



Grand Rapids Public Library  
Board of Library Commissioners  
**Policy Manual**

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# Board of Library Commissioners

## Policy Manual

### 10 | Administration

#### Policy 10-1 | Bylaws

##### Article I

##### Purpose and Authority

###### Section 1.

These Bylaws are adopted by the Grand Rapids Board of Library Commissioners (the "Board" herein), an entity organized under the authority of the City Charter of the City of Grand Rapids ("City Charter" herein). The purpose and mission of the Board shall be: "inspiring opportunity, connection, and innovation."

###### Section 2.

The Board shall have the entire management and control of the Public Library of the City of Grand Rapids and of all property and assets belonging thereto devoted to or intended for library purposes. (City Charter Paragraph 230.)

###### Section 3.

The Board may employ in its management of the library a librarian and such other employees as it may determine, and fix their salaries. It may purchase such books and apparatus for the use of the library as it may find necessary, and may do everything necessary to maintain the library, building and grounds, and increase its usefulness. For these purposes it may establish, amend, or repeal rules and regulations in any manner not inconsistent with City Charter Title XIII. (City Charter Paragraph 235.)

###### Section 4.

The Board is composed of a diverse and varied group of individuals, each holding unique and independent positions on a variety of issues. All Library Commissioners are encouraged to seek opportunities to champion the library's programs and policies. When appearing at a public forum, attending meetings, or addressing any individual, or group of individuals in any public or private setting, each Commissioner should clearly indicate whether they are speaking only on

their own behalf or as a representative of the Board. No Library Commissioner is authorized to act or speak on behalf of the Board, or to represent themselves as acting or speaking on behalf of the Board, unless they have been specifically authorized to do so by a majority vote of the Board.

#### **Section 5.**

Where directed or deemed appropriate, the Library Executive Director shall develop and maintain procedures and/or guidelines for administering board policies. The Library Executive Director shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date procedures manual which shall be reviewed annually and shared with all staff. All procedures should be supported by board policies.

### **Article II**

#### **Election and Eligibility of Commissioners to Serve**

##### **Section 1. Election of Library Commissioners.**

The Board shall be composed of seven (7) elected members. (City Charter Paragraph 230.) Library Commissioners shall be elected as provided for by law and City Charter for a term of six (6) years and until each Library Commissioner's successor is elected and qualified. Notice of the election shall be given as provided for by law. (City Charter Paragraph 229.) The election of members of the Board shall be at the even year general election except as otherwise provided for in City Charter. The result of the vote shall be canvassed and declared in the same manner as in the case of other City Officers. (City Charter Paragraph 231.)

##### **Section 2. Eligibility to Serve as Library Commissioner.**

Any qualified elector meeting the eligibility requirements for elective City office set out in Title II, Section 4 of City Charter shall be eligible for election as a Library Commissioner. Nominations shall be in the same manner as nomination for other City offices and nominating petitions shall be as provided for in Title III, Section 5 of the City Charter. (City Charter Paragraph 232.)

##### **Section 3. Eligibility for Elective City Office, Generally.**

A candidate for any elective office of the City shall be a resident of the City for six (6) months or more immediately prior to the last day for filing petitions for office and shall be a registered and qualified elector of the City at the time of filing petitions for office. An appointee to any vacancy in any elective office of the City shall be a resident of the City for six (6) months or more immediately prior to the date of appointment, and shall be a registered and qualified elector of the City at the time of appointment. Term limits established by the City of Grand Rapids Charter Amendment for the Mayor and City Commissioners do not extend to the Board. (City Charter, Title II, Section 4, Paragraph 9.1)

**Section 4. Commitment to Serve Without Compensation.**

At each January Board meeting, or at the first meeting of an appointed term, Board members shall sign the “Voluntary Commitment to Serve” form. No member of the Library Board shall receive any compensation for their services in connection with their office. (City Charter Paragraph 234.)

**Section 5. Removal from Office.**

Any member of the Board may be removed by the Board for official misconduct or for unfaithful or improper performance of the duties of their office or for ineligibility. (City Charter Title V Paragraph 73 Section 24.a.) A copy of the charges against such Commissioner and notice of the time and place of hearing shall be served on them at least ten (10) days previous to the date assigned for hearing. If personal service cannot be had, the same shall be left at their place of residence within the City, with some suitable person of proper age, or other substituted service may be had. Opportunity shall be given to them to make their defense. A majority vote of the Board shall be necessary to remove such Commissioner. (City Charter Title V Paragraph 73 Section 24.b.)

**Section 6. Announcement of Intent to Seek Additional Term.**

At each January Board meeting in a year when new Board members will be elected, Board members whose terms are expiring should, as a courtesy, indicate to the Board whether they will be seeking an additional term. Should a Library Commissioner be unable to fulfill the responsibilities of office, including attendance at Board meetings, they should send a letter of resignation to the President of the Board as soon as possible. This will allow for a smooth transition in filling the vacancy with minimal disruption.

**Section 7. Vacancies.**

In case of the death, resignation, removal, or relocation from the City of any Library Commissioner, their position shall become vacant and the vacancy shall be filled by election by the remainder of the Board for a term continuing for the remainder of the unexpired term and until their successor is elected and qualifies; provided, that if a regular non-partisan primary election occurs in the interim, 12 months or more after the happening of the vacancy, an officer shall be elected to fill the unexpired term. (City Charter Paragraph 233.) The Library Executive Director shall publicize in each election year the number of seats up for election, the deadline date for filing petitions, and information on contacting the City Clerk. Publicity shall be widely circulated.

**Section 8. Employment of Commissioners by the Library.**

No currently seated Board member may apply for or be hired to fill a position at the Grand Rapids Public Library. A Board member who wishes to apply for a position with the library must first resign from the Board.

### **Section 9. Orientation.**

Orientation for new Board members will be arranged by the President of the Board.

## **Article III Meetings**

### **Section 1. Open Meetings.**

Except as permitted by law, meetings of the Board (including committee meetings) shall be open to the public, shall be held in a place available to the general public, and shall otherwise be conducted in compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, being MCL 15.261 et. seq.

### **Section 2. Regular Meetings.**

The Board shall meet in regular session on the last Tuesday of each month at a time and location to be determined by the Board. The Board shall, at least annually, adopt by resolution a schedule of its regular meetings showing the dates, times, and locations of such meetings.

### **Section 3. Special Meetings.**

The President of the Board may call a special meeting as deemed necessary by the President. Special meetings shall be conducted in compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, being MCL 15.261 et. seq.

### **Section 4. Conduct of Meetings.**

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Rules adopted by the Board.

### **Section 5. Official Board Business.**

No official Board business will be conducted via email; only at Board meetings.

## **Article IV Officers**

### **Section 1. Officers.**

Annually on the first Monday after their election, the Board shall organize by electing one of its members President and one of its members Vice-President/Secretary. (City Charter Paragraph 234.) For purposes of this Section, "the first Monday after their election" shall mean the first regularly scheduled meeting of the Board following certification of the election by the Kent County Board of Canvassers. This interpretation is necessary because the Board does not regularly meet on Mondays, and the election results are not finalized until so determined by the Board of Canvassers.

The officers shall serve a term of one (1) year beginning at the regular meeting of the Board held in January, and shall continue to serve until the following December meeting. Should either the office of President or Vice-President/Secretary become vacant during the officer's

term, the Board shall elect a successor for the remainder of the unexpired term at the next regular meeting of the Board following the occurrence of such vacancy.

### **Section 2. President.**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, serve as ex-officio member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with the office of President.

### **Section 3. Vice-President/Secretary.**

The Vice-President/Secretary will assume and perform the duties of the President in the event of absence or disability of the President.

### **Section 4. Recording Secretary.**

Except as provided herein, the Library Executive Director or their designee shall serve as the Board's Recording Secretary and shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Board, consistent with the Michigan Open Meetings Act. For closed sessions of the Board conducted under authority of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, the City Attorney or their designee shall serve as Recording Secretary.

## **Article V**

### **Finances**

#### **Section 1. Custodian of Funds.**

The City Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the Board and all bills incurred by it shall be allowed by the Board and certified to the City Comptroller to be audited and paid from the Library Fund. (City Charter Title XIII, Paragraph 234.)

#### **Section 2. Fines and Penalties.**

All fines and penalties which by law are devoted to library purposes shall hereafter be paid into the City Treasury for the purposes of the Board. (City Charter Paragraph 236.)

#### **Section 3. Gifts.**

On behalf of the library, the Board is hereby authorized to receive gifts, devises, or bequests of real or personal estate for the library or any matters connected therewith. The Board is hereby authorized to carry out in connection with any such gifts any trust or trust conditions that may be attached thereto in like manner as any other trustee. All gifts, devises, or bequests for the benefit of the library shall be subject to the same control and management by the Board as the original library committed to its care, provided however, that trust funds shall be paid to and invested by the Trustees of the Sinking Fund. (City Charter Paragraph 237). Absent sufficient appointees to constitute a quorum of the Trustees of the Sinking Fund, funds shall be invested in accordance with the Michigan statutes relative to the

investment of funds of public corporations, the City Commission ordinance on investments, and the City Commission Policy governing the investment of City funds.

#### **Section 4. Funds for Support of Library.**

There shall be placed in the budget annually for the maintenance and running expenses of the library, two-fifths ( $\frac{2}{5}$ ) of a mill of the assessed value of the property of the City, and such further sum as may be determined by the City Commission in making up its budget from year to year. The City Commission may provide from time to time such temporary funds for the purposes of the Board as it deems necessary. (City Charter Paragraph 238). Additional dedicated mills authorized by a vote of the people of the City of Grand Rapids shall also be placed in the budget annually for the purposes for which the mills are authorized.

#### **Section 5. Report to City Commission.**

Annually, the Board or its designee shall present to the City Commission its report containing a full detailed statement of all monies received and expended and such facts and recommendations regarding the library as the Board shall deem proper. (City Charter Paragraph 239).

### **Article VI Committees**

#### **Standing Committees.**

Standing Committees of the board shall be comprised of no more than three (3) Board members, and shall be appointed by the President. The Library Executive Director shall be represented at all Committee meetings. Reports of the standing committees shall be advisory, and shall be presented to the Board upon request of the President.

#### **Ad Hoc Committees.**

The President of the Board may establish and appoint ad hoc committees of the Board, as deemed necessary by the President. Membership on advisory committees may include no more than three (3) members of the Board, and may also include others who possess particular knowledge, expertise, or interest in the subject matter for which the committee is formed.

### **Article VII Legal Actions**

Whenever necessary for the enforcement of the powers, rights, and privileges conferred upon the Board, or for the protection of the property placed in its charge, the Board may, in the name of the City of Grand Rapids, institute in any court of competent jurisdiction, an action at law or in equity. In all suits on behalf of the Board, it shall be represented by the City Attorney. (City Charter Paragraph 240).



## **Article VIII**

### **Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the Board, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of any such meeting, or at the previous regular meeting.

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*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-2 | Rules of Procedure

#### **Section I Commission and Duties**

##### **Rule 1**

The regular meetings of the Board shall be as established by the bylaws of the Board of Library Commissioners (the "Board" herein) in compliance with Title XIII of the City Charter. Special meetings shall be held as permitted by the bylaws of the Board.

##### **Rule 2**

The President of the Board shall open the meeting at the time provided in the calendar approved by the Board, and as required by the bylaws by taking the chair and calling the members to order; by announcing the business before the assembly in the order in which it is to be acted upon; by recognizing members entitled to the floor; by stating and putting to a vote all questions which are regularly moved, or necessarily arise in the course of the proceedings; and by announcing the results of the vote. They shall preserve order and decorum, decide on all questions of order, and conduct of proceedings. The President shall appoint all committees subject to the approval of the Board.

##### **Rule 3**

Any request for work product from staff shall be made through or authorized by a majority vote of the Board and conveyed to the Library Executive Director.

##### **Rule 4**

Email and other communications issued by Board members are public records, and may be subject to disclosure according to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), being MCL 15.231 et. seq.

## **Section II**

### **Order of Business**

#### **Rule 1**

The regular order of business shall be as follows: (Agenda items requiring action will be noted by use of an A)

- A. Roll Call
- B. Minutes Approval
- C. Board Comments
- D. Committee Reports
- E. Other Reports
- F. Staff & Foundation Reports
- G. Old Business
- H. New Business
- I. Information Items
- J. GREIU
- K. Agenda Items for Next Regular Board Meeting
- L. Public Comments

#### **Rule 2**

No items should be considered unless presented to the Library Executive Director two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which they are to be presented.

#### **Rule 3**

The Library Executive Director and Board President shall prepare the agenda including the Agenda Calendar. The Board packet, including the agenda, will be sent to each Board member at least one (1) week before a regular meeting.

## **Section III**

### **Decorum and Debate**

#### **Rule 1. Speaking.**

When a member wishes to speak, they shall address the President and shall wait to speak until they have been recognized by the President.

#### **Rule 2. Precedence in speaking.**

When two (2) or more members address the President at or about the same time, the President shall designate by recognition the first speaker.

#### **Rule 3. Voting.**

- A. All members of the Board present shall vote on a question when their name is called, unless excused by consent of a majority of the remaining members present; however,

- B. No member of the Board shall vote on any question in which they have a conflict of interest, or on any question concerning their conduct.
- C. Any member of the Board may demand a roll call vote on any question before the decision is announced by the President.
- D. Except as otherwise provided, an affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the Board present and constituting a quorum is necessary to approve any action before the Board. Approval of Board policies; contractual agreements, exceeding amounts delegated to Executive staff; salary changes; hiring of a Library Executive Director; and approval of the annual budget, requires four (4) affirmative votes for passage.
- E. A roll call vote is required to enter into a closed session.

**Rule 4. Motions and Resolutions.**

- A. The President of the Board, at their discretion, shall determine whether any motion or resolution must be presented in writing; except that motions to adjourn, postpone, table, remove from table, commit, or take from committee shall not require a written motion.
- B. Non-agenda matters shall not be discussed without the consent of a majority of the Board.
- C. When a motion has been made, the President shall immediately state the question or shall have such question read by the Recording Secretary.
- D. A second shall be requested by the President, or any member of the Board, on any motion.

**Rule 5. Debating a Motion.**

- A. In the debate, each member has a right to speak twice on the same question on the same day (except on an appeal), but cannot make a second speech on the same day (except on an appeal), on the same question so long as any other member who has not spoken on the question desires the floor. No one shall speak longer than five (5) minutes without permission of the Board.
- B. While a question is under debate, no motion shall be received unless to postpone, table, amend, substitute, commit, or adjourn, which motion shall require a second.

**Rule 6. Question.**

When the debate appears to have closed, the President shall ask, "Are you ready for the question?" In all such cases, the President shall state the question.

**Rule 7. Division of a Question.**

On demand of any member before the question is put, a question may be divided if it includes propositions so distinct in substance that on being taken away a proposition shall remain. The motion may be amended, or a subsidiary motion applied to it, but such amendment or subsidiary motions are not debatable.

**Rule 8. Reconsidering a Question.**

When a question has been taken, it shall be in order for any member who voted with the prevailing side to move for reconsideration thereof at the same or succeeding meeting, but no question shall be reconsidered without the consent of two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the members of the Board.

**Rule 9. Adjournment.**

A motion to adjourn takes precedence over all others; it is not debatable, nor can it be amended or have any other subsidiary motion applied to it, nor can a vote on it be reconsidered. It may be withdrawn.

**Rule 10. Suspension of the Rules.**

A motion to suspend the rules may be made at any time when no question is pending, or while a question is pending, provided it is for a purpose connected with the question. Suspension of the rules may be accomplished by a majority vote of the Board present. A motion to suspend shall require a second.

**Rule 11. Speaking from the Floor.**

- A. No person shall address the Board without the recognition and approval of the President or presiding officer.
- B. Each person receiving permission to address the Board shall clearly give their name and, if appropriate, group affiliation. Any recognized speaker who refuses to so identify themselves shall be denied the opportunity to address the Board by the President or presiding officer.
- C. All persons addressing the Board shall limit their remarks to a duration of three (3) minutes; provided, however, that in the judgment of the President or presiding officer the time period may be extended if the person speaking is representing several other persons in attendance who, therefore, do not intend to speak themselves; or may be shortened to not less than two (2) minutes if, in the judgment of the President or presiding officer, the number of persons desiring to speak and the constraints of time make it impracticable for all persons to speak if each is given three (3) minutes.
- D. Any person making impertinent, slanderous, or profane remarks or who engages in threatening or abusive language or conduct shall be in breach of proper decorum. If such person continues to breach decorum after being warned by the President or presiding officer, they may be removed from the meeting.

**Section IV****Suspension, Amendment, or Rescission of the Rules****Rule 1**

At any legal meeting, these rules may be suspended by a majority vote of members present or they may be amended or rescinded by a majority of the members.

**Rule 2**

The Robert's Rules of Order, revised, may be consulted and considered rules of the board on matters not specifically covered by these rules.

**Section V****Annual Review of Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures****Rule 1**

The Board shall review the bylaws and policies annually and reaffirm by vote at the January meeting.

**Rule 2**

The Library Executive Director shall maintain an up-to-date procedures manual compliant with Board policies. This manual will be reviewed by staff at least once a year and follow the Board's reaffirmation of its Policy Manual.

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*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: July 26, 2022, February 20, 2024, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-3 | Library Executive Director: Hiring, Evaluation, and Compensation

The Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) has the sole authority and responsibility for establishing and maintaining the job description for the Library Executive Director, hiring the Library Executive Director, establishing compensation for the Library Executive Director, evaluating the Library Executive Director, and disciplining the Library Executive Director, including firing.

The Board, in consultation with appropriate counsel, will have the responsibility for maintaining a current contract with the Library Executive Director. Compensation for the Library Executive Director’s position will be established at the time of hiring and at stated interval(s) provided by contract. Special consideration of circumstances arising during the term of the contract may be requested by either the Library Executive Director or the Board.

The evaluation of the Library Executive Director will be conducted annually by the Board at a time established by the Board. Procedures for this evaluation will be provided by the Board in consultation with the Library Executive Director and maintained by the Board. The evaluation will be the basis for continued review of the job description and contract between the Board and the Library Executive Director. (See Exhibit A)

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 91-4*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: September 24, 2019, November 28, 2023, December 17, 2024*



## EXHIBIT A

### **Library Executive Director Evaluation**

The Grand Rapids Public Library Board of Library Commissioners will conduct an annual formal

evaluation of the Library Executive Director. The purposes of this evaluation are as follows:

- To review shared expectations between the Library Executive Director and the Board and assess how they are being met.
- To assess the Library Executive Director's satisfaction of their annual goals from the previous evaluation process.
- To reflect on strengths and areas of improvement in four focus areas: Director Responsibilities, Board Communication, Staff Relations, Community Development.
- To identify the Board's concerns moving forward, if any, so that appropriate action can be taken.
- To demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to the library staff and the community.

### **Procedure for the Evaluation**

1. The Executive Director will compile the following three (3) documents to provide to the board at the official Board meeting one (1) month before the Library Executive Director evaluation meeting:
  - a. Annual Goals for the upcoming year
  - b. Collected Anonymous Staff Feedback, using a method determined separately, in partnership with the Board. This may include hiring an outside facilitator.
  - c. A Personal Summary of identified strengths and potential areas of improvement for each of the four (4) focus areas presented below
2. To prepare for the formal evaluation, the Board will read and review all of the above documents, and each member will submit comments to a selected Library Commissioner to compile and send to the Library Executive Director in advance of the meeting to discuss all evaluation documents.
3. The Library Executive Director will meet with the Board for a conversation around focus area strengths, areas of improvement, and progress around previous annual goals. This conversation will be a place to discuss concerns in more detail, ask questions, and review shared expectations moving forward.



## **Focus Areas**

### **Executive Director Responsibilities**

The expectations of the Library Executive Director's strategic planning, ongoing administrative duties, and professional development include, and are not limited to:

- Provide leadership in developing and implementing long- and short-term goals to carry out the library's strategic framework, and provide communication around any revisions.
- Develop priorities that show advanced planning, appropriately reflect community needs, and are consistent with the long- and short-term goals provided.
- Develop and present an appropriate budget to the Board, exploring and applying for alternative funding sources and grants as appropriate, and negotiating and overseeing contracts held by the library.
- Oversee activities of the library, including helping staff initiate new programs and services, carrying out library procedures, and communicating library services effectively to the public.
- Attend relevant conferences, meetings, workshops, and seminars, sharing knowledge gained with the Board and other appropriate individuals.
- Demonstrate to the staff and to the Board an awareness of new services, programs, resource materials, and technological developments, and their potential impact on the library.

### **Board Communication**

The expectations of the Library Executive Director's interactions with the Board of Library Commissioners include, and are not limited to:

- Keep the Board informed on issues, needs, and operations of the library.
- Report to the Board regularly on library operations, activities, opportunities, and problems.
- Offer professional advice to the Board on items requiring Board action, with appropriate recommendations based on thorough study and analysis.
- Recommend to the Board plans, policies, and technological improvements relating to library operations.
- Support and execute Board Policy and communicate it to the public and to staff.
- Seriously considers and/or acts on the Board's suggestions.
- Implement Board decisions on a timely basis, showing full support of such decisions.

### **Staff Relations**

The expectations of the Library Executive Director's management role with staff include, and are not limited to:

- Set an example for the staff through professional conduct, high principles, and a business-like approach. This includes displaying initiative, making decisions objectively, and seeking and accepting constructive criticism.

- Maintain positive management/staff relations.
- Administer Board and library policies fairly and equitably.
- Address grievances appropriately and in a timely manner when they are filed.
- Encourage staff to maintain an awareness of technological advances in the profession.
- Justify the need for staff development funds, actively campaign for such funds, and adequately account for the use of such funds.

### **Community Development**

The expectations of the Library Executive Director's community development include, and are not limited to:

- Develop and maintain relations with governmental officials.
- Develop and maintain relations with community members and organizations.
- Develop and maintain relations with the Library Foundation and Friends of the Library.
- Be visible to large segments of the population.
- Be available for speaking engagements in the community.



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-4 | Library Executive Director: Expenditure Authority

In addition to the purchasing authority granted to the Library Executive Director in Purchasing Policy 30-3, the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) authorizes the Library Executive Director to expend funds within the library’s approved budget for all board expenses for meetings which may include refreshments, meals, board recognition and appreciation, and other miscellaneous expenses as appropriate to conduct the business of the Board, and that these expenditures will be budgeted annually and paid for by the Comptroller’s office.

The Board authorizes the Library Executive Director to expend funds for staff functions including, but not limited to, meetings with staff, retirements, awards, staff recognition and appreciation, and special events, and that these expenditures will be budgeted annually and paid for by the Comptroller’s office.

The Board authorizes the Library Executive Director to expend funds for meetings and other functions as required to promote the library and its services, within the community, and that these expenditures will be budgeted annually and paid for by the Comptroller’s office.

The Board authorizes the Library Executive Director to send a floral or similar tribute upon the death of a staff or Board member or immediate family member (defined here as spouse or significant other, mother, father, or child).

In the event of any conflict between this Policy and any Policy promulgated by the City of Grand Rapids, it is the intent of the Board that this Policy shall control.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 97-3*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-5 | Non-Discrimination

The Grand Rapids Public Library shall provide an open and welcoming environment for all regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, or gender expression/identity.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 12-6*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: August 27, 2019*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-6 | Advertising

Advertising conducted by the Grand Rapids Public Library will be produced in the most prudent manner possible.

The Library Executive Director will develop guidelines and procedures to implement this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 02-03  
Adopted: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-7 | Posting and Distribution of Literature by Outside Organizations or Individuals

The Grand Rapids Public Library may display posters, flyers, etc. to publicize events sponsored by or for the benefit of non-profit organizations (formal or informal). All proposed postings must be approved by the Communications Department. Obscene material, defamatory material, or material that is otherwise illegal may not be posted.

The Library Executive Director shall develop guidelines to implement this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 90-2*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-8 | Volunteer Program

Staff will maintain procedures for addressing volunteer opportunities. A roster of all volunteers will be maintained with emergency contact information. All rules of conduct for staff shall also apply to volunteers.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 91-2  
Adopted: November 26, 2019*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 10-9 | Confidentiality Agreements Prohibited

In keeping with the mission statement of the Grand Rapids Public Library, and consistent with the trust placed in each Library Commissioner by the voters, it is the policy of the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) to conduct its business in a manner of openness and transparency, and to maintain such transparency consistent with the laws of the state of Michigan, including the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Open Meetings Act (OMA). Accordingly, no Library Commissioner acting in their official capacity shall enter into a confidentiality agreement. In addition, no Library Commissioner acting in their official capacity shall offer to accept or review any written information provided by any person, organization, or business entity under a promise of confidentiality.

The response to any written request for information submitted to the Board under the Michigan FOIA shall be issued in a manner consistent with the FOIA, being Public Act 442 of 1976, as amended.

The business of the Board shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the Michigan OMA, being Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended.

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*Adopted: November 20, 2012*  
*Amended: December 17, 2024*





## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 10-10 | Collaboration with Other Organizations

The Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) may enter into cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations and governmental agencies whose primary purpose is compatible with the mission of the Grand Rapids Public Library, and who provide a direct service to the citizens of Grand Rapids. The purpose of such agreements would be to form partnerships with such non-profits or governmental agencies in order to deliver quality library-related services to the citizens of Grand Rapids. The library may contribute the following services under such an agreement:

- A. Staff consulting and assistance
- B. Books and other library materials
- C. Equipment and technology support
- D. The temporary use of library facilities
- E. Operating support not to exceed the value of services received excluding salaries and benefits

Non-profit organizations or governmental agencies seeking to collaborate with the library must contact the Library Executive Director in writing and submit a proposal. The Library Executive Director may bring such applications to the attention of the Board and provide a recommendation. No cooperative agreement contemplated by this Policy shall be valid unless presented to the Board with the recommendation of the Library Executive Director, and approved by a majority vote of the Board.

#### **Any proposal submitted under this Policy must:**

- A. Be submitted by an eligible entity having an organizational purpose compatible with the mission of the library
- B. Demonstrate that such collaborative effort will inure an obvious benefit to the taxpayers of Grand Rapids, and patrons of the library
- C. Demonstrate that the service provided via such agreement would be one that could appropriately be provided as a direct library service
- D. Demonstrate that the service will benefit the community as a whole and be open to all citizens of the City of Grand Rapids

- E. Demonstrate that the service shall not be provided as a grant or gift of public resources by the library
- F. Demonstrate that the organization is a governmental unit or a tax-exempt non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Code and must be authorized by law to operate in the State of Michigan

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 97-1*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 10-11 | Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Standards of Conduct for Elected and Appointed Commissioners of Grand Rapids Public Library

#### **Section 1. Fair and Equal Treatment.**

No elected or appointed Library Commissioner shall request, use or permit the use of any consideration, treatment, advantage, or favor beyond that which is the general practice to grant or make available to the public at large. All elected and appointed Library Commissioners shall treat all citizens of the City with courtesy, impartiality, fairness, and equality under the law.

#### **Section 2. Use of Public Property.**

No elected or appointed Library Commissioner shall request, use, or permit the use of any publicly owned or publicly supported property, vehicle, equipment, material, money, labor, or service for the personal convenience or the private advantage of self or any other person or entity including their employer. This requirement shall not be deemed to prevent any elected or appointed Library Commissioner from requesting, using, or permitting the use of such publicly owned or publicly supplied property, vehicle, equipment, material, labor, or service which is made available by general practice to the public at large, or which is provided, as a matter of public policy for the use of the elected and appointed Library Commissioners in the conduct of official business, as approved consideration for their services to the City.

#### **Section 3. Matters Requiring Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest, Actual and Potential.**

The following disclosure requirements are established to avoid both actual and potential conflict between the private self-interest and the public interest of elected and appointed Library Commissioners:

- A. **Self Interest.** No elected or appointed Library Commissioner, either on their behalf or on behalf of any other person, shall have an interest in any business transaction with any public body of the City, unless the person shall first make full disclosure of the nature of such interest.

- B. **Rule of Necessity.** When the performance of official duties shall require, pursuant to the Rule of Necessity<sup>1</sup>, an elected or appointed Library Commissioner to deliberate and vote on any matter involving their financial or personal interest or that of their employer, that person shall publicly disclose the nature and extent of such interest.
- C. **Dual Employment.** No elected or appointed Library Commissioner shall engage in employment with, or render services for, any person or entity which has business transactions with any public body of the City, without first making full disclosure of the nature and extent of the employment or services.
- D. When a conflict of interest is determined to exist following disclosure, an elected or appointed Library Commissioner shall be disqualified from participating in the deliberations and voting on the matter.

#### **Section 4. Prohibited Conduct & Conflicts of Interest.**

All elected and appointed Library Commissioners are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct:

- A. Divulging confidential information to any person not authorized to obtain such information.
- B. Benefiting financially from confidential information.
- C. Representing their individual opinion as that of the library or the commission as a whole.
- D. Misusing library personnel, resources, property, funds, or assets for personal gain or private employment purposes.
- E. Soliciting or accepting a gift or loan of money, goods, services, or other things of value which tend to influence the manner in which the elected or appointed Library Commissioner performs their official duties.
- F. Engaging in a business transaction which may cause the elected or appointed Library Commissioner or their employer to derive a personal profit or gain or benefit directly or indirectly as a result of their official position.
- G. Engaging in employment or rendering services that are incompatible or in conflict with the discharge of their official duties or that tend to impair their independence of judgment.
- H. Participating in policy making, the result of which potentially benefits them or their employer.
- I. Participating in contracts, loans, grants, rate-fixing, or issuing permits involving a business entity or non-profit in which they have a substantial interest unless:
  - a. The contract is awarded pursuant to sealed bids, and;

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<sup>1</sup> The Rule of Necessity applies only in situations where the conflict is acknowledged, and there is no possibility of waiting for a quorum without conflicts to decide the issue at a later date because the matter is an emergency. This doctrine may not be invoked when a non-conflicted quorum is present.

- b. The elected or appointed Library Commissioner is not involved directly or indirectly or otherwise refrains from participation in the decision on the award of the contract, and;
- c. The Board of Library Commissioners, after reviewing the circumstances, determines the award of the contract would be in the best interest of the library.

### **Section 5. Disclosure, Contents.**

Whenever a disclosure is required by this Policy, it shall be made in a writing filed with the Library Executive Director on the form attached as Attachment A, entitled *Conflict of Interest and Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement*. Each elected and appointed Library Commissioner will be required to sign the *Conflict of Interest and Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement* upon assuming office, or for current elected and appointed Library Commissioners, as soon as this policy is in effect, as well as annually. A copy of the *Conflict of Interest and Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement* shall be sent to all elected and appointed Library Commissioners no less than annually. In all cases, disclosures shall include:

- A. The identity of all persons involved in the interest. This includes family members, organizations in which elected and appointed Library Commissioners or family members are officers, directors, or either directly or indirectly, stockholders or partners, and trusts and estates in which elected and appointed Library Commissioners or family members have a beneficial interest, or for which they act in a fiduciary capacity. Family members include spouses, parents, brothers, sisters, children, nieces, nephews, spouses of brothers, sisters, and children, and spouses' parents, brothers, and sisters.
- B. The source and amount of income or benefit, directly or indirectly derived from the interest that may be considered as resulting from employment, investment, or gift. The person required to file a disclosure statement in accordance with the provisions of this Policy must verify, in writing, under penalty of perjury, the information in the statement is true and complete as far as they know.
- C. If it is determined that a conflict exists, the affected elected or appointed Library Commissioner shall disclose the conflict on the record at an open meeting, shall recuse themselves from participating in the discussion and vote relating to the issue, and shall leave the room while the discussion and vote take place.

### **Section 6. Duties of the City Attorney.**

The City Attorney shall examine all disclosure statements filed pursuant to this Policy and report to the Library Executive Director any concerns or irregularities that may, in the judgment of the City Attorney, require further review. Acceptance of a disclosure statement by the City Attorney shall not constitute approval of the statement.

**Section 7. Request for Opinion from the City Attorney.**

Any elected or appointed Library Commissioner may request that the City Attorney provide an advisory privileged legal opinion addressed to the entire Board interpreting the effect or application of this Policy generally, on conflicts or potential conflicts, disclosed or undisclosed, or on questions directly relating to the propriety of their conduct or the conduct or possible conflicts of another elected or appointed Library Commissioner in a particular situation. The City Attorney may also identify and make a determination relating to a conflict, disclosed or undisclosed, on their own initiative.

**Section 8. Policy Enforcement.**

Following the issuance of an opinion pursuant to Section 7, any request seeking enforcement of this Policy shall be presented to the Board and Library Executive Director. The Board shall have the authority to render a final decision, including but not limited to censure of the Library Commissioner found to be in violation of this policy.

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*Adopted: March 28, 2017*

*Amended: December 17, 2024*



ATTACHMENT A

**Conflict of Interest and Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement**

I have read and understand this Conflict of Interest Statement. There are no present or potential conflicts of interest other than those listed below. I have and will continue to observe the Conflicts of Interest & Ethical Standards Policy. If, in the future, circumstances warrant a disclosure of a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest situation, I will submit an amended Statement within 10 days of my knowledge of the situation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

DISCLOSURES: Please provide a brief explanation of any conflicts, and potential conflicts, and list all boards and commissions you are involved with or upon which you serve, as well as the names of all current employers, business interests including business ownership interests, and business ventures

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## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### 20 | Labor Relations

#### Policy 20-1 | Terms of Employment and Collective Bargaining

Pursuant to Title XIII of the Grand Rapids City Charter, the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) is authorized to enter into employment contracts and to establish the terms of employment for library employees. This authority shall include the ratification of collective bargaining agreements between the library and its unionized employees, as well as the establishment of terms of employment for non-unionized employees.

The Library Executive Director (or their designee), shall represent the Board for the purpose of collective bargaining negotiation. The Library Executive Director (or their designee) shall consult with the Board as permitted under the Michigan Open Meetings Act, prior to entering into contract negotiations, and at appropriate intervals during the course of negotiations. The Board President is authorized to sign all final collective bargaining agreements and to authorize all terms of employment, once approved by the Board.

Employment contracts or terms of employment will be in compliance with the Non-Discrimination Policy established in the Boards’ bylaws and in compliance with law.

Except for the employment contract between the Board and the Library Executive Director, the Library Executive Director is responsible for the administration of all employment contracts and terms of employment approved by the Board.

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*Adopted: November 20, 2012*  
*Amended: December 17, 2024*





## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 20-2 | Professional Memberships and Training for Library Employees

The Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) encourages its members and library staff to participate in training and development activities, and to maintain membership in professional organizations related to their work. Toward that goal, the Board shall provide funding to the extent that funding is available for the purpose of advancing the professional development of library staff and Board members. Such funding shall be dedicated to the membership of Library Commissioners and eligible employees in local, state, and national organizations; as well as attendance at appropriate workshops, conferences, and other training opportunities.

The Library Executive Director shall establish guidelines for the administration of this Policy.

#### **Membership**

Upon approval of the Library Executive Director, employees may be eligible to receive full or partial reimbursement for dues paid to professional organizations. Such approval shall be issued in accordance with the guidelines established by the Library Executive Director under authority of this Policy.

The appointment of any library employee as an officer or committee member in any professional organization is subject to the approval of the Library Executive Director. Consideration may include the time commitment required by such appointment, as well as expenses anticipated for such appointment. Other factors may be considered, including the relationship of the requested activity to the employee’s responsibilities, the availability of funding, and the needs of the organization.

The Library Executive Director shall consult with the board before accepting an appointment to serve as an officer of a statewide or national organization.

#### **Training**

Upon approval by the Library Executive Director, employees may be eligible to receive full or partial reimbursement for expenses and time away from work for the purpose of attending training programs, workshops, or seminars. In authorizing such attendance, the Library

Executive Director may consider the relationship of the requested training to the employee's responsibilities, the availability of funding, and the needs of the organization.

Training and development funds for part-time employees will be determined on an as-needed basis by the Library Executive Director based on the direct relevance of the training for the position, the availability of funding, and the needs of the organization.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 84-1*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 20-3 | Tuition Reimbursement Program

The Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) encourages employees of the library to seek educational opportunities whenever possible. In furtherance of that goal, the Board has established the Tuition Reimbursement Program. The Program is intended for the reimbursement of tuition expenses incurred by eligible full-time and part-time employees. The funding level for the Program is dependent on the amount allocated for such purpose by the Board for the fiscal year, and may vary from one year to the next. In no event shall any unused fund balance from the Tuition Reimbursement Program be carried over to the subsequent fiscal year. The Library Executive Director shall establish guidelines for the implementation of this Policy.

Eligibility for reimbursement shall be at the sole discretion of the Library Executive Director, and in accordance with the guidelines established by the Library Executive Director under authority of this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 96-1*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 20-4 | Employment of Relatives

Except as provided herein, the employment of the following by the Grand Rapids Public Library shall be permitted:

- A. Otherwise qualified members of a library employee's household; or
- B. Otherwise qualified members of a library employee's immediate family, as defined by the collective bargaining agreement.

Provided however, employment of household members or family members shall not be permitted where, in the judgment of the Library Executive Director, a potential for favoritism or appearance of a conflict of interest may be created.

Employees must notify the Library Executive Director when any change in their household circumstances would render the provisions of this Policy applicable.

The Library Executive Director shall establish guidelines for the implementation and enforcement of this Policy. Decisions made by the Library Executive Director pursuant to this Policy are final.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 07-01*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 20-5 | Electronic Equipment Use and Access

The Grand Rapids Public Library provides its employees with electronic equipment, such as computers and telephones, for use in the execution of work being performed. The Library Administration reserves the right to monitor the use of library-supplied access by its employees. The following Policy and guidelines govern employees with access to any of the library's computer and telephone equipment and related systems.

#### **Appropriate Use**

Systems owned by the library are for use by the employees in the performance of their work. This extends to access provided by the library to all other systems, e.g. email, ILS, Internet, phone system, etc.

#### **Passwords and Access Codes**

Employees are responsible for the security of their passwords. Passwords should not be posted or discarded where others may find them. Care should be taken in the selection of passwords by avoiding common words, names, or numbers. Passwords should be changed periodically and users may be notified when they must change.

#### **Hardware**

To ensure compatibility and stability with systems hardware and software, all hardware must be authorized before it can be added to any system, stand alone or networked, e.g., gift components, sound cards, mice, printers, etc. The Information Systems Department should be consulted prior to the acquisition of any equipment.

#### **Telephone Equipment**

The library's telephone system and library-provided cellular phones are available for business use. They may be used for personal needs on a limited basis.

#### **Software**

In order to prevent the spread of viruses and malicious software and to prevent the use of unlicensed software, all software changes must be authorized in the same manner as hardware. Unauthorized copies of software may not be made. Staff may not download

unauthorized software from the Internet nor install unauthorized software from other media.

### **Portable Devices**

Devices such as laptops, notebooks, or smartphones create unique security concerns. No confidential patron or employee information should be transported on these devices without sufficient security to assure privacy of this data. Third party networks should be used with caution to prevent the spread of malicious software.

### **Email**

Work related activities are an appropriate use of email. Personal messages should be kept to a minimum. Discretion should be used in sending messages from the library's servers. Email files must be kept up-to-date and cleared when unwanted or outdated. Any correspondence may be subject to legal discovery or obtained via a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. Illegal use of the system is prohibited. Requests for new accounts must be approved by an Executive staff member. Email is not a secure means of sending messages and can and will be read by those other than the addressee. There is no right to privacy in the use of library supplied access.

### **Internet Access**

Staff use of the Internet is provided for work related activities. Personal use should be limited to breaks or scheduled lunch periods and must not violate the noted restrictions on software. The library reserves the right to request access to personal accounts accessed from library equipment.

### **Maintenance**

Equipment must be kept free from exposure to liquids and the area around the equipment kept clear of dust and other items which may obstruct air intake or otherwise damage the unit or system. Placing scotch tape or decorative stickers on any computer equipment is prohibited. Any problem with the system must be reported to the Information Systems Department as soon as possible after a problem occurs.

### **Backups**

System software and data backups are done on a regular basis. Staff are responsible for storing data in the proper locations so they may be backed up.

### **Data**

All data stored or maintained on a library computer or system is owned by the library. If any of this data is knowingly destroyed, the person responsible may be subject to criminal prosecution in addition to dismissal. This extends to any unauthorized access or altering of patron files, bibliographic files, item files, information files, and any other file accessed through the library system or remote access. Files and software created and/or maintained for the library are or become the sole property of the library (this extends to home pages and

special scripts).

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

All non-shared files, although owned by the library, are considered confidential. However, there is no guaranteed right of privacy on systems owned by or connected to the library's systems. Authority for inspecting any system is vested with the Library Executive Director and their designated representatives. Any attempt to access files by network systems personnel (except as may be required to ensure the integrity of the systems or as requested by the Library Executive Director or their designated representatives) or other staff members is prohibited.

### **Documentation**

All configurations, system layouts, system inventories, and other setups will be documented and kept current by the Information Systems Department staff. Special authorization for added software, hardware, or access will be documented and maintained.

### **System Monitoring**

To ensure that users are in software license compliance, no unauthorized software has been loaded, to perform diagnostics and for the purpose of assessing usage patterns and compliance with this Policy, monitoring will be performed. This information will be treated as confidential and access restricted.

### **Suspending Access**

To ensure safety of equipment and the systems, computer and systems access may be suspended at the discretion of the Library Executive Director or their designee.

### **Leaving Library Employment**

Upon leaving library employment, access to the system will be terminated on the last day of employment or earlier. Persons leaving the employment of the library may not remove files without first clearing this with Information Systems Department staff. Information Systems Department staff are responsible for all reformatting. A form requesting access to the system will be maintained in the employees' personnel file. This form will be sent immediately to the Information Systems Department requesting termination of access when the user leaves employment.

### **Termination**

Upon termination of employment, access will be suspended.

### **Definition of Computer and Systems**

Including but are not limited to:

- A. **All hardware** - e.g., workstations, CPUs, monitors, mice, speakers, printers, drives, backup units, etc.;
- B. **All software** - e.g., operational system, application, network management, email, metering, screensavers, Internet access, and support;
- C. **All information systems and services** - e.g., Internet access, national bibliographic databases, Integrated Library Systems (catalog, circulation, acquisitions, serials, etc), email;
- D. **All wiring, support devices, and furniture attached to or supporting system components** -  
e.g., patch panels, computer or network wiring, jacks, computer desks, screen covers, mouse pads, etc.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 10-1*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: October 14, 2015, December 17, 2024*





## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### 30 | Finance/Purchasing

#### Policy 30-1 | Library Fees and Fines

Library fees and fines shall be established from time to time by resolution of the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein). Each year during the preparation of the budget, the Library Executive Director shall submit a schedule of suggested fees and fines to be approved by the Board. New fees and fines may be proposed at any time during the fiscal year, but no new fee or fine shall be implemented unless first approved by the Board.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 91-1*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 30-2 | Fundraising and Development

The Grand Rapids Public Library is authorized to accept donations from members of the public, non-profit groups, corporations, and others. The Library Executive Director shall be responsible to account for such donations, and to implement and enforce a Policy to ensure such accountability. The Library Executive Director shall present to the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) a statement of such donations periodically, and shall not authorize any expenditure of such donations, except with the express approval of the Board. Every donation received by the library shall be promptly acknowledged.

Any fundraising or development activities conducted by any library employee shall be undertaken only at the direction of the Library Executive Director, and shall be consistent with the Mission and Strategic Plan of the Grand Rapids Public Library.

The Board authorizes and directs the Library Executive Director to develop and implement guidelines consistent with this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 95-1*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 30-3 | Purchasing and Contracts

Notwithstanding the expenditure authority granted to the Library Executive Director, pursuant to Board Policy 10-4, the following Policy authorizes the execution of contracts and purchases as follows:

- 1. Supply, equipment, furnishings, furniture, and repair work expenditures (\$10,000 or less)**
  - A. Prices shall be obtained from three (3) or more sources to determine price and availability. The Chief Financial Officer or their designated representative may approve purchase of the lowest priced best product, considering all costs for the expected life of the product.
  - B. Should there not be three (3) known sources of the supply or equipment needed, the Chief Financial Officer or their designated representative shall negotiate and obtain the best price for the product.
  
- 2. Supply, equipment, furnishings, furniture, and repair work expenditures (\$10,000 to \$30,000)**
  - A. Prices shall be obtained from three (3) or more sources to determine price and availability. The Library Executive Director or, in their absence, the Chief Financial Officer with subsequent approval of the Library Executive Director, may approve purchase of the lowest priced best product, considering all costs for the expected life of the product.
  - B. Should there not be three (3) known sources of the supply or equipment needed, the Chief Financial Officer or their designated representative, shall negotiate and obtain the best price for the product and obtain approval from the Library Executive Director.
  
- 3. Supply, equipment, furnishings, furniture, and repair work expenditures (\$30,000 or more)**
  - A. Formal sealed bids are required for purchases of a single expenditure in excess of \$30,000 when specifications of the product are exact. When specifications are not exact, a Request for Proposal (RFP) shall be obtained from three (3) or more sources. The Library Executive Director or, in their absence, the Chief Financial Officer with subsequent approval of the Executive Director, may approve purchase of the lowest priced best product, considering all costs for the expected life of the product.

- B. Should it be in the best interests of the library to accept a bid other than the lowest of the best, approval for purchase shall be obtained from the Board of Library Commissioners (the "Board" herein). Such a request to the Board will be accompanied by supportive documentation.
- C. Should there not be three (3) known sources of the supply or equipment needed, the Library Executive Director or their designated representative shall negotiate and obtain the best price for the product and approval for purchase shall be obtained from the Board.

**4. Contracts for professional and other services**

**A. Contracts Over \$30,000.**

Contracts anticipated to be over \$30,000 shall be identified as part of the annual budget package presented to and approved by the Board. Without further consent or approval of the Board, the Library Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer are authorized to execute contracts for professional and other services on behalf of the Board, provided that the contract amount does not exceed the budgeted amount approved by the Board for the purpose specified.

**B. Contracts Under \$30,000.**

Without consent or approval of the Board, the Library Executive Director is authorized to approve and execute contractual agreements in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 on behalf of the Board. All contracts so executed will be reported at the first regular meeting of the Board following execution of said contract.

**C. Delegation of Authority.**

The Library Executive Director is further authorized to delegate to the Chief Financial Officer the authority to execute contractual agreements in amounts up to \$10,000. Such contracts shall be reported at the first regular meeting of the Board following execution of said contract.

**5. Actual spending levels line by line**

Throughout a fiscal year, the library may actually spend more than what was budgeted for in a single line item as long as that overage does not project the library to exceed the total amount of authorized expenditures in that fiscal year.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 81-2  
Adopted: November 20, 2012  
Amended: August 30, 2022, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### 40 | Library Asset and Facilities Management

#### Policy 40-1 | Asset Management

The following shall govern the management of library assets:

**1. Land & Buildings**

The acquisition, development, or sale of real estate shall be governed by the Real Estate Transactions Policy approved by the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein).

**2. Furniture & Equipment (delegated to the Library Executive Director and governed by the Purchasing Policy approved by the Board)**

Used computer equipment that has been removed from the inventory may be recycled or offered for sale through the Friends of the Library (the “Friends” herein) or other organizations approved by the Board.

**3. Collections (delegated to the Library Executive Director and governed by the Collection Development Policies approved by the Board)**

The divestiture or removal of any major collection will require Board approval. Gifts and deaccessioned items that have not been added to the collections or are considered to be discarded and in salable condition will be provided to the Friends for sale at a designated location in each building and/or at publicly announced sales. In the rare occurrence of the sale of special items/materials, these will be sold through the most appropriate public forum for the items or materials.

**4. Art & Decorative Furniture**

To the extent possible, the terms of the original gift(s) will be honored as per the Board’s directive within the City Charter. Some items may be deemed to be an integral part of the historic collections in addition to serving as decorative objects that enhance the architecture and ambiance of the buildings. Items lacking clear

provenance and that have been considered to be a part of the Grand Rapids Public Library's permanent collections are considered to be grandfathered. Funds have been expended on these items to insure that they have been carefully moved, cleaned, and in some instances, rebound or reupholstered. In the rare occurrence of the sale of objects of art, these items would need to be handled in a public manner and through the most appropriate public auction house or forum as may be warranted by the object(s).

## **5. Leases & Loans**

Space may be approved for leasing by the Board to non-profit organizations or City departments that are consistent with the mission of the Grand Rapids Public Library.

Objects of art or collections may be loaned for a limited period of time to museums or public organizations where the items will be available for public viewing. These loans may be made for a period not to exceed six (6) months unless otherwise approved by the Board. All expenses for packing and shipping to and from the institution borrowing the items will be borne by the borrowing institution. Items loaned must be insured by the borrowing institution and a copy of the proof of insurance to cover the item while in transit and while on display at the borrowing institution provided to the Grand Rapids Public Library. Under no circumstance may the borrowing institution transfer or loan the object(s) while the object(s) are on loan.

No leases will be made to an individual or individuals, inclusive of equipment, collections, objects of art, or decorative furniture, and all other assets of the Grand Rapids Public Library.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 10-2*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: May 28, 2013, January 27, 2015, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 40-2 | Real Estate Transactions

#### 1. Procedure

When the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) determines that there is a need to acquire or dispose of real property interests involving the library, the Board will submit a request to the City’s Economic Development Office. The request will include the location of the real property; available financial resources, including restrictions and account numbers to which expenses can be charged or revenues deposited; a desired date for the completion of the transaction; the purpose of the transaction; and other such information as the City’s Economic Development Office might need to carry out its responsibilities. Any requests which involve the sale or acquisition of real property shall have the approval of the City Manager before being submitted to the City Commission for final approval.

#### 2. Transaction Costs

The library shall pay the cost of acquisition and incidental expenses such as titles searches, appraisals, administration, legal fees, and closing costs for real estate transactions conducted pursuant to this Policy.

3. Board approval is required in acquiring, leasing, repurposing, modifying, or disposing of real property interests, rights-of-way, easements, or encroachments involving property used or to be used for library purposes. The City’s Economic Development Office or the City Engineer shall obtain the necessary approvals from the Board.

#### 4. Price and Terms of Sale

Price terms for the sale, purchase, or lease of real property shall be established by the Board, as the department responsible for the management or disposal of the specific property being offered for sale, lease, or needing to be acquired.

#### 5. Notice to Board of Library Commissioners

The Library Executive Director shall promptly notify the Board of any potential acquisition, disposal, or lease that may affect any real property interest involving the library.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 81-01*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012*  
*Amended: April 26, 2016, December 17, 2024*





## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 40-3 | Collection Development

The Grand Rapids Public Library strives to connect people to the transforming power of knowledge. This Policy is designed to support the library’s mission and to articulate the scope, responsibilities, and considerations used in the selection and maintenance of all materials for each of our locations.

This Policy operates in conjunction with the documents of the American Library Association approved by the Grand Rapids Public Library Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein):

- The Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom To Read Statement
- Statement on Labels and Rating Systems
- Diversity in Collection Development
- Free Access to Libraries to Minors
- Expurgation of Library Materials
- Evaluating Library Collections
- Challenged Materials
- Restricted Access to Library Materials
- Freedom to View
- Access to Electronic Information, Networks, and Services

### **Community Served**

Vibrant, exciting, and diverse, Grand Rapids is the second largest city in Michigan, with over 1 million people in the surrounding metropolitan area. The Grand Rapids Public Library has a rich heritage of more than 135 years of service to our urban community. Today, a beautifully renovated central library joins seven regional and neighborhood branches to provide services for city of Grand Rapids citizens. With the addition of a highly utilized web branch, the library serves over one million patrons annually and circulates over 1.6 million books, media, and other items both physically and virtually.

## **Scope and Objectives**

In response to the needs of our dynamic community, the library aims to provide access to a broad range of resources. The library has a responsibility to act inclusively, rather than exclusively, and our collection represents a diversity of viewpoints, including materials that reflect differing social, cultural, political, and religious views. The collection contains resources in various formats (including print, non-print, and electronically accessible), languages, and comprehension levels. Understanding that technologies are always evolving, the library will continue to assess and evaluate the usage and need of all formats. While the library's collection includes popular materials, it is the goal of the Grand Rapids Public Library to provide a balanced, deep, and enduring collection of materials for the Grand Rapids community.

Our collection includes resources:

- To meet the information needs of our community
- To enrich, entertain, and inspire
- To help people learn new skills, better their education, and improve literacy
- To increase social awareness and community involvement

## **Access**

The library does not restrict access to reading, viewing, or listening to its materials based on age and provides equal access to all library resources for all library users. To ensure equitable access to different materials, the library does restrict circulation of reference materials and may establish different loan periods for select materials.

Given the diversity of the community, the library seeks to acquire the broadest range of materials within budgetary constraints. Due to the varied nature of the collection, patrons may find that not all materials will be suitable for all audiences.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own children. The library encourages parents to be involved in their child's use of the library and to guide them in choosing suitable materials. Final responsibility for what a child checks out on his or her library card is left to the parent. The library does not stand in place of parents (*in loco parentis*).

Due to limited space, security, and preservation concerns, some items may be placed in designated storage areas of the library. All items in the storage areas are available for patron access, but must be retrieved by a staff person.

## **Labeling**

The library collection will be organized, cataloged, and marked for the primary purpose of helping people find the materials they want. The library does not label, alter, or shield materials due to the nature of the content or imagery. The library does not add or remove

evaluative labels from library materials, such as MPAA ratings on some motion pictures, or language ratings on some audio materials.

For more information on labeling of library collections, see ALA Labeling Statement.

### **Responsibility**

Final responsibility and authority for the collection rests with the Library Executive Director, who operates within the framework of policies adopted by the Board. Direct responsibility for the selection, maintenance, and weeding of materials is delegated to professional librarians. The transfer or disposition of sizable or special collections will require Board approval upon recommendation(s) from the Library Executive Director.

### **Selection of Materials**

Under the parameters of the annually established materials budget, librarians select materials for the collection. Each type of material is considered in terms of its own value and in relation to its audience. An item will not necessarily be judged against all criteria and no one standard applies in all cases and at all times. Librarians use various tools to help guide their selection process, including review media, trade publications, publishers' catalogs, and usage statistics. Additionally, materials may be added based on patron requests and donations.

The following criteria is to be used when adding new or gift items to the collection:

- Relevance to the present and potential needs of the community
- Accuracy, timeliness, currency, and validity
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- Suitability of the physical form for library use
- Public demand and/or local interest
- Comparison with other available titles in existing collection
- Cost
- Scarcity of materials on the subject
- Comprehension and depth of treatment
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Literary style, importance, or originality
- Cultural significance and critical acclaim
- Sustained interest

### **Collections with Additional Consideration**

#### **Grand Rapids History Center**

The library collects, preserves, and makes accessible for research purposes numerous historical materials. The scope of the different collection areas vary, as outlined below.

### ***Grand Rapids, Michigan History and Genealogy***

This area is composed primarily of books and periodicals with a specific focus on Grand Rapids and Western Michigan History and Genealogy, including materials that document migration to the Grand Rapids and Western Michigan region. General materials on Michigan, Great Lakes, and Upper Midwest History and Genealogy are also collected to a lesser degree.

### ***Archival Collections***

The archival collections are composed of original materials of a documentary nature centered on the Greater Grand Rapids area. This may include but is not restricted to the following; individual and organizational records, diaries, church records, maps, visual images of various formats, oral histories, scrapbooks, and Grand Rapids and surrounding area newspapers. The library generally does not collect materials that are considered realia, or three dimensional objects. Realia or objects are passed on to other institutions with the expertise to collect and house such materials. The library does not collect the official records of the City of Grand Rapids. Such records are kept with the City Archives and Records Center.

### ***Furniture Design***

This collection is composed primarily of books, periodicals, and folios with a specific concentration on furniture history, design, and related decorative arts.

### ***Rare Books***

This collection is composed of a variety of different titles identified as materials of considerable value. The value is determined either by the monetary value or the content of each individual title. The particular strengths of this collection include Americana, American History, Angle Fishing, and Fine Arts.

### ***Materials for Children, Teens, and their Caregivers***

The library collects materials for children and teens from birth through high school. The collection, especially at the Main Library, is heavily used by area schools, and materials are purchased to meet the needs of students and teachers, in keeping with the role of a public library. Items are purchased in a variety of formats, with an eye toward currency, age level suitability, and a general balance of the subject collection. The library collects juvenile materials in a variety of international languages. Branch juvenile and teen collections are primarily recreational reading and entertainment, with limited curriculum support materials due to space constraints.

### ***Government Documents***

The library is a selective depository for United States government (federal) publications and also makes state and local documents available to citizens. The library has been a depository since 1876 and it offers many valuable historical documents. Government documents are available in paper, CD-ROM, microform, and electronically.

### ***International Languages***

The library collects materials in numerous languages for all ages. The library is committed to developing and maintaining international language collections which meet the needs of a changing Grand Rapids population, as well as materials in support of those patrons learning an additional language. City demographics and U.S. census information are factors in determining which languages are collected.

### ***Textbooks***

The library does not generally collect textbooks. A textbook may be added to the collection if it is the best information on a particular subject. Textbooks will not be purchased based on the need of a particular educational course.

### ***Periodicals***

The library subscribes to hundreds of current periodicals and newspapers available on paper, microfilm, and microfiche. The library also retains many older titles which are no longer received or which have ceased publication.

### **Collection Maintenance and Weeding**

The circulating collection of the library is not intended to be archival. In order to ensure that the collection remains relevant, in good physical condition, and continues to meet the needs of our diverse community, items will be evaluated on an ongoing basis for potential withdrawal. Due to space constraints, some items may be moved to storage areas of the library, relocated to another branch location, or given to the Friends of the Library. Under certain circumstances, some items or collections may be relocated to other institutions.

Materials are subject to removal if:

- Items are worn, stained, or damaged beyond repair
- Items are out of date, contain inaccurate data, or are not historically significant
- Newer, more current, or more comprehensive resources are available
- A more desirable format of the content is available
- The usage of the item is low
- Duplicates of the item exist within the collection
- The collection is limited in space
- Items removed from the collection are given to the Friends of the Library and may be sold in support of the library.

### **Patron Suggestions**

Suggestions are welcome and often provide valuable information about community interests and unmet collection needs of patrons. All suggestions are assessed with the same selection criteria as other items added to the collection.

The library provides a Suggest a Title Form.

## **Donation/Gifts**

The library welcomes donations of materials or money to be used toward the purchase of materials. Donated items are accepted with the understanding that the same selection criteria used in the purchase of new items will also be applied to donated items. Donated items are not automatically added to the library's collection. Items not added to the collection may be given to the Friends of the Library and may be sold in support of the library. The library can not appraise gift materials for tax purposes.

Monetary donations in the form of memorials or honoraria are also accepted and when so designated are managed through the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation.

Please see Donation/Gift Form.

Please see our donation guidelines for current information about donating specific items to the library.

## **Reconsideration of Materials**

The library believes that each patron has the right to read, listen, or view any item of their choosing. The collection includes resources that range widely in subject and treatment, including complex and controversial issues that may be unpopular or unorthodox in opinion. Evaluation of items included in the collection pertain to the entire work, not just individual parts of the work. Language, situations, or subjects which may be offensive to some community members, do not disqualify materials, which, in their entirety, are judged to be of value.

If a Grand Rapids Public Library patron is concerned by or questions the inclusion of a particular item in the library's collection, they may fill out a Statement of Concern Form at any library branch. All completed forms will be directed to the Library Executive Director, initiating a review process. The patron will receive a written response regarding the concern.

The Board authorizes and directs the Library Executive Director to develop and implement guidelines consistent with this Policy.

## **Related Documents**

Suggest a Title Form

Donation / Gift Form

Statement of Concern Form

## **ALA Documents Supported by the Grand Rapids Public Library**

- The Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom To Read Statement
- Statement on Labels and Rating Systems

- Diversity in Collection Development
- Free Access to Libraries to Minors
- Expurgation of Library Materials
- Evaluating Library Collections
- Challenged Materials
- Restricted Access to Library Materials
- Freedom to View
- Access to Electronic Information, Networks, and Services

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 95-4*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: October 14, 2015, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 40-4 | Gifts to the Library: Acceptance and Deaccession

The Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) will have sole authority for the transfer of gifts made to the Grand Rapids Public Library (cash or materials).

Gifts transferred by the Grand Rapids Public Library to other organizations will take into account the spirit of the gift(s) and shall be in compliance with the law. The Board shall seek advice from counsel for the transfer of gifts not provided for in other Board policies. The terms of transfer of materials will be maintained.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 97-2*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*





## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 40-5 | Intellectual Freedom Guidelines for Elected and Appointed Commissioners of Grand Rapids Public Library

The Grand Rapids Public Library provides equal access to all library resources consistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Michigan. Patrons are free to select to reject items for themselves, but may not make that decision for others.

Per Policy 10-1, the Board of Library Commissioners (the “Board” herein) may purchase such books and apparatus for the use of the library as it may find necessary. The only condition under which the Board would make purchasing decisions related to the collection is if no single individual were employed in the role of librarian by the Grand Rapids Public Library. Librarians hold unique expertise in collection development, including selection and deselection principles that align with the Grand Rapids Public Library’s values of Inclusion, Access, and Sustainability. Grand Rapids Public Library seeks to purchase materials from a wide variety of viewpoints and value systems to create a welcoming place for all, provide equal access to information, and support literacy, curiosity, and cultural enrichment.

Per Policy 40-3, the library aims to provide access to a broad range of resources and the library has a responsibility to act inclusively rather than exclusively. As agents of the Grand Rapids Public Library, the Board will uphold the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement.

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*Adopted: August 29, 2023*

*Amended: December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 40-6 | Meeting Room Policy

Library facilities shall be used for regular library programming and for other uses as outlined below and approved by the Board of Library Commissioners. The library will not discriminate in the use of its facilities based upon race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, or other criteria prohibited by law.

- The primary intent of library facilities is to implement regular library programming.
- The sponsored and administered activities of the library and its affiliated organizations shall have priority in determining the use of library facilities.
- Permitting use of library facilities does not constitute endorsement by the library of the organization, the goals, objectives, or activities of the organization, or the content of any communications made by the organization.

The Library Executive Director shall establish procedures to implement this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 82-1*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 40-7 | Library Hours

Library hours shall be set from time to time by Resolution of the Board of Library Commissioners (the "Board" herein).

If a change in library hours is necessary, the Library Executive Director may, at their discretion, authorize the temporary closure of any branch, or may temporarily amend the hours of any branch without prior approval of the Board, provided that such closure or change in hours is necessary due to an emergency, building maintenance or repair, or other extenuating circumstance.

The Board President will be promptly notified of such closure or change in library hours. In absence of the President, the Vice President will be notified.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 88-1*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 40-8 | Smoke- and Vape-Free Facility and Grounds

The Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids declares all library facilities and grounds to be smoke-free and vape-free.

This Policy applies to all individuals including employees, clients, contractors, and visitors. Violation of this Policy is a municipal civil infraction subject to fine.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 40-5*  
*Adopted: November 20, 2012*  
*Amended: August 29, 2023, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### 50 | Library Privacy and Freedom of Information

#### Policy 50-1 | Circulation Records: Library Privacy

It is the policy of the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids (the "Board" herein) to preserve the confidentiality and privacy of the circulation records of its patrons to the fullest extent permitted by law. To that end, the circulation records of the library shall be released or disclosed only as provided for in this Policy or as otherwise required by law.

#### **Definitions**

##### **A. Non-Identifying Records**

Any record or data pertaining to the circulation of library materials in general which does not identify a person may be released or disclosed as provided in the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (Act No. 442 of P.A. of 1976, being MCLA §§15.231 to 15.246).

##### **B. Confidential Records**

Any document, record, or other method of storing information retained by the library that identifies a person as having requested or obtained specific materials from the library is a confidential record which shall not be released or disclosed to any person without the written consent of the person liable for payment or return of the materials identified in the confidential record unless a court orders such release or disclosure after notice and hearing as provided in the Library Privacy Act (MCLA 397.601 to 397.605).

#### **Request for Circulation Records**

Any employee who receives a request, subpoena, court order, or other legal process to release or disclose any library circulation record or material relating to confidential records or non-identifying records shall notify the Library Executive Director or the Library Executive Director's authorized subordinate.

#### **A. Requests for Non-Identifying Records**

The Library Executive Director shall consult with and follow the advice of the City Attorney concerning requests for the release or disclosure of non-identifying records as defined above.

#### **B. Requests for Confidential Records**

Authorized Circulation personnel shall deny, in writing, all requests for the release or disclosure of confidential records unless they have in their possession:

1. A valid court order as determined by the City Attorney, or
2. the written consent to such release or disclosure of the person identified in the confidential record requested and authorized Circulation personnel is satisfied as to the authenticity of the consent.

Authorized Circulation personnel, in their discretion, either may require the person requesting the release or disclosure of the confidential record to secure the written consent of the person identified in that record or may obtain that consent directly from the person identified.

#### **Electronic Notification**

Because of the provisions outlined in this Policy and the Michigan Privacy Act, the library does not use electronic notification to notify patrons (including children for whom a patron is the legal guardian) of overdue materials or materials requested for loan unless the patron requests this service.

#### **Other Considerations**

Any questions or problems relating to the subject of the confidentiality of library circulation records, or their possible release or disclosure, not specifically covered by this Policy, shall be referred to the Library Executive Director who shall handle them as they deem appropriate, consistent with the spirit of this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 83-1  
Adopted: November 20, 2012, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 50-2 | Public Records: Freedom of Information

It is the Policy of the Board of Library Commissioners of the City of Grand Rapids to facilitate the disclosure of public records sought under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), being MCL 15.231 et. seq.

Any written request for public records made under the FOIA shall be promptly forwarded to the Library Executive Director for response. The Library Executive Director or their designee shall respond to the request within five (5) days, as required by the statute, or shall forward the request to the City Attorney's office for response pursuant to the City's Administrative Policy on Freedom of Information.

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*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 50-3 | Social Media Policy

#### **Summary**

This Policy provides a framework and expectations for establishing, overseeing, moderating, and using social media platforms for organizational use as well as establishing social media public engagement standards, and personal use of social media by employees and others affiliated with the Grand Rapids Public Library. This Policy was recently adopted by the City of Grand Rapids and is being largely borrowed by the library.

#### **Purpose**

Third-party social media platforms are effective resources for sharing information and outreach with the community. Likewise, public engagement platforms used for civic participation have become valuable resources for obtaining feedback and facilitating a two-way dialogue with residents, stakeholders, and visitors. All such platforms and components are governed by this Policy, which is designed to provide standards and procedures for the appropriate use of social media for library business. This Policy also covers the use of social media by library employees outside of their job scope and responsibilities, as well as outlining public engagement standards for public comments. The library's official website, [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org), will remain the primary means of digital communication. Library social media accounts will complement and enhance the library's long-established web presence.

#### **Policy Applicability**

The Grand Rapids Public Library Social Media Policy applies to members of the Board of Library Commissioners (the "Board" herein), all library employees, temporary employees, interns, and volunteers, both paid and unpaid, and any other group or individual who serves or is affiliated with the library. The social media comment and content moderation subject matter applies to account managers.

#### **Account Approval**

The Grand Rapids Public Library's Social Media Policy requires that the establishment and use of the library's social media accounts shall be approved by the Communications



Department to ensure consistency with overall communication strategies, branding efforts, and compliance with records retention schedules. Library social media accounts shall conform to specific requirements in terms of account administration and content moderation to ensure content meets appropriate legal and professional standards. This Policy applies to all library departments, offices, divisions, and staff using social media in an official capacity.

## Definitions

- **Account Manager** is a person who manages or supports a library social media account.
- **Social Media Platforms** are third-party websites and software applications that allow for the creation of user accounts, content, and interaction around a post, event, group, or other areas of interest. Examples of social media platforms used by the ILibrary include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and NextDoor. Social media platforms are used as a communications tool to maximize public views for general awareness, public education and engagement, emergency alerts, promotions, and advertising campaigns.
- **Library Social Media Administrator** is a person designated by the Director of Marketing & Communications to oversee organizational social media operations, administration, and Policy. This person is responsible for overseeing this Policy.
- **Library social media account** is an official Grand Rapids Public Library account on a social media platform approved to conduct library business that is managed in an official capacity by library staff.
- **Library social media content** is any information posted on or shared by a library employee (or authorized representative) on a Grand Rapids Public Library social media account. This includes paid, promoted, or boosted content.
- **Library social media content moderation** is the practice of monitoring a library's social media account for comments, notifications, and direct messages from the public to provide a timely response from library staff and ensure active communications.

## Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Library Social Media Administrator is responsible for
  - a. Overseeing the review, approval, creation, development, and management of existing and proposed public library social media accounts
  - b. Developing and providing, in collaboration with the Human Resources Department and the library social media committee, enterprise social media training, and education
  - c. Ensuring compliance with this Policy and its procedures
  - d. Working with the City Clerk's Office to ensure compliance with records retention laws

- e. Working with the City Attorney’s Office to ensure compliance with social media terms of service, community guidelines, and other applicable laws and statutes to include retention of records for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) purposes
  - f. Having administrative control and access to all library social media accounts
2. Account Managers are responsible for
    - a. Following this Policy and its procedures when managing library social media accounts
    - b. Ensuring all library social media content is retained according to the library records retention schedules
    - c. Serving as a liaison to the library’s social media administrator in the Communications Department
  3. The City Attorney’s Office is responsible for
    - a. Advising the Communications Department of statutes, regulations, and case law requiring modification to the Policy or procedures
    - b. Assisting with legal interpretation of the Policy language.
    - c. Process any FOIA requests related to social media.
  4. The Communications Department are responsible for
    - a. Ensuring account managers and staff adhere to this Policy when establishing and managing library social media accounts.
    - b. Managing and monitoring the library social media accounts.
    - c. Taking appropriate action on violations or complaints related to this Policy and its procedures.
    - d. Designating social media account managers and ensuring the Communications Department is aware of any changes.

### **Grand Rapids Public Library Social Media Procedures**

1. Implementation of Public Library social media accounts:
  - a. Authority
    - i. The Communications Department is the coordinating authority for approval, auditing, and governance of library social media accounts.
    - ii. The Director of Marketing & Communications, or their designee, oversees final approval on requests for library social media accounts.
    - iii. All recommendations for new library social media accounts are subject to approval by the Director of Marketing & Communications, or their designee, prior to implementation.
  - b. Unapproved Account Creation
    - i. If an account is created without authorization from the Director of Marketing & Communications, it is subject to immediate deactivation.

2. Deactivating a library social media account
  - a. The Director of Marketing & Communications, upon recommendation, or Library Executive Director, may authorize deactivating a library social media account.
  - b. Considerations for deciding whether to deactivate a library social media account may include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Merging an account into another library's social media account.
    - ii. It is no longer needed to accomplish the library's goals.
    - iii. It does not align with the library's mission, vision, or values.
    - iv. It is not currently being used or is being underutilized with no original posts for at least 60 days.
    - v. It is not being monitored.
  - c. If a decision is made by the Director of Marketing & Communications, or their designee, to deactivate a library social media account, the following actions shall occur:
    - i. Preservation of all content before the account is deactivated.
    - ii. Set a timeline for deactivating the account.
    - iii. Determine whether to protect the account name by keeping it active to prevent use of the library's name for improper purposes. If a decision is made to protect the account name, take all necessary action to do so.
3. Social media management platforms
  - a. If the account manager of a library social media account would like to use a social media management platform, the account manager must use the current social media management tool contracted with the Communications Department.
  - b. The cost of a third-party vendor for social media management may be distributed to the library with library social media accounts.
  - c. The use of content management platforms to schedule posts across social media dashboards is permitted at the discretion of the Director of Marketing & Communications.
4. Library social media account audits
  - a. The Director of Marketing & Communications, or their designee, should confirm that library social media content moderation is regularly occurring to ensure that sites are active, that content is engaging, and that content posted in violation of this Policy is handled appropriately.
    - i. For purposes of this Policy, "active" refers to a page having been posted to at least once weekly; and "engaging" refers to views, reach, and interaction with the posts.
    - ii. Annual audits of account activity and the effectiveness of the content being posted will be performed by the Director of Marketing & Communications or designee.

- b. If necessary, the Director of Marketing & Communications, or their designee, may disable or deactivate a library social media account or prohibit posting library social media content based on prevailing circumstances.
5. Library social media content posting
- a. Non-exempt (eligible for overtime) employees who manage library social media accounts shall monitor, create, maintain, or post on the library's social media account only during normal office hours, unless pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.
  - b. Staff contributing to library's social media accounts will follow these guiding principles:
    - i. To the extent possible, the use of social media will link back to the library's website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with, utilize the services of the library, or learn more about the library.
    - ii. Account managers must carefully consider the information they are sharing, as it is widely accessible. All content (both published and deleted/modified) is subject to FOIA requests.
    - iii. Follow best practices from the Communications Department on deleting and editing posted content.
    - iv. Follow the archive and retention schedule for all social media content, including posts and messages which are considered public record, as outlined in the archives section in this Policy.
    - v. Ensure content only reflects the official positions of the organization regarding library employees, policies, programs, or practices, and opinions or practices of other public agencies, political organizations, private companies, or non-profit groups.
    - vi. Ensure comments do not violate the library's privacy, confidentiality, or legal guidelines for external communication. Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any associated parties without the appropriate approvals, and be mindful of "no contact" periods for contract awards or requests for services.
    - vii. Prioritize the use of original multimedia and digital content captured or generated by the library. When using another externally generated content, ensure the library has permission to do so and use platform appropriate attribution practices.
6. Public Engagement Expectations
- a. Purpose
    - i. The purpose of library social media accounts is to enable the library to post matters of public interest concerning Grand Rapids Public Library programs, activities, news stories and photos, and to enable public

engagement. Library social media accounts are limited forums devoted exclusively to its posted content, and comments from members of the public should be relevant to the subject matter of the post they are responding to and adhere to established community guidelines.

- ii. The Grand Rapids Public Library welcomes engagement and seeks to maintain an environment that is civil and appropriate for all ages.
  - iii. By posting on any library social media page, commenters agree to follow community guidelines. The library is not responsible for and neither endorses nor opposes comments placed on the site by visitors. Commenters are personally responsible for their own comments, username, and any information they post to the page. Library social media administrators may remove content that does not follow this Policy.
- b. Limited Public Forum
- i. The Grand Rapids Public Library's social media pages are limited public forums. The library does not make its social media accounts available for general public discourse, but rather reserves and limits the topics that may be discussed on library's social media accounts.
- c. Library's Use of Commenter Content
- i. The library can reproduce, distribute, publish, display, and otherwise use commenter content.
  - ii. If a commenter does not wish to have the content they have posted used, published, copied and/or reprinted, they should not post on library's social media pages.
- d. Content Restrictions
- i. Because communication via social media constitutes a limited public forum, the library reserves the right to reject or remove (if possible) any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable law. Content and comments posted to the library's social media accounts containing any of the following forms of content shall not be permitted and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the library's social media account managers:
    1. Comments or hyperlinks not directly related to the business or work of the library or to the particular social media content being commented upon may be deleted.
    2. Defamatory, threatening, profane, obscene, violent, bullying, sexual, or harassing language or links are not allowed and may be deleted.
    3. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates hate or discrimination on the basis of any legally protected category is not allowed and may be deleted. This includes: religion or creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, physical or mental disability,

medical condition, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, genetic characteristics or information, military and veteran's status, or any other category protected by federal or state law, including association with individuals with these protected characteristics or perception that an individual has one or more of these protected characteristics.

4. Solicitations of commerce are not allowed. Do not post advertisements, prize contests, promotions to like a page, or giveaways. This includes promotion or endorsement of any financial, commercial, or non- governmental agency. Sales and spam may be deleted.
5. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures will be deleted.
6. Personally identifiable information such as an address, phone number, email addresses, social security number, or other sensitive information should not be posted and may be removed.
7. Details about an ongoing investigation or legal or administrative proceeding that could prejudice the processes or could interfere with an individual's rights and may interfere with or compromise current investigations, police tactics, and the safety or security of public safety staff and/or the public or public systems should not be posted and may be removed.
8. Content that promotes or encourages, or appears to promote or encourage, the use or possession of unlawful or illegal goods, the use of illegal services, or the practice of illegal behaviors or activities should not be posted and may be removed.
9. Distribution of copyrighted photographs, music, video, graphics, or other content without the express permission of the copyright holder or that violates the legal ownership interests of another party is not allowed and may be removed.
10. Content that defames or defrauds anyone or financial, commercial or nongovernmental agency should not be posted and may be removed.
11. Documents of any kind like invoices, personnel lists, rosters, etc. should not be posted and may be removed.
12. Comments that violate this Policy may be removed from the social media page.
13. Posts or links that contain malicious software (malware) such as viruses, worms, trojans, rootkits, spyware, adware, or any other unwanted software should not be posted and may be removed.
14. Multiple or repetitive posts will be considered spam, will be archived, and may be hidden and deleted.

- e. Content Removal
    - i. Content that is deemed not suitable for posting by a library account manager, based on the criteria defined above, shall be retained by account managers pursuant to the records retention schedule in the form of a screen capture or archiving solution. The comment will then be removed, as technology allows, from the library's social media accounts.
  - f. Time of Use
    - i. Library social media accounts are not monitored 24/7, and as such, posts and responses should not be immediately expected. Accounts are traditionally monitored during normal business hours, designated as weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding holidays.
  - g. Accessibility
    - i. When possible, and as technology allows, library social media account managers will make every effort to ensure that content posted to social media accounts is accessible to all, including those with visual or auditory impairments, by using available alt text, closed captioning, or other assistive and accessibility features.
  - h. Emergency Situations, Issue Reporting, General Questions
    - i. Library social media accounts are not monitored 24/7, users are advised NOT to use the library's social media accounts to report a crime, emergency situation, or general reports.
7. Account Manager Comment Moderation and Interactive Features
- a. Comments on posts should be regularly monitored to ensure compliance with this Policy. While all account managers are encouraged to be as engaging as possible, those designees who are not able to regularly monitor or moderate comments, upon approval by the Director of Marketing & Communications, may deactivate commenting or other interactive features if the following conditions are met:
    - i. Deactivating comments is due to inadequate staffing or resourcing.
    - ii. Deactivation should be considered semi-permanent and once turned off will require approval of the Director of Marketing & Communications to reactivate.
  - b. Under no circumstance should users be blocked from the library's social media accounts. If suspicious activity is noted, staff should report it directly to the social media platform.
  - c. The library will post its Social Media Policy and engagement expectations on its public facing website as part of the Board's Policies. This includes:
    - i. The reasons listed under the content restrictions in Public Engagement Expectations section.
    - ii. Comments posted by others to library social media accounts do not necessarily reflect the views or position of the library.

- iii. Notifying people that “follows” from library social media accounts do not reflect endorsements.
- iv. The library is not responsible for, and neither endorses nor opposes, comments placed on this site by visitors to the site.
- d. Library employees contributing to and managing content on the library’s social media accounts must adhere to the following comment moderation criteria:
  - i. Staff can only delete public comments from library social media accounts per the content removal and archiving sections of this Policy.
  - ii. Some social media platforms include features that allow an account manager to hide comments from public view. Hiding comments is only permitted if it meets one of the conditions under the content restrictions in Public Engagement Expectations section.
  - iii. If photos, video, or other media are solicited from the public through a library social media account to increase public interaction, all content received must be accepted and remain public unless it fails to meet the criteria stated above.

### **Personal or Employee Group Usage of Social Media Account**

The Grand Rapids Public Library has a highly engaged community with numerous avenues for online discussion, including social media platforms. These avenues of communication can be very useful and positive avenues for communication with one another and our community. As such, we encourage our employees, volunteers, Board, and affiliates to engage on social media by sharing library news, digital content, photos, videos, and announcements, engaging in positive discussions about news and events and generally acting as good stewards of the library’s brand and messaging.

Remember that regardless of whether an employee is speaking personally or professionally, they are viewed first and foremost by others as an employee or representative of the library. Others view an employee as a representative and spokesperson of the local government.

### **Personal use of social media**

- a. The library’s Social Media Policy applies to employees whenever using social media in a manner related to their job or to library business, including when employees are not at work, not on work time, or using their own personal computer or electronic device.
- b. Employees may not use social media for purposes unrelated to their job duties while on work time and in work areas unless authorized to do so by their supervisor.
- c. Employees must not use their library email address to register an account on social media platforms, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use.
- d. Before creating online content, employees are encouraged to consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. When posting content on social media as a private citizen regarding a matter of public concern, keep in mind that conduct that adversely affects the efficiency of the library’s public service, impairs workplace discipline, or destroys



harmony with co-workers may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

- e. Employees must ensure that their postings are consistent with the library's Policies that prohibit unlawful discrimination, bullying, and harassment. Inappropriate postings that include discriminatory remarks, harassment, bullying, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- f. Employees must be respectful. They must always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, constituents, suppliers, residents, people who work on behalf of the library, or other community stakeholders. If they decide to post complaints or criticism, do not use statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably can be viewed as malicious, obscene, and threatening or intimidating, that disparage constituents, employees, or suppliers or that may constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, creed, disability, height, weight, pregnancy, marital status, or age.
- g. Employees must not post:
  - i. Information about actual or potential claims or litigation involving the Grand Rapids Public Library.
  - ii. Information that includes sensitive or confidential information about the library, its staff, or its residents that would constitute an invasion of an individual's privacy.
- h. Unless authorized to do so by the library, employees must never represent themselves as a spokesperson for the library. If the library is a subject of the content being created, employees must be clear and open about the fact that they are an employee and make clear that their views do not represent those of the library.
  - i. Regardless of any other provision of this Policy, the library's Social Media Policy does not prohibit employees from engaging in this kind of activity, nor prohibits any other activity that is protected by the Public Employment Relations Act.
  - ii. Failure to comply with this Social Media Policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. In addition, the library reports all illegal activities to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **Archives and Records Retention**

The Communications Department may choose to contract with a third-party vendor to assist with archives and records retention on behalf of library departments. All departments using social media must have their content archived under the same library account. The cost of a third-party vendor for archiving library records may be distributed to departments with library social media accounts. If the library's contracted vendor cannot archive messages on a particular platform, content creators should save a screenshot of the communication to be retained on a library's system.

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*Adopted: April 25, 2023*

*Amended: August 29, 2023, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### 60 | Patron Rules

#### Policy 60-1 | Patron Responsibilities

The Grand Rapids Public Library welcomes everyone to use the library and its resources. In order to maintain a clean, safe, and comfortable environment for all of our patrons and staff, everyone accessing library buildings or grounds has the responsibility to:

**1. Follow all local, state, and federal laws.**

This includes, and is not limited to:

- a. Children should not be left unattended.
- b. No trespassing, including non-public areas within library buildings.
- c. Smoking, vaping, or the use of related products is not allowed.
- d. No public intoxication.
- e. Clothing covering the upper and lower body is required in addition to shoes or other footwear.
- f. Do not display obscene materials or images.

**2. Follow library policies and procedures about the use of library materials, services, and property.**

This includes, and is not limited to:

- a. Do not damage, vandalize, tamper with or improperly remove library property, including furniture and computers.
- b. Patrons may consume covered beverages and food in designated library spaces to help maintain the cleanliness of shared public spaces. The use or possession of alcoholic beverages is not allowed, except with prior approval of the Library Executive Director.

**3. Preserve the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of themselves and others.**

This includes, and is not limited to:

- a. Refrain from disruptive or aggressive behavior, including verbal or physical fights or altercations.
- b. Do not use profane, obscene, violent, or harassing language. Hate speech is not tolerated.
- c. Do not damage, tamper with, or improperly remove property that does not belong to you.
- d. No sleeping is allowed on library property. Patrons who are sleeping or appear to be sleeping will be woken up to ensure their safety.
- e. Parents, caregivers, and other responsible adults are solely responsible for minors' usage of library materials, services, and spaces.
- f. Library access may be restricted in the event of disruptive personal hygiene.

**4. Maintain a welcoming space for all patrons and staff.**

This includes, and is not limited to:

- a. Do not ask other patrons for money or items nor attempt to sell goods or services to others.
- b. Do not bother or willfully annoy others.
- c. Do not make comments about other peoples' bodies or attractiveness.
- d. Do not use shared library space for personal grooming, including restrooms.

**5. Maintain physical access for all patrons by keeping pathways clear.**

This includes, and is not limited to:

- a. No sitting or laying on the floor except in kids/teen sections or while browsing lower shelves.
- b. All personal items and belongings should not be left unattended in public areas.
- c. All belongings should be stored out of the way and fit within designated GRPL guidelines.

Any person who does not adhere to these responsibilities may be asked to leave library property, be denied library privileges, or be banned from the library. Violation of local, state, or federal laws may result in criminal prosecution. For further details and clarifying language included in this Policy, please see the "Patron Responsibilities Explained" document written and maintained by library staff that supports this Policy.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 12.7*

*Adopted: November 20, 2012*

*Amended: November 26, 2019, January 30, 2024, December 17, 2024*



## Board of Library Commissioners **Policy Manual**

### Policy 60-2 | Internet Access

No user will be allowed to display, exhibit, or disseminate obscene or sexually explicit matter to minors as prohibited by Michigan law. Specifically, the library complies with MCL 379.601-606 entitled “The Library Privacy Act” that does not allow persons under 18 years of age to view “obscene or sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors” and with MCL 722.671-679 entitled “Disseminating, Exhibiting, or Displaying Sexually Explicit Matter to Minors”. The library does not have private Internet viewing facilities. All computers with access to the Internet are available to minors and open to view by minors.

The library provides classes to teach children and their parents how to use and safely navigate the Internet. Although the library will monitor behavior, it is ultimately the parent’s or guardian’s responsibility to determine what library resources are appropriate for their minor children.

The Internet is a vast network of computer networks linking millions of computers around the world. The Internet is a dynamic environment with the content and format of information accessed from these networks constantly changing. Its resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. However, there is no regulation of its content.

The Grand Rapids Public Library does not control the availability of information links that often change rapidly and unpredictably. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. Users need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information.

The Collection Management Policy of the Grand Rapids Public Library supports access to materials on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of its users regardless of the user's age. This pertains to the Internet no less than it does to the more traditional sources of information in libraries. The Internet permits users access to information that some may deem inappropriate, but the Grand Rapids Public Library does not deny or limit access to information except as required by law.

Also, the Grand Rapids Public Library assumes no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from use of its WWW Server or from its connections to other Internet services through our service provider.

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*Cross Reference: Rescinded Policy 95-3  
Adopted: November 20, 2012*



## Board of Library Commissioners Policy Manual

### Policy 60-3 | Photography & Video Policy

The Grand Rapids Public Library reserves the right to document its services and the public's use of the library by taking photographs and making video or audio recordings of its programs, events, activities and their participants for use in brochures, flyers, web pages, or other promotional materials.

To ensure the privacy of all individuals, including children, images will not be identified using personal identifying information or names without written approval from the photographed subject or parent/guardian if a minor. Those wishing not to be photographed or recorded should inform the photographer or library staff. All patrons consent to the library's use of these photos or videos unless they specifically inform staff of an objection when the photos or videos are being taken.

#### **Guidelines for the Public**

Photography is allowed in all public areas. We ask all patrons who are photographing or filming in the library adhere to the following guidelines which are posted on [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org):

#### **Photography in the Library**

- Patron access to library material should be kept open. This includes doorways, stairs, elevators, book stacks and other areas identified by staff.
- The library is a place of business. Photographers should take care not to disrupt the work of library staff or patrons.
- The privacy of library accounts is protected by Michigan law. They cannot be photographed or recorded in any way.
- A photographer should ask for consent before filming a patron or staff member.
- Tripods, lighting and other equipment can block access and be a trip hazard. A camera and a camera bag are the only photography equipment allowed in the library.

#### **Filming in the Library**

- Professional filming should be scheduled through the Communications Department. Location fees may be charged.

- Filming for personal use is allowed if they meet the criteria above. Staff should use their best judgment when allowing filming and can offer meeting rooms to use if needed.

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*Adopted: June 25, 2024*