

Rowlett Public Library Policy Manual

Approved by the Rowlett Public Library Advisory Board
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Rowlett Public Library Policy Manual

I. Vision and Mission

Library Vision Statement:

Rowlett Public Library will provide a communal environment for cultural exchange, recreational pursuits and information access to stimulate learning and readership.

Library Mission Statement :

The mission of the Rowlett Public Library, a dynamic civic resource, is to:

- promote activities and ideas,
- encourage, enrich and expand interests of library users,
- stimulate the awareness and usage of libraries,
- promote individual enlightenment, community enrichment and economic vitality,
- inform, entertain and enrich,
- foster the self-learning process, and
- facilitate access to Library collections, services and technology.

II. Accreditation and Standards

In Texas, a library must be accredited to be eligible for certain services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC). These benefits, which provide significant cost savings for a community, include:

- participation in the TexShare databases consortium, electronic resources utilized by some 700 public, school and medical libraries. Registered cardholders have access to more than 50 databases, 24 hours a day.
- participation in the TexShare card program, whereby cardholders have the privilege of visiting and borrowing physical materials from over 500 libraries throughout the state.

- eligibility for participation in the statewide interlibrary loan (ILL) borrowing program, with reimbursements made to lending libraries.
- subsidies for weekly ILL delivery service through TExpress Courier, reducing postage and shipping fees.
- e-rate discounts for agencies eligible under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).
- consideration for TSLAC competitive grants and additional programs or project opportunities which vary from year to year.

Additionally, accreditation represents a quality of life marker, a way to be connected with other libraries in the state and a means to market the community.

In efforts to standardize the quality of library services throughout the state of Texas, the Texas Library Association (TLA) has set forth Public Library Standards designed to offer a measurable guide for the level of service experienced by library visitors. Rowlett Public Library staff regularly assess these standards in striving to provide high quality service to the community. These policies will be periodically reviewed to ensure responsiveness to the community.

The Rowlett Public Library adheres to an Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Policy, attached as an exhibit to this manual, to ensure that Library communications with applicants, employees and members of the public with ADA disabilities are as effective as communications with others; to make reasonable accommodations in Library policies, practices and procedures when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless a fundamental alteration in a Library program would result; and to operate its services, programs and activities so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The Library provides equal access to persons with disabilities, including those individuals who use service animals.

III. Purpose

Objectives of the Rowlett Public Library are to:

- offer a safe, comfortable and welcoming setting to meet and interact with others through the use of relevant programs and services,
- maintain a quality library materials collection which will respond to the informational, educational and recreational needs of patrons, including current social and cultural trends,
- cultivate a knowledgeable, professional and dedicated staff of employees focused on customer support,
- emphasize the journey, not the result, in supporting patrons' interests and ambitions while encouraging lifelong learning,
- promote an understanding of the community's heritage while celebrating diversity and cultural awareness,
- offer sensory, tactile, visual and auditory learning in all children's programming, with an emphasis on school readiness,
- offer personalized services to promote research, information and technology assistance,
- develop online user surveys, paper surveys, community forums, apps and/or evaluations connected with library programs,
- cooperate with other area libraries, schools, educational agencies and governmental agencies to advance the educational levels of the Rowlett community,
- strive to maintain Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) public library accreditation and pursue continued achievement of excellence, as recognized by the Texas Municipal Library Directors' Association (TMLDA),

- assist the City of Rowlett administration and all departments and divisions of the City to enhance the City's ability to respond to the needs of residents, and
- improve library services and facilities in a progressive, not reactive, manner.

IV. Collection Scope and Development

Recognizing the diverse informational, educational and recreational needs of Rowlett citizens, the Library Advisory Board supports a framework of growth to include acquisition and maintenance of a variety of materials and formats in response to these needs. While the following serves to outline the general principles driving selection and removal of library materials, they do not serve as an exhaustive list.

A. Selection Criteria

Authority and responsibility for selection and weeding of library materials ultimately rests with the Director of Library Services. Under his/her direction, selection may be delegated to the professional library staff. In choosing materials for the collection, staff utilize a variety of professional review sources, aggregates of public reviews and other popular cultural review sources.

Staff strive to create a collection that reflects the library's primary role as a popular materials and cultural center that reflects the diversity of the population served, maintaining a well-rounded selection of topics, views, expressions, opinions and interests based on needs assessments, community studies and analyses, and patron surveys. Within the limitations of space, budget and materials availability, the Library collects and holds items presenting a variety of points of view so that individuals may pursue their personal information needs. A work will not be excluded from the Library's collection solely because of frankness of expression, current social policy, depiction of a particular lifestyle or because the content may be deemed controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to others. Library materials may be chosen on the basis of:

- popular demand,
- current formats popular and in use,
- suitability of the material to the format,

- importance and value of subject matter to the collection,
- age of titles in relation to subject matter,
- literary merit,
- critical acknowledgement,
- cost,
- reflective of the range of views and opinions of library users, and
- reflective of the increasing diversity of library users.

Materials generally not selected include:

- archival materials (including yearbooks, newspapers, magazines, etc.),
- specialized materials of limited community interest,
- materials of historical merit that are no longer widely read,
- official publications easily and freely accessed online,
- works superseded or outdated,
- individual workbooks and materials of a consumable nature, and
- materials of a fragile or otherwise vulnerable design which cannot withstand the rigors of public use.

Other considerations:

- Donations, patron requests for purchase, digital materials and self-published materials, including those by local authors, are subject to the same criteria discussed above.
- Digital materials often have different availability and pricing structures than traditional library materials which may impact the Library's ability to acquire them.
- While the library supports the independent education of learners of all ages, it does not attempt to meet specific curriculum needs of educational programs at any level.
- The City of Rowlett, City Council, Library Advisory Board and Library staff do not endorse, nor refute the opinions expressed in materials held.

- The Library fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement and the Freedom to View Statement of the American Library Association (see Appendix B-D).

B. Patron Requests

Patrons are encouraged to submit requests for materials. If a requested item does not meet the Library's selection criteria, the patron may request that the item be borrowed from another library through interlibrary loan or pursue interlibrary reciprocal borrowing privileges through the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's TexShare Card program.

C. Donations

The Library may accept donations of library materials and/or equipment, depending upon perceived need, available space and staffing levels. All donated materials and/or equipment become the property of the Rowlett Public Library and will be utilized at the discretion of staff. Donations to the circulating collection which do not meet the selection criteria outlined above will be otherwise used as needed or discarded. Donated items that are worn, damaged, obsolete or otherwise unacceptable will also be discarded.

A donor acknowledgement form will be provided upon request. Library staff will not quote a monetary value for any materials or equipment donated.

Monetary donations and gifts are welcomed. Acceptance is subject to City of Rowlett policies and procedures applicable to donations and gifts of money and/or tangible items of property. The Library will not accept contributions that are not outright gifts or donations, nor will monetary donations necessarily be restricted to the purchase of specific items.

Monetary donations made in honor or in memory of an individual for the purchase of library materials will be used for items selected by staff, in consultation with the donor. All honorary and memorial donations and gifts will be acknowledged by the Library.

D. Collection Maintenance and Weeding

Maintenance of the collection is ongoing and removing materials is integral to the process. Factors influencing the decision to either retain, replace or withdraw items from the collection may be influenced by:

- overall physical condition of the item,
- frequency of circulation,
- age and/or accuracy of the information contained within, and
- relevance to the collection

Items removed from the collection will be sold or otherwise discarded.

E. Requests for Reconsideration

Individuals requesting that materials be removed, relocated within or excluded from the Library collection may discuss the item(s) with a professional or administrative member of staff. If additional consideration is requested, the patron must complete a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Material” form (Appendix E).

- Upon receipt of the request, a member of the Library administrative staff will contact the patron to discuss the item. Should the matter remain unresolved, Library administrative and professional staff will then meet to evaluate the item on the basis of Library selection criteria, critical reviews and other professional considerations, after which a written evaluation of the material will be made.
- The patron will be notified of the decision within four weeks from the date of submission of the reconsideration request. Requests for reconsideration will only be accepted from Library cardholders or patrons who are residents of the City of Rowlett. Anonymous requests will not be considered.

- The Rowlett Public Library Advisory Board, Rowlett City Council or City administration will not consider a complaint related to specific items held or excluded from the Library collection.
- All materials acquired under the Library's selection policy are considered constitutionally protected until such time as any item taken individually is determined unprotected by judicial action in courts of jurisdiction and after all appeals have been exhausted. In the event that the patron charges that any particular item is not protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution, the onus of proof rests with the complainant. Items being challenged will remain in the active collection at the Library's sole discretion, until such judicial determination is made.

V. General Policies

Policies have been implemented to ensure that an environment conducive to public use and enjoyment is maintained. Library staff are authorized to enforce these guidelines and direct patrons who do not comply to leave the Library premises. Visitors may forfeit their ability to use the Library, which may include loss of borrowing privileges, program participation, use of public computers and access to online services, if they:

- damage or destroy Library materials, furnishings or the facility,
- fail to return Library materials,
- refuse to pay fines, fees or other charges,
- engage in unacceptable conduct or conduct that is illegal or violates any city, state or federal law/ordinance,
- act in a manner that disrupts the orderly use of the Library and/or infringes on the rights of others, or
- interfere with a staff member's performance of his/her duties.

A. Confidentiality of Patron Records

The Texas Public Information Act renders library information confidential. Rowlett Public Library patrons' records are confidential in nature and are not part of the public record. Per Section 552.124 of the Texas Government Code, Library staff and administrators will treat patron records as confidential and will follow state law regarding the protection and restricted disclosure of confidential information.

B. Lending and Use Policies

Rowlett Public Library welcomes visitors of all ages, socioeconomic backgrounds and educational levels.

1. User Cards

Library materials, both physical and electronic, may be loaned to or accessed by Rowlett Public Library cardholders whose accounts are current and in good standing. Accounts showing lost items, as well as those carrying unpaid fines and/or fees exceeding the current limit will be suspended. Borrowing privileges, use of public computers and access to online services will be blocked until such time as the accounts are cleared.

Rowlett Public Library serves residents of the State of Texas. Adults (age 17 and up) may receive their first card free of charge upon presenting a valid (i.e., non-expired) government-issued photo I.D. and proof of residency. In signing the card, the applicant agrees to:

- comply with Library rules, policies and procedures,
- pay all fees and charges assessed to their card, and
- report promptly the loss or theft of their Library card or change of address.

Applicants whose current residence is not established on their photo I.D. must provide hard copy of an official document bearing their printed name and address, such as an insurance card, lease, utility bill, piece of mail or current pay stub. Staff are authorized to refuse to accept any document which is not valid or recent.

Minor children of Texas residents (through age 16) may receive their first card free of charge when their parent or legal guardian presents a valid, government-issued, photo I.D. and proof of residency as described above. The child must be physically present at the time the card is issued and the parent or legal guardian must sign for the child's card, assuming full

responsibility for all materials borrowed against it. Adult or legal guardian cardholders whose accounts are not in good standing are not permitted to apply and sign for children's cards.

2. TexShare Cards

TexShare is a statewide program which facilitates resource sharing. Adult cardholders who are residents of the City of Rowlett can request a TexShare card free of charge from the Library six months after obtaining a Rowlett Public Library card. The account must be current and free of any delinquencies.

Each library participating in the TexShare program makes its own rules regarding services they choose to make available to TexShare cardholders. A list of participating libraries can be found at:

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/texshare/libsearch/index.php>.

3. Interlibrary Loans

Items not held by Rowlett Public Library may be requested for loan from another library. Through the statewide interlibrary loan program managed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), adult cardholders with accounts in good standing may request up to 10 interlibrary loans at a time. Recently published, rare or fragile materials may not be obtained through interlibrary loan. Loan processing and delivery may take several weeks and due dates for item return are determined by the lending library. Fines will be assessed for the late return of interlibrary loans and the borrower assumes all responsibility for loss of or damage to borrowed items. Failure to promptly pick up materials requested on interlibrary loan may result in reduction or suspension of interlibrary loan privileges.

C. Conduct

Any behavior that is illegal, disrupts the use and enjoyment of the Library by others, damages Library materials, equipment or facilities, or impedes Library staff's ability to provide services is strictly prohibited. Failure to abide by these guidelines and/or staff's instructions may result in revocation of Library privileges, expulsion from the Library, criminal trespass warning or criminal prosecution. Unacceptable behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- smoking, vaping, consuming tobacco, using open flame or burning materials,
- consuming beverages that are not in a closed cover container or consuming food in non-designated food areas,
- making excessive noise or using abusive, threatening and/or profane language,
- engaging in illegal conduct,
- introducing animals, insects and/or other living organisms into the Library without express permission of staff, except service animals who are controlled on a leash, such as seeing-eye dogs or other guide-trained animals,
- utilizing recreational devices indoors, such as skateboards, shoes with wheels, roller skates, roller blades, bicycles and scooters,
- soliciting, panhandling, proselytizing, distributing literature or conducting surveys,
- using audible devices without headphones or with headphones set at a volume that disturbs others,
- using restrooms for bathing, shaving or laundering,
- lying down or sleeping on Library furniture, on floors or in restrooms

- trespassing in non-public areas or entering the Library without authorization before or after business hours,
- fighting or challenging to fight, running, pushing, climbing or other aggressive behaviors,
- entering the library barefooted, without a shirt or with offensive odors,
- abusing, damaging or vandalizing Library facilities, equipment or materials, or
- using cell phones, pagers and other communication devices in a manner that disturbs others. Audible cell phone and pager ringers should be turned off.

Visitors will be asked to refrain from entering the Library with strollers, large-frame backpacks, bedrolls, blanket rolls or oversized bags or parcels. Personal belongings must not impede access to doorways, aisles, service areas, materials, entrances or exits. Visitors are advised to keep personal belongings and electronic devices with them at all times

D. Safe Child Policy

Rowlett Public Library assumes no responsibility for unattended children, either in the Library or the exterior surrounds. Children should be accompanied and/or supervised by a responsible adult while using the Library facility. All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

Children are expected to comply with Library policies. Library staff may approach a disruptive child or the child's parent/caretaker to address the behavior. Should the disruptive behavior continue, staff may ask that the child be removed from the Library.

Responsibility for choosing a child's reading materials rests with the child's parents or legal guardian. Parents who wish to limit or restrict the reading of their child should personally guide and oversee their choices. Library collection policy directs that selection of Library materials, including those for children, will not be inhibited by the

possibility that content may be deemed controversial or otherwise unacceptable by others.

Library staff will notify police when unaccompanied children are left in the Library at closing.

E. Study Room Policy

The Library's study room may be checked out by adult Library cardholders whose accounts are in good standing. The following guidelines will be observed:

- Due to facility limitations, reservations must be made in person with staff on the day the room is needed.
- Staff will reserve the room for a 55-minute block of time.
- Room users under age 14 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Room use is limited to four people.
- Crafting supplies, including but not limited to paint, glitter, liquid glues, glue guns and aerosols are not permitted.
- Food is not permitted, closed-cover drinks only.
- Availability is first come, first-served.
- Room privileges may be suspended for misuse.

F. Photo Permissions Policy

Library-sponsored programs, classes and events may be photographed or recorded by staff for Library promotional purposes. Visitors should notify staff if they wish to not be photographed.

VI. Library Programs and Services

A. Library Programs

Library programs are vehicles for dispensing valuable information, designed to educate, enrich, enlighten and entertain all who attend. While some encourage self-learning and discovery, others provide amusement and provoke thought and wonder. Selection of Library program topics, speakers, courses, classes and resource materials will be made by staff, in consideration of the needs and interests of Library users and the community. Presentation of a program topic does not constitute endorsement by Library staff, the Library Advisory Board, City Council or City of Rowlett of any entity's (individual's or group) policies, practices or beliefs.

Every effort will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend Library programs. Facility limitations may require that attendance be limited when the safety or success of a program necessitates. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation or other accommodation of special needs for any program can be arranged by contacting a Library administrative staff member a minimum of two weeks before the scheduled date.

Schools, daycares and other organized groups that have not requested and received authorization to attend in advance of a scheduled program will be admitted as space and materials permit. Groups are expected to arrive before the advertised starting time, with the understanding that it may not be possible to admit everyone in the group. Should this situation occur, staff will inform the group leader as to how many individuals can be accommodated, so that the leader can determine which group members, if any, may attend.

Leaders of visiting children's groups are expected to provide sufficient supervision for all children in their care while at the Library, whether or not they are program participants. As a courtesy, groups are encouraged to time their arrival so that Library staff can determine what level of assistance may be necessary. Groups wishing to visit the Library without expectation of any program presentation are welcome to come at any time.

B. Reference and Information Services

Rowlett Public Library strives to provide accurate and timely reference and information assistance to all who request it, regardless of their residency, age, ethnicity, or views. While every effort will be made to provide answers or referrals to patron inquiries, Library staff are not authorized to offer advice or opinion in medical, legal, tax or consumer topics. The Library disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from use of the Library's reference and information services.

C. Other Services

1. Library Catalog

Rowlett Public Library maintains a catalog of its holdings which is available to the public and electronically searchable by author, title, subject and other fields. The Library catalog can be accessed in-house or remotely via the Library's Internet website.

2. Photocopying

The Library offers photocopier services to the public at a fee and complies with all applicable copyright acts and laws. The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. If unsupervised use of photocopying equipment is authorized, a notice reciting the foregoing will be posted in a conspicuous location.

3. Public Internet Access

The Library provides public computers with Internet access. Public computer users must be Rowlett Public Library cardholders whose accounts are in good standing. One-time, temporary Internet use passes may be made available to visitors who are not Rowlett Library cardholders or Texas residents. Temporary Internet use passes will not be issued to Rowlett Library cardholders whose accounts are not in good standing.

Printing from the public computers is offered at a fee and is subject to all applicable copyright acts and laws. Mobile printing is also available and can be done in-house or remotely from patrons' smart phones, computers or other personal electronic devices. Mobile printing is offered at a fee and subject to the above.

VII. Public Computer and Wireless Internet Access

A. Computer Use

As a service to its cardholders, the Library offers the use of public computers with Internet access. Computers are available for public use on a first-come, first-served basis. In order to make the service available to as many patrons as possible, a time limit for usage may be imposed. Library staff are available for general assistance in using computers, but staff are not expected to train patrons in the use of application programs.

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.

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 email is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the proper authorities.

Library public computers are not to be used for any activity that is illegal, creates an intimidating or hostile environment, or creates a disturbance in the Library. Users are not to post, upload or transfer illegal material, or display obscene text or images. Library computers are not to be used to compromise the safety and security of minors (under age 17) when using email, chat rooms or other forms of direct electronic communications.

The Library is not responsible for:

- the content, quality, validity or currency of any information found on the Internet, or
- damage to a user's files or portable drive, loss of data or liability that may be incurred from an individual's use of the Library's Internet services.

Public computer users:

- are responsible for observing and complying with copyright laws, especially those which pertain to copying software.
- agree to hold the Library blameless from any claims, losses, damages, obligations or liabilities relating to the use of information obtained from the Library's electronic information systems.
- are not to use Library computers to cause harm to others or to damage the property of others. Engaging in defamation (i.e., harming another's reputation with lies), uploading any kind of harmful form of programming, participating in hacking activities or utilizing any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems is prohibited.

Visitors may not use someone else's library card to access the Internet. Only one user is permitted per workstation. No food or drink is permitted when using the public computers.

Misuse or unauthorized use of Library computers and information resources will result in revocation of library privileges.

B. Wireless Use

Library visitors who bring their own devices to the Library may access the Internet through a wireless network. Library wireless users are required to adhere to the same expectations as outlined under section A. (Computer Use) above.

Users are encouraged to utilize anti-malware and virus protection on their personal electronic devices. 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.

General guidelines for use of the Library's wireless network are:

- 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 (email) as long as they use a free email service which will establish and maintain an account for them; the Library is unable to manage email accounts for any organizations or individuals.
- 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, and will be responsible to the Library (i.e., will indemnify the Library) if such costs are incurred.
- Users shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses or malware over the Internet.

- Users shall not deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment, programs, or software.

By using the Library's wireless network, users agree to hold the Library blameless from any claims, losses, damages, obligations or liabilities relating to their use of the wireless network. Users also agree to indemnify the Library for copyright infringement conducted through the use of the Library's wireless network.

Library staff are not able to troubleshoot users' personal devices. Users are encouraged to practice caution with regard to all information they access or share on the public wireless network.

Appendix A – City Ordinances/Resolutions

1. #111876B (November 18, 1976) - Establishment of Library and Board of Trustees
2. #7-17-84A (July 17, 1984) – number of board trustees; adoption of Dallas County Public Library Policies and Procedures to be used as guideline
3. #3-16-93D (March 16, 1993) – by-laws of Rowlett Public Library Advisory Board accepted
4. #3-16-93E (March 16, 1993) – revision to policy manual; amended Rowlett Public Library Board of Trustees to Rowlett Public Library Advisory Board
5. #10-1-96 (October 1, 1996) – revision to policy manual
6. #10-15-96 (October 15, 1996) – reduces number of Library Advisory Board members from 9 to 5
7. #7-15-97 (July 15, 1997) – amends library policy manual to include Internet usage policy
8. #9-4-01A (September 15, 2009) – revised City meeting room policy

Appendix B – American Library Association 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.

Appendix C – American Library Association 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.

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.

Appendix D – American Library Association Freedom to View Statement

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

Appendix E – Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

ROWLETT PUBLIC LIBRARY

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Type of Material to be Reconsidered:

___ Book ___ Audiobook ___ eBook ___ eAudiobook ___ Periodical

___ DVD/Blu-Ray ___ Streaming Media ___ Online database ___ Other

Title: _____

Author/Creator: _____

Call Number: _____ Copyright Date: _____

Publisher/Producer: _____

1. Did you review this material completely? ___ YES ___ NO

If no, how much did you review? ___ 25% ___ 50% ___ 75%

2. Have you read any reviews or critical works on this material? ___ YES ___ NO

If yes, please specify: _____

3. Did you discuss this material with a member of the Library staff? ___ YES ___ NO

If yes, name of staff: _____

4. To what do you object in this library material? Please be as specific as you can. Cite pages, story line, or other identifying areas: _____

5. Why do you object to this content? _____

6. Are you requesting that the item be removed from the Library collection or moved to another section? ___Removed Moved to: _____

7. Whom do you represent? ___Self Other individual (please specify): _____
Organization (please specify): _____

8. How did this material come to your attention? _____

Thank you for your interest and completion of this form. Please return to a Library staff member with your signature.

A Library Administrative Team member will contact you.

SIGNATURE

DATE

Staff Action Taken

Appendix F - Americans With Disabilities Act Compliance Policy

Article I: General Guidelines.

The Rowlett Public Library complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (the “ADA”) and offers alternative reasonable compliance to meet its requirements. Accordingly, the Library takes appropriate steps to ensure that Library communications with applicants, employees and members of the public with ADA disabilities are as effective as communications with others; makes reasonable accommodations in Library policies, practices and procedures when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless a fundamental alteration in a Library program would result; and operates its services, programs and activities so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The Library provides equal access to persons with disabilities, including those individuals who use service animals.

Article II: ADA Compliance Officer.

The Library Director or his/her designee is the Library’s ADA Compliance Officer. The ADA Compliance Officer may be contacted via telephone at: (972) 412-6161 or via email at reference@rowlett.com.

Implementation of this Policy is the responsibility of all Library staff.

Article III: Method of Notification.

A copy of this Policy is integral to the Library’s Policy Manual and is posted on the Library’s website. If a person with visual impairment or other disability inquires about this Policy or about the Library’s ADA services, staff will offer to read the Policy and to provide appropriate ADA services.

Article IV: Service Animals.

The Library welcomes service animals, and service animals are permitted in any area of the Library where members of the public are permitted to go. Trainers are also permitted to accompany service animals in training in the Library. Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder during an anxiety attack or performing other duties. The work or task that the dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability.

The ADA has also defined a miniature horse as an animal that may serve as a service animal if it has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. To determine if a miniature horse can be accommodated in the Library, the Library will assess whether (1) the miniature horse is housebroken, (2) the miniature horse is under the owner’s control, (3) the Library can accommodate the miniature horse’s type, size and weight, and (4) the miniature horse’s presence will compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of the Library.

Some service animals may wear special collars, harnesses, vests or capes and some are licensed and certified and have identification papers. However, special identification and

certification are not required by the ADA. Employees may only ask an individual who accesses the Library with a service animal the following two questions: (1) whether the animal is a service animal and (2) what work or task the service animal has been trained to perform. Employees may not require identification documents for the animal and may not ask about the person's disability.

A service animal may be removed from the premises only if (1) the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or (2) the animal is not housebroken. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless such devices interfere with the animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using such devices, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).

When there is a legitimate reason to remove a service animal, staff will offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain Library materials or services without the animal's presence. Staff is not required to provide care, food or a special location for the animal.

Article V: Programming & Meeting Accessibility.

All notices and advertising for Library-sponsored programming will contain an appropriate ADA notice (such as the following):

Any person needing an accommodation for a disability in order to access the benefits of the Library's services, programs, or activities under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact a Library manager by telephone at (972) 412-6161, by email at reference@rowlett.com or in writing, not less than five (5) working days prior to the program.

All notices for library board meetings will contain an appropriate ADA notice (such as the following):

Any person needing an accommodation for a disability in order to attend a meeting at the Library should contact the Administration Office by telephone at (972) 412-6161, by email at reference@rowlett.com or in writing, not less than five (5) working days prior to the meeting.

Article VI: Accommodations to Persons with a Disability.

Staff will assist a patron with a disability in any reasonable way needed, including opening doors, carrying and retrieving library materials, and completing library forms. In addition, in order to assist persons with visual, hearing, mobility, intellectual, or other disabilities, the Library provides materials in a variety of formats: conventional print, large type, DVD, CD, electronic download, streaming services. When materials are not available in all needed formats, the Library attempts to provide equivalent or similar items for use by persons with disabilities.

Article VII: Meeting Room Users.

Groups using the meeting room and presenters are required to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Library offers the facility as a service to community groups, but has no responsibility for the groups using the room.

Article VIII: Grievance Procedures.

Any person who believes that the Library has discriminated against that person because of the person's disability may file a written complaint with the ADA Compliance Officer, within 60

days of the alleged occurrence of discrimination. The complaint will provide information about the alleged discrimination, including the date, location, persons involved, and other particulars. The complaint will include the name, address, and telephone number of the person filing the claim. The complaint will include the complaining person's proposed resolution of the matter.

Upon request, the Library will provide alternate means for filing a complaint, such as a personal interview or tape or digital recording, to a person with a disability.

Within 15 days after receipt of a complaint, the ADA Compliance Officer, Director, or other designated Library representative will meet with the person filing the complaint, with the purpose of receiving any additional information and seeking a mutually acceptable resolution of the complaint.

Within 15 days after the meeting, the ADA Compliance Officer, Director, or other designated Library representative will respond to the person filing the complaint, in writing or other appropriate format, stating the Library's response to the complaint and proposed resolution of the complaint.

Within 15 days after receipt of the Library's response, if the Library's proposed resolution is not acceptable to the person filing the complaint, that person may submit a written appeal of the matter to the City Manager. The City Manager will meet with the person filing the appeal within 15 days, with the purpose of receiving any additional information and seeking a mutually acceptable resolution of the complaint. The City Manager's determination of the complaint is final and binding.

Individuals may also file an administrative complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) within 180 days of the alleged discrimination, or may file a lawsuit for injunctive relief and damages.

Any or all of these methods may be pursued at the same time.

Individuals are protected from retaliation or coercion when pursuing their rights or responsibilities under the ADA.

For further information

In accordance with Section 35.106 of the ADA's Title II Regulations, all applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons are advised that further information may be obtained from the ADA Compliance Officer and also from the Disability Rights Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20530. Telephone: (800) 514-0301 (Voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TDD).