

Portland Library Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
Van Beynum Room  
March 21, 2024

Board Members Present: Olenka Castelli, Don Eiler, Myra Finkelstein, Betsy Graziano, Melissa Kelley, Laurel Steinhauser

Absent: Jade Richardson,

Others Present: Jennifer Billingsley (Library Director), Shaun Manning (BOS), Ralph Zampano

Laurel Steinhauser called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

### **1. Public & Staff Comment**

No public comment.

### **2. Additions and Approval of the Agenda**

A motion was made by Melissa Kelley, seconded by Myra Finkelstein, to approve the agenda, all were in favor, motion carried.

### **3. Review Minutes:**

#### **a. Action on the Minutes of the February 15, 2024 Meeting**

Betsy Graziano made a motion to approve the February 15, 2024 meeting minutes, seconded by Don Eiler, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

### **4. Corresponding Secretary's Report**

Betsy delivered three leaves for engraving. It should take about two weeks for the three green leaves (for \$800). Betsy presented a paper copy of the form, and talked through the ordering process and she shared that she personally covered the cost of engraving as a gift to the library, and Laurel thanked her. A question came up regarding punctuation on one form, so Jenn sent a text asking the individual to clarify and will follow up with Betsy.

### **5. Old Business**

- a. Budget Update: Jenn has attended the town budget hearings and workshops and expressed appreciation to Tom and Ryan for what was included in the First Selectman's budget. Payroll numbers were adjusted due to staffing changes made this year as well as increase to cover professional development of new staff. Only item which may come as a surprise was the inclusion of a copier/fax machine in the FY 26 capital improvement. Public copier was purchased in 2013, the service contract said that some replacement parts may no longer be available so there is

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a request to fund replacement in the future and staff will start to work on quotes, etc. Including items like this in long range capital plans can impact the ability to qualify for outside funding. Original funds came through Memorial account, but could have come from endowment or a state grant. Jenn will follow up. A discussion ensued regarding “E” book licensing, and how some licenses expire and items disappear in two years. Very positive comments were received regarding the infographic document and usage charts from state report. Request was made to share with the Board of Selectmen.

b. Meeting Room Policy

Jenn went through the proposed changes that were made including: Adding in a section prohibiting vaping, stating that outside groups must wait for confirmation until town meetings are booked internally for calendar year. Under IV. Eligibility & Fees: proposal was made to change the minimum booking age from 18 to 16 years old. Confirmed that board of Ed tutoring is generally 2-hour sessions, and that exceptions can be made by staff to accommodate community needs, trash from refreshments should not be discarded inside study rooms, and there should be a minimum ratio of 1 adult per 10 juveniles in meeting rooms.

Don Eiler made a motion to accept the Meeting Room Policy with the suggested changes, seconded by Betsy Graziano, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

c. Tutoring Policy

Jenn indicated that the full staff had input into both policy updates. A brief discussion took place regarding the Tutoring Policy draft.

Don Eiler made a motion to approve the Tutoring Policy, seconded by Betsy Graziano, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

**6. New Business**

**a. Volunteers for “Portland Quarry Celebration Day and Artisan Show”  
(Saturday 6/8 (rain date 6/9) 9:30-4:30 – for Brownstone Quorum)**

Friends will be bringing Melissa would like to take the seed library. However, she would not be available for the rain date on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Betsy said she could help out on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Melissa will coordinate the transport and the return of the seed library and will develop a schedule. Tom Bransfield will be the point person with the Quorum. Laurel suggested a giveaway or some kind of activity. Brainstorming of ideas will take place later.

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## 7. Friends of the Portland Library

With the resignation of Maureen Muir from her position as President, Monica Jensen who was Vice President, is now serving as President of the Friends of the Portland Library. Monica provided the following report (through Jenn Billingsley):

- Read and Recycle Collection will take place Saturday, March 23 from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon at the library.
- The Friends next meeting is April 8, 2024 at 7 p.m.

Jenn expressed their appreciation for all of Maureen's support and wonderful leadership of our Friends group. They have met with Monica and are looking forward to working with her.

## 8. Chair's Report

Laurel expressed gratitude for Maureen Muir for what she has done in her role. She has been a wonderful partner to us.

A webinar was hosted about DEI in libraries. It included how to support DEI in public libraries and what the staff and board can do.

## 9. Director's Report

In addition to Jenn's report, the following was covered:

- All seemed to want Jenn to continued how she starts the strategic planning update.
- Beth Kauczka is moving from full time department head to part-time Librarian 1. Michele Grzejszczak will move into full-time head of Adult Services.
- The financial part of the report is much more detailed (on Page 3) including information on what is held in reserve from the memorial fund balance. Director needs to do some more work on how this is organized but does plan to include this type information going forward. Laurel appreciated the update regarding the Memorial Fund balance. Billingsley will keep updating it and will also have more info on the grant funding next month.
- Billingsley asked if the board is still interested in funding the window art moving forward. New spring art is welcoming and warm. The Board is supportive and the artwork is great and the cost is reasonable so preapproval of up to \$400 for Summer 2024 will be added to April agenda
- Regarding the holiday schedule, this board will no longer vote to approve it since it is outlined in the union contract.
- Laurel praised Jenn Renk for inviting an after-school club at the Middle School over to the Library so they could continue during the instructor's maternity leave.

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**10. Other Discussion**

No other discussion.

**11. Adjournment**

Myra Finkelstein made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Betsy Graziano, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Hoy  
Recording Clerk

# Meeting Rooms Policy

## Portland Library

### Statement of Purpose

The Board of Directors of the Portland Library views the use of the library meeting rooms as a library service. The rooms shall be available to the library community in its broadest sense and shall reflect the Library's educational, cultural, social and recreational roles and its function as a community gathering space. The use of a room by any group or individual does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's or individual's policies or beliefs by the Library or the Town of Portland.

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

### I. Availability

The Portland Library has meeting rooms and two small study rooms available for public use.

#### **Meeting rooms:**

The Mary Flood Room:

- with tables and chairs: capacity is 40 people,
- with chairs only: capacity is 70 people

The Wagner Room: capacity is 30 people

The Van Beynum Room: capacity is 12 people

#### **Study Rooms:**

The Nocek Room: capacity is 6 people

The Buck Room: capacity is 6 people

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The Nocek and Buck study rooms may be booked by individuals for quiet study, tutoring, or meetings. If applicable, please also see the Tutoring Policy

Meeting rooms are generally available by reservation during hours when the library is open to the public.

### II. Application for Use of Meeting Rooms

The meeting rooms shall be available for booking to groups or individuals on a first come, first served basis, subject to the approval of the Library Director or his/her designee.

To book a **meeting room**, a representative of any non-government town group must fill out and sign a meeting room application form and either submit it through the library website, or send the application in **by mail, e-mail, or hand-delivery**.

**An updated application is required every three years and groups must contact the library promptly and a revised application should be submitted if there is a change to relevant contact or setup information or nonprofit status.**

**The Library shall respond to requests for the current calendar year within three business days of receipt,**

**but please note that the library is unable to confirm reservations from outside groups for the upcoming calendar year until all regular Town meeting schedules have been approved.**

To book a **study room**, an individual or a representative of a group may call or come in to the library and speak with a staff member at the Information desk and reserve a space up to 60 days in advance.

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

- 1) Critical Town Meeting with the exception of a previously scheduled library program when another venue can appropriately accommodate the Town group.
- 2) Library and library affiliated groups or programs.
- 3) Portland non-profit and Civic organizations or groups whose activities will benefit the citizens of Portland
- 4) Non-profit and civic organizations not relating to Portland, and local **For-profit groups conducting non-commercial activity which is free and open to the public.**

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

### III. Limits:

The Mary Flood Room may remain in use beyond the usual closing time until 11 pm; a designated group member must be trained in closing procedures.

In case they continue beyond closing time, public meetings held in a room other than the Mary Flood must move to a designated area to allow monitoring of the entrance door activity after the Library is closed.

Except for Critical Town Meetings, groups shall be limited to regular bookings of no more than once a month.

Non-profit groups with no Portland affiliation and local

for-profit groups are limited to a maximum of one use of the meeting rooms between the respective periods from January to June and July to December.

Tutors who receive pay for their services may only reserve a room one business day prior to the day of use, and are held to a time limit of two hours per day. Study room users who do not receive pay for their services or are tutors employed directly by the Portland Public Schools may reserve a study room or the Van Beynum Room at any time during normal operating hours.

**The Library reserves the right to approve or deny requests for use of the meeting or study rooms, or cancel a reservation for the use of a meeting or study room, in case of conditions that could reasonably be expected to disrupt the library's operations.**

#### **IV. Eligibility & Fees:**

**The rooms shall be available to non-commercial, tax-exempt, cultural, civic, professional, educational or governmental groups.**

Individual juveniles and groups of juveniles under the age of 16 may use the meeting or study rooms only with verified adult supervision; one adult per each group of ten (10) juveniles present.

**The rooms and the library facility shall not be used for the following purposes:**

Commercial activity, soliciting, or sales of products or services, with the exception of tutoring, as named above, Political rallies, meetings, or phone banking for the purpose of supporting or opposing a specific candidate, Religious services, Group or private social events, Events where admission or registration fees are charged, or where donations are solicited.

Fundraising may take place only at the discretion of the Library Board or designee.

The Library reserves the right to seek references of the individual booking the room and of any group, before booking the room.

#### **V. Guidelines and Responsibilities**

Supervision and Responsibility for order:  
The organization and the individual applying for using the meeting room are responsible for supervising the use of the room.

A child or children accompanied to the library by a user of a meeting room may not be left unattended in the library or in a meeting or study room.

Groups using the meeting rooms may be responsible for arranging the room and shall be responsible for restoring the room to the same condition in which it was found.

If the kitchen is used, it must be left in clean, orderly condition. Permission from the library must be granted before refreshments may be served in the Van Beynum Room.

Applicant should supply a request for set up of the meeting room at the time of application which the library and town will do its best to provide.

Study rooms are to be left in clean, orderly condition, and food should not be disposed of in study room trash receptacles.

Per the library's Behavior and Environment Policy "beverages are allowed only in appropriate closed containers and to be kept at a minimum distance of 4 feet from any library electronic equipment."

Users of the library's audio-visual equipment must be trained in advance and will be held responsible for any damage to hardware.

Alcoholic beverages may not be served in the Library. The Library is a **Smoke-free** building.

Cooking, use of candles, and vaping are prohibited. Materials shall not be affixed to wall surfaces without prior written permission.

A statement clarifying sponsorship must appear in all advertising and press releases using the following phrase:

"This program is sponsored by (organization's name) and will be held in the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting room of the Portland Library."

Groups, excepting Critical Town meeting groups, may not store materials at the Library.

No group may use the Library as its mailing address or information contact point.

The Library shall not be responsible for damage or loss to equipment, supplies, exhibits or exhibit materials, or any other items owned by an individual or group and used in the meeting rooms.

#### **VI. Liability**

Waiver:

The Library Board and the Town of Portland or their employees or agents are not liable for any claims

arising out of the use of this facility.

The library reserves the right to require that groups or individuals provide a certificate of comprehensive general liability insurance with minimum coverage of one million for property damage and personal injury arising of use of the facility.

The applicant shall be required to pay in advance, either through a cashier's check or a surety bond, the cost estimated by the Director of any security measures which are reasonable or necessary for the meeting.

**VII. Exceptions:**

Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the Library Director or his/her designee.

Failure to act in accord with this policy and/or the following library policies: the Behavior and Environment Policy and/or the Child Behavior and Supervision policy may result in cancellation of a meeting and/or future denial of meeting room privileges for any group or individual.

Revised and Approved by the Library Board of Directors  
October 22, 2009  
May 19, 2011  
October 25, 2012  
August 18, 2023  
March 21, 2024

## **Tutoring Policy Portland Library**

Portland Library offers two small study rooms, the Nocek and the Buck room, that may be used by tutors in accord with the Meeting Room Policy. The Van Beynum Room is a 3rd option if the 2 smaller rooms are full (please note that while using the Van Beynum room, one could be interrupted by someone looking for historical materials.)

Tutors using a room must return the study room "Meeting Room Evaluation" form to the library staff at the end of the session.

Tutors who are tutoring for pay may book a study room one business day in advance, for up to two hours per day, or may tutor their students at tables in the public areas of the library as long as they do not disturb or impede the use of the library by other patrons. Otherwise, the study rooms are available to tutors who are tutoring for pay on a first come, first serve basis.

Tutors hired by Portland Schools and tutors who are not collecting pay may reserve the meeting rooms for one, two hour session per student, per day up to 30 days in advance.

The Library reserves the right to limit the number of hours per session and per week that may be used by a tutor and library administration reserves the right to restrict or limit any tutor's use of the rooms during high-demand periods.

Failure on the part of the tutor or student to comply with the Library's Behavior and Environment Policy and the Meeting Room Policy shall result in the denial of the individual's privilege to tutor at the library.

Approved by the Library Board February 20, 2003

Revised March 20, 2003

Approved November 17, 2011

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