

RAPIDES PARISH LIBRARY MEETING ROOM POLICY

Purpose

The Rapides Parish Library meeting rooms are used for Library (or Library sponsored) activities (programs, conferences, seminars, and exhibits.) Meeting rooms are also available to other groups of a civic, cultural, charitable, fraternal, social, educational, or religious nature. Businesses and groups may use the rooms for non-commercial purposes: staff training, informational presentations on issues of public interest, etc., but not for sales presentations, billable services, club bake sales, etc.

Restricted hours of use for meeting rooms can be found on individual reservation forms.

Use of Public Library Meeting Rooms for Political Activity

Political debates and forums, involving all sides of issues and most or all candidates for an office, are permitted. Individuals or groups desiring to use meeting rooms and Rapides Parish public libraries for political purposes or political activity are required to pay in advance of the use, a rental fee. The rental fee amount shall be approved by the Board and applied uniformly to all applicants for use of the meeting room. Political activity or political purpose is defined as a meeting in which the purpose is the promotion of, or opposition to, a candidate for political office or the advancement of, or opposition to, a proposition which will or may be submitted for public debate or voter consideration. The rental fee shall be in an amount approved by the Library Board. As of January 19, 2016, the fee is \$25 per use. If the user of the meeting room fails to disclose that the purpose of the meeting is for a political purpose or fails or refuses to pay the user fee, the Board may refuse to allow the user or applicant from utilizing the meeting room thereafter.

Authority

Regional and branch managers will interpret the policy to the public. The Director of the Rapides Parish Library is the final authority in approving meeting room requests in accordance with this policy. At the Director's discretion, authors may sell their books in connection with book signings or speeches.

Rapides Parish Library reserves the right to determine whether a request constitutes acceptable use of its public facilities.

Fees

No admission charge, collections (except for regular club dues) or other money-raising activities may be attached to any meeting room usage, unless all proceeds benefit the library.

No charges are assessed for the use of a meeting room during a library's regular business hours. Hours vary according to location. After hours charges may be waived at the discretion of the Director. No meeting room may be reserved on regularly-scheduled Library holidays.

Responsible Parties

For groups whose representative resides in the parish, a valid Rapides Parish Library card is required to reserve a meeting room. Groups requesting the use of a meeting room must designate a member to represent them. This member (18 years of age or older) monitors the event, accepts responsibility for the group and its use of the rooms, and signs the reservation form in that capacity. A library employee who participates with a group in the use of a meeting room may serve as the responsible party.

Reservations

Reservations may be made directly through Library personnel, or by accessing meeting room reservations information on the Rapides Parish Library website – www.rpl.org. Regular recurring meetings may be scheduled up to one year in advance. All reservation requests must receive confirmation from Library personnel.

Furniture and Equipment

Groups will arrange tables and/or chairs for their needs. No other physical changes, such as tape or tacks on walls, artwork or other surfaces, are allowed in a meeting room. Available audio-visual equipment is listed on reservation forms. Trash cans are on site; all trash related to meeting room use must be properly disposed of.

Permission to use a library meeting room will be withheld from groups which damage rooms, carpet, equipment, or furniture; or cause disturbances that interfere with Library use; or for any other failure to comply with rules and regulations. Permission to use the room may be denied to groups which made reservations, and failed to show up or cancel.

Restrictions

- All meetings are open to the public.
- Smoking is not permitted.
- Alcoholic beverages are not permitted.
- Firearms, weapons, illegal substances/paraphernalia are not allowed.
- No open flames are allowed; standard fire code practices are applicable.
- The number of participants at any meeting shall not violate capacity regulations as established by the Fire Marshall or other regulatory bodies.
- The Library is not responsible for loss, damage, or injury sustained by any individual(s) using its facilities.

Authorized use of a meeting room does not constitute endorsement or sponsorship of an organization, or the views expressed by the group. Meetings will not be allowed or disallowed solely on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion or age.

This policy shall apply to the following meeting rooms:

1. Boyce Branch, 500A Ulster, Boyce
2. Huie-Dellmon House, 430 Saint James Street, Alexandria

3. Martin Branch, 801 West Shamrock Street, Pineville
4. Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch, 1115 Broadway Avenue, Alexandria
5. Hineston Branch, 1810 Highway 121, Hineston
6. Libuse Branch, 6375 Hwy 28 E, Pineville
7. McDonald Branch, 1075 Highway 497, Glenmora
8. Robertson Branch, 809 Tioga High School Road, Ball
9. Westside Regional Library, (two rooms) 5416 Provine Place,
Alexandria

Approved by the Board of Control: October, 1999
Revised/Approved: February, 2005
November, 2008
February, 2009
December, 2009
May, 2014
January, 2016
March, 2018