

Somerset Public Library

Meeting Room Use Policy



June 21, 2011

Revision – November 19, 2013

Revision – April 15, 2014

The Somerset Public Library exists to serve as a center of informal learning, individual growth and recreation for the citizens of Somerset. The Library expects to make a contribution to the learning process and to aid individuals in the lifelong process of growth and appreciation and understanding of themselves, their neighbors, and the world around them. In addition, the library makes its building available as a setting for appropriate events according to the needs and interests of the community.

1. Introduction

The Somerset Public Library is fortunate to have four public meeting areas available. These are primarily for library staff and library-sponsored programs that enrich and extend library services to the community.

When not scheduled for Library or Town use, we are pleased to make these meeting spaces available to the public for civic, cultural, educational and community non-profit groups and individuals. Events must be open to the public. Library and Town related activities always take precedence in scheduling and use of meeting space. Use of these spaces may not interfere with the normal operation of the Library.

The rooms may not be reserved by individuals for private study, tutoring, interview or meeting sessions; however, if a room is available when you arrive at the library it may be used following the rules of this policy. Exceptions may be made for test proctoring or specific interviews for college admission, military service or state or federal agencies. Approval is made by the Library Director or designee.

After Library and Town needs, the Library gives preference to Somerset-based organizations and to organizations serving the residents of Somerset. In formulating this policy, the Trustees of the Somerset Public Library seek to accommodate a broad range of associations. The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to review and accept or reject any or all applications for meeting room use.

Meeting Rooms available for use –

- Large Meeting Room [aka Captain's Community Room]–
Seats 120 people in audience arrangement
Seats 50 people at large tables
- Small Meeting Room [aka Shipyard Room] – Seats 35 people
in audience arrangement
- Conference Room [aka Evans Conference Room] – Seats 8
people at conference table.
- History Room [aka 1897 Local History Room] Seats 8 people at
two small tables.

2. Scheduling and Reservations

The Meeting Rooms are available during regular library hours. The rooms may be used when the Library is closed only by special arrangement, and on an individual basis. A fee will be charged for any use after hours.

Requests to reserve the meeting rooms are on a first-come, first-served basis. Each request is reviewed to determine meeting room availability, equipment needs and compliance with library policy.

All requests must be made through the Library Director or a staff person designated by the Director.

Agencies and/or individuals will be asked to fill out a contact form which is available at the Library.

Scheduling may be done up six (6) months in advance. Groups using the Library meeting rooms on a continuous basis (e.g. Every 2nd Monday of the month) must renew their reservations at least once a year with the Library Director. The agency or individual must alert the Library Director of any changes in the contact information as soon as possible.

All groups make reservations with the understanding that if a serious need arises for those spaces, the Library and/or the Town have precedence.

Reservations may be made by telephone (508-646-2829) or email (somersetpl@sailsinc.org) or fax (508-646-2831) or in person at the Library, 1464 County Street, Somerset, MA 02726.

3. Fees

Generally there is no fee for the use of the Library meeting rooms

If a group is permitted to use the Library after the library is closed, a staff member or custodian must be present. Ask the Library Director for the current rate based on the Town of Somerset Personnel By-Laws.

Fees may not be charged by groups when using the Library meeting rooms. If the group incurs costs due to hiring a speaker, or giving materials to be taken home, these fees may be charged up to the cost of the materials or the cost of the speaker. This must be approved by the Library before the expense is incurred.

4. Equipment Use

Groups may use Library equipment with advance permission. Please ask the Library Director about available equipment for use at the library.

Library staff will see that the equipment is in working order; however, it is up to the group to have someone responsible for the use of the equipment. The library is not responsible for issues that may cause the equipment to malfunction during presentations.

5. Responsibility and Liability

Groups using Library facilities and equipment are responsible for any damages. Facilities should be left in the same condition found upon entry.

Users are asked to complete their business/programs and vacate the room 15 minutes before the library closes; unless arrangements have been made in advance.

It is the responsibility of the group or individual to set up the meeting rooms to their satisfaction.

Organizations or individuals leaving the Meeting Rooms in an unacceptable condition will be billed a standard custodial fee based on the Town of Somerset Personnel Bylaws for the time it takes to return the room to an acceptable condition. Ask the Library Director for the current rate based on the Town of Somerset Personnel By-Laws.

If a spill occurs, or if you notice a problem with a room or equipment, please notify the Library staff before you leave.

Groups may not store items in the Meeting Rooms without permission of the Library Director. Please be advised that there is very limited space for any storage of items and there are no locked cabinets. The Library assumes no responsibility for any item left in the Meeting Rooms. The Library Trustees reserve the right to refuse the use of the Library meeting rooms or cancel any reservation when they deem the action to be in the best interest of the Library and/or the Town.

The Library meeting rooms will not be available for use in the event that the building is closed due to emergency conditions or inclement weather. Groups that have reserved a Library meeting room should listen to local radio station WSAR AM-1480, for announcements of delayed openings or early closings. It is also posted on our website www.somersetpubliclibrary.org

Use of the Library meeting rooms by any group in no way constitutes endorsement of the group's policies or activities by the Library and/or the Town.

6. Restrictions

Smoking is not permitted in the building. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the Library. If food is served at a program, the group reserving the Meeting Room must clean the sink and tables before they leave. Food is only permitted in the meeting rooms, no food or drink is allowed in the library proper. No food or drink is allowed in the History Room.

Though we will do our best to pass on emergency calls, the Library will not be responsible for taking phone calls and passing on messages for the groups or individuals who use the Library.

All requests will be accepted or rejected by the Library Director guided by this Policy established by the Board of Library Trustees.