the values of intellectual freedom that define the profession of librarianship into broad principles and provides a framework for library professionals dealing with situations involving ethical conflicts” and expects all staff will strive to maintain the highest levels of personal and professional integrity.

Library staff may not accept nor solicit any gift or service that is offered to influence the employee’s behavior to the advantage of another. Token items, such as food or flowers, may be accepted and shared with other staff. Any gift of significant value should be submitted to the Director for evaluation. Gifts intended for the library rather than an individual will be formally accepted by the Director. Personal gifts to staff will be returned to the giver or forwarded on to an appropriate local charity. Staff is also prohibited from using their position for private gain or transacting library business with any entity in which they or their family members have a financial interest.

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

“As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

“Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

“We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

“The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.

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3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.
4. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.
9. We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces."

Adopted by the ALA Council, June 28, 1995. Addition of ninth principle by unanimous vote of ALA Council on June 29, 2021. Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.17 Library Bill of Rights

ACPL endorses the American Library Association’s evolving “Bill of Rights” for libraries and library patrons.

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.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. 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.
7. 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. Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.18 Freedom to Read & Freedom to View

“ACPL endorses the American Library Association’s evolving “Freedom to Read” and “Freedom to View” statements for libraries and library patrons.

The Freedom to Read

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 avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens 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 citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept 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 in 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 silence of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the least 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 of making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only

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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

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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 with any expression the prejudgment of a label characterizing it 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 the citizen. 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.

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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.

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 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 citizens 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 possesses 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. [Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004.](#) [Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.](#)

The Freedom to View

"The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Each of us has the right to read, view, listen to, and

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disseminate constitutionally protected ideas, even if a censor finds those ideas offensive. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expressions. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view."

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989. Endorsed by the ALA Council January 10, 1990. Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.19 Libraries: An American Value

ACPL endorses the American Library Association’s evolving “Libraries: An American Value” statement for libraries and library patrons.

Libraries: An American Value

“Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America’s libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.

To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library’s resources and services;
- We value our nation’s diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources and services;
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library’s resources;
- We protect each individual’s privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions, and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners—informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment. By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.”

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association, February 3, 1999. [Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004.](#) [Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.](#)

1.20 Intellectual Freedom

ACPL endorses the basic premise of intellectual freedom as a guiding principle of the work we do in public libraries.

Intellectual Freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom is the basis for our democratic system. We expect our people to be self-governors. But to do so responsibly, our citizenry must be well-informed. Libraries provide ideas and information in a variety of formats to allow people to inform themselves. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive, and disseminate ideas.

American Library Association, "Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q&A" from ALA website, December 7, 2003. Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004. Reaffirmed: April 10, 2017.

1.21 Core Values of Librarianship

ACPL endorses the American Library Association’s evolving “Core Values of Librarianship” statement.

“The foundation of modern librarianship rests on an essential set of core values that define, inform, and guide our professional practice. These values reflect the history and ongoing development of the profession and have been advanced, expanded, and refined by numerous policy statements of the American Library Association. Among these are: access, confidentiality/privacy, democracy, diversity, education and lifelong learning, intellectual freedom, preservation, the public good, professionalism, service, social responsibility, and sustainability.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to express our values more eloquently than ALA already has in the Freedom to Read statement, the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Mission Statement, Libraries: An American Value, and other documents. These policies have been carefully thought out, articulated, debated, and approved by the ALA Council. They are interpreted, revised, or expanded when necessary. Over time, the values embodied in these policies have been embraced by the majority of librarians as the foundations of their practice. These selections are direct quotes from the ALA Policy Manual. The following are some representative excerpts from ALA policy expressing the values listed above. These selections are direct quotes from the ALA Policy Manual. Please note that many of these statements express the interrelationship of these values.

Access

All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users.

Confidentiality/Privacy

Protecting user privacy and confidentiality is necessary for intellectual freedom and fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship.

Democracy

A democracy presupposes an informed citizenry. The First Amendment mandates the right of all persons to free expression, and the corollary right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. The publicly supported library provides free and equal access to information for all people of the community the library serves. Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights, Economic Barriers to Information Access

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Diversity

We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve.

Education and Lifelong Learning

ALA promotes the creation, maintenance, and enhancement of a learning society, encouraging its members to work with educators, government officials, and organizations in coalitions to initiate and support comprehensive efforts to ensure that school, public, academic, and special libraries in every community cooperate to provide lifelong learning services to all.

Intellectual Freedom

We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.

The Public Good

ALA reaffirms the following fundamental values of libraries in the context of discussing outsourcing and privatization of library services. These values include that libraries are an essential public good and are fundamental institutions in democratic societies.

Preservation

The Association supports the preservation of information published in all media and formats. The association affirms that the preservation of information resources is central to libraries and librarianship.

Professionalism

The American Library Association supports the provision of library services by professionally qualified personnel who have been educated in graduate programs within institutions of higher education. It is of vital importance that there be professional education available to meet the social needs and goals of library services.

Service

We provide the highest level of service to all library users...We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Social Responsibility

ALA recognizes its broad social responsibilities. The broad social responsibilities of the American Library Association are defined in terms of the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society; support for efforts to help inform and educate the people of the United States on these problems and to encourage them to examine the many views on and the facts regarding each problem; and the willingness of

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ALA to take a position on current critical issues with the relationship to libraries and library service set forth in the position statement.”

Adopted by the ALA Council: January, 2004. Revised/Reaffirmed: January, 2019. Approved by ACPL Board: March 10, 2004.