



City of Rio Communities Library Board Meeting
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Wednesday, March 23, 2022 6:00 PM
Agenda

Please silence all electronic devices.

ATTENTION: We encourage you to participate in the Library Board Meeting from the comfort and safety of your own home by entering the following link:

@ <https://www.facebook.com/riocommunities>

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

1. for March 9, 2022

Action Items

2. **Discussion: Draft Library Budget**
3. **Discussion, Consideration, and Decision – XIV. Internet Use Policy**
4. **Discussion, Consideration, and Decision – XV. Meeting Room Policy**
5. **Discussion, Consideration, and Decision – XVI. Displays and Exhibits Policy**
6. **Discussion:**
 - a) **XVII. Public Notice Bulletin Board Policy**
 - b) **XVIII. Disasters Policy**
 - c) **Library bill of rights and the freedom to read statement**

Public Comment: The Board will take public comments on *this meeting's specific agenda items*. These should be in written form via email through 4:00 PM on Wednesday March 23, 2022 to info@riocommunities.net. These comments will be distributed to all Board Members for review. ***If you wish to speak during the public comment session in person:*** The Board will allow each member of the public three (3) minutes to address the Board. Both the public and Library Board will follow rules of decorum. Give your name and where you live. The public will direct comments to the Board. Comment(s) will not be disruptive or derogatory.

General Board Discussion/Future Agenda Items

Adjourn

We will be streaming live on Facebook Live @ <https://www.facebook.com/riocommunities>

NOTE: THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO REVISION UP TO 72 HOURS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED MEETING DATE AND TIME (NMSA 10-15-1 F). A COPY OF THE AGENDA MAY BE PICKED UP AT CITY HALL, 360 RIO COMMUNITIES BLVD, RIO COMMUNITIES, NM 87002. IF YOU ARE AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO IS IN NEED OF A READER, AMPLIFIER, QUALIFIED SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER OR ANY OTHER FORM OF AUXILIARY AND OR SERVICE TO ATTEND OR PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE MUNICIPAL CLERK AT 505-861-6803 AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE MEETING OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



City of Rio Communities Library Board Meeting
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Wednesday, March 09, 2022 6:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Call to Order

- Chairman Bobby Caldwell called to order the Library Board meeting at 6:03 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Secretary Tabet-Chavez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

- PRESENT: Chair Bobby Caldwell, (virtual) Vice Chair Merita Wilson, Secretary Lisa Tabet-Chavez, (Virtual) Member Deborah Benavidez, (virtual) Member Rita White, Member Lisa LaManna (arrived at 6:10).

Approval of Agenda

- Motion made by Member Benavidez to approve the agenda. Seconded by Vice Chair Wilson. Voting Yea: Chair Caldwell, Vice Chair Wilson, Secretary Tabet-Chavez, Member Benavidez, Member White. With a 6-0 vote the agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes for February 23, 2022

- Motion made by Secretary Tabet-Chavez to approve the minutes from February 23, 2022. Seconded by Member White. Voting Yea: Chair Caldwell, Vice Chair Wilson, Secretary Tabet-Chavez, Member Benavidez, Member White. With a 6-0 vote the minutes for February 23, 2022 was approved as written.

Possible open dates of Library

- Vice Chair Wilson stated to have the library open at the end of April for schools to inform students before school is out in May.
- Chairman Caldwell said that is a good reason, but to choose at least 2 possible dates just in case one date doesn't work. He then went on by saying we have a deadline of May and started saying what dates they are having meetings. And processed to ask if they are looking for a weekend or weekday open date.
- Manager Dr. Moore recommended an open date and a ribbon cutting date and said to work with Representative McQueen since he did make the library possible for the ribbon cutting and for an opening it can be at any time or day they would like to choose, this led into a discussion.
- Secretary Tabet-Chavez asked if the library is good to open and if Deputy Clerk is ready to move forward.
- Manager Dr. Moore said there are two things, one is books are already being entered, and seconded we have computers, so we do have enough for a soft opening, and continued the discussion.
- Secretary Tabet-Chavez stated her understanding for the soft opening book check out will not be ready.

- Manager Dr. Moore said no it will not be, but that's not the case as for the ribbon cutting everything will be done and invite Representative McQueen so he can see what we've done. He then stated our goal is to be close to 100% fully functional as we can.
- Municipal Clerk Adair gave an example of a restaurant only having a select menu when they open just to start off with, and the discussion continued.
- Chairmen Caldwell said maybe after the first meeting in April to look over plans we have already.
- Manager Dr. Moore said you can use your first board meeting for plans and then your second board meeting to walk through the soft opening.
- Vice Chair Wilson said she can see why the soft opening should be during the week but the ribbon cutting should be on a Saturday if Rep. McQueen can be there, as well as someone call the schools to let them know we are having our grand opening.
- Municipal Clerk Adair said she didn't know if there would be staff available as well as hours of open.
- Manager Dr. Moore suggested a soft opening and we need to refine the ideas.
- Secretary Tabet-Chavez asked if we needed the City Council to approve the opening date.
- Manager Dr. Moore said no but we want their input. He thinks we should know by March 28.
- Chairman Caldwell said we need to pick a few dates.
- Manager Dr. Moore recommends April 30, and everyone agreed that day could work.
- Secretary Tabet-Chavez asked about the possibility of a quorum
- Municipal Clerk Adair said she will put out a possibility of a quorum notice, this continued the discussion.
- Member Benavidez recommends 1pm and everyone agreed on the time.
- Library Board decided on April 30, at 1 pm for the soft opening.
- Member White asked how long are we going to have the opening for.
- Manager Dr. Moore said no more ten 2-3 hours.
- Municipal Clerk Adair said the board doesn't have to stay the whole time at all either.
- Manager Dr. Moore stated he will pass the information on to Council.

General Discussion Topic... Library Budget

- Manager Dr. Moore said the library needs money. He said he'll should shoot for March 23 as a draft budget for the library. The library board can give input on this before it goes to the city council. He said it needs to be an open process but stay on a strict timeline.
- Chairman Caldwell said the sooner the better.

XIII. Equipment Use Policy

- Municipal Clerk Adair said changes were made as requested from last meeting. And said everything else stayed the same.
- Chairman Caldwell said his question was where the policy says payment is concluded at the end of the session.
- Municipal Clerk Adair informed him that it is simply saying they need to collect the printed papers from the librarian after printed.
- Secretary Tabet-Chavez said she thought they had left it to the librarian to approve or deny the printings, this started a discussion.
- Municipal Clerk Adair suggested taking out the wordage about paying at the end of the session.

- Vice Chair Wilson said that she doesn't think it's going to be a problem.
- Chairman Caldwell said he is worried about inconsistency. He thinks we should have people pay up front.
- Municipal Clerk Adair suggests we can revisit the policy if we need to. Hopefully we can have some kind of technology that can prohibit useless prints.
- Motion made by Member LaManna to accept the policy as written. Seconded by Secretary Tabet-Chavez. Voting Yea: Chair Caldwell, Vice Chair Wilson, Secretary Tabet-Chavez, Member Benavidez, Member LaManna, Member White. With a 6-0 vote approval of the equipment use policy as written.

XIV. Internet Use Policy

- Municipal Clerk Adair said the City Attorney said the policy is good.
- Chair Caldwell said he had a question about CIPA. Do we need to ask legal about CIPA? What happens if the child goes to an inappropriate site? There are specific steps to be taken, and this started a discussion.
- Vice Chair Wilson said there are filters that block the inappropriate content.
- Chair Caldwell said we need an opinion from the legal team.
- Member Benavidez said we need to investigate this more so we can handle this properly.
- Vice Chair Wilson said she will ask the Belen Librarian how they handle this.
- It was agreed to table this and put on the next agenda as an action item.

XV. Meeting Room Policy

- Chairman Caldwell said in his research he found that meeting room activities must stay in meeting rooms, can't create hazards. Should be 18 or older. Time limits. Room Occupancy. This led to a discussion.
- Municipal Clerk Adair said people need to fill out a building use form but that's a problem with the city and not through the library. This is a working document, and the library service area is the actual library. She said exceptions should be made by the City Manager not the library board.
- Secretary Tabet-Chavez agrees with the idea that we scrap this meeting room policy and refer people to the cities building use policy.
- Vice Chair Wilson said we shouldn't be renting out the actual library room at all.
- Municipal Clerk Adair said the library is too small to rent out.
- Member White said we can leave it open and refer to the city.
- Everyone agrees that we can refer people to the city building use policy

XVI. Displays and Exhibits Policy

- Vice Chair Wilson asked how detailed we want to leave the Displays and Exhibits Policy, this led to a discussion.
- Member White said it can be left to the librarian/directors' discretion.
- Chairman Caldwell asked if the board would like to keep the policy how it is written, and will decide next meeting.

Public Comment

- No public comments

Board Discussion/Future Agenda Items

General Discussion Topic... a) XVII. Public Notice Bulletin Board Policy b) XVIII. Disasters Policy c) Library bill of rights and the freedom to read statement

- Chairman Caldwell said everyone should research this and have read up on what we need to do moving forward. Everyone is encouraged to be diligent in doing research.

Adjourn

- Motion made by Member LaManna to adjourn. Seconded by Secretary Tabet-Chavez. Voting Yea: Chair Caldwell, Vice Chair Wilson, Secretary Tabet-Chavez, Member Benavidez, Member LaManna, Member White. With a 6-0 vote the Library Board meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

 Lisa Tabet-Chavez, Library Board Secretary
 (Transcribed by Cheyenne Sullivan, Assistant Clerk)

Date: _____

Approved:

 Bobby Caldwell, Chairman

 Merita Wilson, Vice Chairman

 Deborah Benavidez

 Lisa La Manna

 Rita White

XIV. Internet Use Policy

The Rio Communities Public Library is providing access to the Internet as a means to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the library's service area. The Library Board has established the Internet use policy to ensure appropriate and effective use of this resource.

Access to the Internet is available to all patrons; however, pursuant to the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/childrens_internet_protection_act_cipa.pdf this service may be restricted at any time for use not consistent with the guidelines. Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the library's Internet service; prior to being granted access to the Internet, anyone under 18 years of age, along with a parent or guardian, must sign the Internet Use Agreement. All users must sign the log-in chart prior to beginning their session.

Expectations:

Users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws and can lead to prosecution. The user will be held responsible for his/her actions using the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the policies below which include generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Unacceptable uses of the service will result in the suspension or revocation of Internet use privileges.

Warnings:

The Internet is a decentralized, unmoderated global network; the Rio Communities Public Library has no control over the content found there. The library will not censor access to material nor protect users from offensive information, and it is not responsible for the availability and accuracy of information found on the Internet.

The library cannot assure that data or files downloaded by users are virus-free. The library is not responsible for damages to equipment or data on a user's personal computer from the use of data downloaded from the library's Internet service.

The use of the Internet and e-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the proper authorities.

Guidelines:

- Users may use the Internet for research and the acquisition of information to address their educational, vocational, cultural, and recreational needs.
- Users may use the Internet for the receipt and transmission of electronic mail (e-mail) as long as they use a free email service which will establish and maintain an account for them; the library is unable to manage e-mail accounts for any organizations or individuals.
- Internet use is offered in thirty (30) minute sessions on a first-come, first-served basis; each user is allowed one session--if there is no patron waiting for the service at the end of a session, the user can have another session, but once having had the service for 30 minutes the user must abandon use of the Internet if another patron requests use of the service.

- Users will respect and uphold copyright laws and all other applicable laws and regulations; they will not use it for illegal purposes.
- Users will respect the rights and privacy of others by not accessing private files.
- Users agree not to incur any costs for the library through their use of the Internet service.
- Users shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses over the Internet.
- Users shall not deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, programs, or parameters.

XV. Meeting Room Policy

The Library or another room in the City Hall multi use complex shall follow the building use policy of the City.

The fact that a group is permitted to meet at the Library does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the Library staff or Board.

The room may be reserved no more than ninety days in advance.

It is understood that library programming will have first priority in room use.

Refreshments may be served and shall be provided by the group. No smoking is allowed.

A refundable cleaning/damage deposit is required. The people using the room shall leave it in neat, clean, orderly condition; if not, the group/individual will forfeit the deposit and may be given notice that continued offense will result in additional deposits or denied access to the meeting room.

The Library is not responsible for any equipment, supplies, materials, clothing, or other items brought to the Library by any group or individual attending a meeting.

The Library Board, Librarian and staff do not assume any liability for groups or individuals attending a meeting in the Library.

XVI. Displays and Exhibits Policy

As an educational and cultural institution, the Rio Communities Public Library welcomes exhibits and displays of interest, information, and enlightenment to the community. Displays of handiwork, historical material, nature study, or any other material deemed of general interest may be exhibited. The librarian/director shall accept or reject material offered for display based on its suitability and availability.

The Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation or protection, and no liability for possible damage or theft of any item displayed or exhibited. All items placed in the Library are there at the owner's risk.

Areas available to the public for displays and exhibits are the glass exhibit case, the meeting room, and the general bulletin board. A release must be signed by the exhibitor before any artifact can be placed in the library. An example of the release follows:

Rio Communities Public Library Display and Exhibit Release

I, the undersigned, hereby lend the following works of art or other material to the Rio Communities Public Library for exhibit purposes only. In consideration of the privilege of exhibiting them in the Library, I hereby release said Library from responsibility for loss, damage, or destruction while they are in the possession of the Library.

Exhibition to be held in the _____
During _____
Description of materials loaned _____

Signature _____ Date _____
Address _____ Telephone _____

XVII. Public Notice Bulletin Board Policy

Item 6.

Bulletin board materials may be submitted for posting by nonprofit organizations for civic, educational, or cultural purposes. Such organizations may submit literature publicizing a specific event. Limited space generally allows only short-term notices. The director must approve all postings and may prohibit postings which do not meet library standards. Library staff will place and remove postings promptly.

Each item posted must be dated and signed. A request for return of items, along with name and telephone number of person to be contacted, should be printed on the back of each article. Unless such arrangements are specified, items must be picked up the day following the date of the publicized event if the owners want them returned. Otherwise, the library will not be responsible for returning materials.

XVIII. Disasters Policy

Fire

Do not panic, but do not under-estimate the potential danger to customers or staff represented by a fire. At the first indication of smoke or flame, investigate the situation to determine location and extent of the fire. If the fire can obviously be contained and extinguished quickly and safely by staff, proceed to do so. However, if there is any doubt about whether the fire can be controlled, immediately call 911 or the fire department and then clear the building.

The time to think about fires is before they happen. Familiarize yourself with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building. Orient all staff and volunteers to this information. If you share a building with another agency and it occasionally initiates fire drills, library staff should respect those training exercises and respond as they would in the case of a real fire.

Health emergencies

Staff members should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the safety of the injured individual and the potential liability of the staff member. Without specialized training it is not advisable for staff to undertake more than keeping the sick or injured patron comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. Since each case is unique, staff members should use their own judgement to do what is prudent and reasonable.

The Rescue Squad/Police (911 if available) should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem. No medication, including aspirin, should ever be dispensed to the public.

Bomb threats

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word spoken by the person. If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or the time of possible detonation, **ASK FOR THIS INFORMATION.**

Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music and any other sounds which may indicate where the location from which the call is originating.

Listen closely to the voice (male, female), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments.

Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.

Snowstorms

The Library will follow the recommendation and actions of the city (or village) between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Closing during other days and hours will be at the discretion of the Library Director.

Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.

Item 6.

Library Bill of Rights: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

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: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

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.

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.