

**Ramsey County Library Advisory Board
August 21, 2024
Ramsey County Library – Roseville
2180 N Hamline Avenue, Roseville, MN 55113**

I. Call to Order

II. Action Items

- a. **Approval of the August Agenda**
- b. **Approval of May Meeting Minutes**

III. Discussion Items

- a. **Tour of library – Roseville**
- b. **Banned Books/ Protested Materials**
- c. **Unattended Child Policy**
- d. **2025 Holiday Calendar**
- e. **Library Director Update**
- f. **Future Meeting Topics**

Library Advisory Board

Sandy Doubek
Molly Jansen
Marissa Kirby-Stofferahn, Chair
Alex Kovarik
Kami Miller, Vice Chair
Andrea West
Dawne Brown White

**Ramsey County Library Advisory Board Meeting
May 15, 2024
Ramsey County New Brighton Library
2576 Mounds View Blvd., Mounds View, MN 55112**

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Sandy Doubek, Marissa Kirby-Stofferahn, Alex Kovarik, Kami Miller, Andrea West.

STAFF PRESENT: Pang Yang, Library Deputy Director; Jeff Eide, Senior Branch Manager; Nicole Herold, Technical Services Manager; Chuck Wettergren, Digital Services Manager; Marcus Lowry, Mounds View Branch Manager; Maggie Soukup, Library Board Coordinator.

OTHERS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER

Kirby-Stofferahn called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Yang welcomed and introduced new board members Sandy Doubek and Alex Kovarik.

ACTIONS ITEMS

Approval of the May 15 meeting agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

Approval of the March 20 meeting minutes

Miller made a motion to approve the March 20 meeting minutes as presented. West seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Donation Acceptance

West made a motion to accept the donations made to the Ramsey County Libraries as presented. Miller seconded the motion.

June Meeting

Yang shared that the June meeting date falls on a County Holiday, Juneteenth, so the libraries will not be open. Board members reviewed the upcoming agenda items and considered the possibility of changing the meeting date. A unanimous decision was made to cancel the June meeting.

Miller made a motion to cancel the June 19, 2024, Library Board meeting. West seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mounds View Branch Tour

Marcus Lowry, Mounds View Branch Manager, gave the board members a tour of the branch.

Collections Development

Nicole Herold, Technical Services Manager, shared the proposed changes to the Collections Development policy. There are 22 Librarians that are tasked with collection development for the RCL system. Herold explained the importance of the policy and how the proposed changes are a direct reflection on what is currently happening in our libraries and what our patrons are requesting and how they are making the requests. Herold also shared that one goal for the Ramsey County Libraries collection development team is to increase racial equity in our collections. Last quarter, approximately 34% of materials purchased is by or about people of color.

In addition to the proposed policy changes, the board also discussed the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View statement.

UPDATES

Deputy Library Director Update

Deputy Director Yang shared the following updates:

- Starting later this summer, Mounds View, Shoreview, and Maplewood will be offering free, non-perishable food bags for patrons.
- Roseville library hosted Katherine Applegate, Newbery Medal-winning author, on May 14. There were over 300 people in attendance. Applegate spoke to the audience, answered questions, and signed books.
- Continuing the hiring process for many open positions. Yang shared that the Deputy Director position should be posted in the next few weeks.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

- **Update on Summer Reading Program.**
- **Be SMART and/or similar group or organization.**
- **Ramsey County Library Friends**

ADJOURN

West made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Doubek seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- (1) evidence that the organization has operated for at least one year and has filed at least one tax return;
- (2) the most recent tax return submitted by the organization and corresponding forms and financial statements;
- (3) a profit and loss statement and balance sheet or similar financial information; and
- (4) evidence that at least ten percent of the organization's operating revenue comes from sources other than the United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition program and that the organization has additional funds or a performance bond available to cover at least one month of reimbursement claims.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 2. [134.51] ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS AND RIGHTS PROTECTED.

Subdivision 1. **Book banning prohibited.** A public library must not ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to a book or other material based solely on its viewpoint or the messages, ideas, or opinions it conveys.

Subd. 2. **Definitions.** (a) For purposes of this section, the terms defined in this subdivision have the meanings given.

(b) "Public library" means:

(1) a library that provides free access to all residents of a city or county, receives at least half of its financial support from public funds, and is organized under the provisions of this chapter, except that a library under this clause does not include libraries such as law, medical, or other libraries organized to serve a special group of persons and not the general public;

(2) a library jointly operated by a city and a school district under section 134.195;

(3) a school district or charter school library or media center under section 124D.991, including libraries operated by an intermediate school district or cooperative unit under section 123A.24, subdivision 2; or

(4) a public higher education institution library.

(c) "Governing body" means a group of persons that oversee the operations, budget, policies, and other administrative responsibilities of a regional public library system under section 134.20, subdivision 2; a multicounty, multitype library system under section 134.351, subdivision 4; a combination library under section 134.195, subdivision 7; a school library under section 124D.991, including libraries operated by an intermediate school district or cooperative unit under section 123A.24, subdivision 2; or any other public library under section 134.001, subdivision 2.

Subd. 3. **Limitations.** (a) Nothing in this section limits a public library's authority to decline to purchase, lend, or shelve or to remove or restrict access to books or other materials legitimately based upon:

(1) practical reasons, including but not limited to shelf space limitations, rare or antiquarian status, damage, or obsolescence;

(2) legitimate pedagogical concerns, including but not limited to the appropriateness of potentially sensitive topics for the library's intended audience, the selection of books and materials for a curated collection, or the likelihood of causing a material and substantial disruption of the work and discipline of the school;
or

(3) compliance with state or federal law.

(b) Nothing in this section impairs or limits the rights of a parent, guardian, or an adult student under section 120B.20.

Subd. 4. **Collection management.** A governing body of a public library or any other public body with personnel authority for a public library may not discriminate against or discipline an employee for complying with this section.

Subd. 5. **Library materials policy.** (a) A governing body of a public library must adopt a policy that establishes procedures for selection of, challenges to, and reconsideration of library materials in accordance with this section.

(b) The policy must not impair or limit the rights of a parent, guardian, or adult student under section 120B.20.

(c) The policy must establish that the procedures for selection and reconsideration will be administered by:

- (1) a licensed library media specialist under Minnesota Rules, part 8710.4550;
- (2) an individual with a master's degree in library science or library and information science; or
- (3) a professional librarian or a person trained in library collection management.

(d) Upon the completion of a content challenge or reconsideration process in accordance with the governing body's adopted policy, the governing body must submit a report of the challenge to the commissioner of education that includes:

- (1) the title, author, and other relevant identifying information about the material being challenged;
- (2) the date, time, and location of any public hearing held on the challenge in question, including minutes or transcripts;
- (3) the result of the challenge or reconsideration request; and
- (4) accurate and timely information on who from the governing body the Department of Education may contact with questions or follow-up.

Sec. 3. **METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SERVICE AGENCY.**

(a) Notwithstanding Minnesota Rules, part 3530.1000, item A, between April 1, 2024, and June 30, 2027, the Metropolitan Library Service Agency may employ an executive director who has not received a master's degree in library science if the job posting for the position listed a master's degree in library science as a preferred qualification.

(b) The Metropolitan Library Service Agency may not terminate an executive director who begins employment between April 1, 2024, and June 30, 2027, on the sole basis that the executive director has not received a master's degree in library science.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Library Bill of Rights

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

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

The Freedom to Read Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is

unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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

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

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression.

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

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

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

2025 Holiday Calendar	
Holiday	Status
New Year's Day	Closed Wednesday, January 1
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Closed Monday, January 20
President's Day	Closed Monday, February 17
Staff Inservice Day	<i>Closed Thursday, April 10*</i>
Memorial Day	Closed Monday, May 26
Juneteenth	Closed Thursday, June 19
Independence Day	Closed Friday, July 4
Labor Day	Closed Monday, September 1
Staff Inservice Day	<i>Closed Monday, October 6*</i>
Veteran's Day	Closed Tuesday, November 11
Thanksgiving	Closed Thursday, November 27 <i>Open Friday, November 28 Administration & Technical Services Closed **</i>
Christmas	Closed Wednesday, December 24* Closed Thursday, December 25
New Years Eve	<i>Open Wednesday, December 31 until 5 p.m.</i>
New Year's Day 2026	Closed Thursday, January 1

*Not a paid holiday under Ramsey County Personnel Rules.

**Non-public service staff follow Court House schedule.