

Beaman Memorial Public Library - Meeting Rooms Policy and Procedure

Purpose:

The Beaman Memorial Public Library exists for the purpose of providing Library services for the residents of West Boylston, Massachusetts. The Library has two meeting rooms; the Muriel Stiles room on the basement level, and the Children's Story Hour Room in the Children's Room.

Library meeting rooms are used primarily for Library programs, but may be used for meetings by civic, cultural, charitable, and educational non-profit groups and organizations that have a substantial connection to the West Boylston community.

A group or organization is considered to have a substantial connection to the West Boylston community if its activities enrich the local community and connect local residents. This includes a primary focus on West Boylston residents, community impact, and a non-commercial, community-centric purpose.

Policy:

Meeting rooms are subject to the policies and procedures outlined below, and in accordance with the principles set forth in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, which states, "Libraries that 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."

Use of meeting rooms does not imply endorsement, support, or co-sponsorship of the activities or of the beliefs of the group using the meeting rooms by the Beaman Memorial Public Library, the Board of Library Trustees, or the Town of West Boylston. Groups or individuals using the meeting rooms may not imply that the meeting is sponsored, co-sponsored, or endorsed by the Library or the Town in any advertising or publicity.

The Library Director reserves the right to refuse the use of the Library meeting rooms or cancel any meeting rooms reservation when the Director deems it to be in the best interest of the Beaman Memorial Public Library.

When the meeting rooms are not being used for Library programs, the Beaman Memorial Public Library welcomes non-profit groups whose primary clientele are West Boylston residents to use the rooms for meetings. Such use of the rooms must be free and open to the public, unless it is a fundraiser specifically for the Library. The meeting rooms are not available to businesses, private organizations, or for private social functions.

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The meeting rooms will be scheduled according to the following priorities:

1. Library related programs or meetings
2. Friends of the Beaman Memorial Public Library and Friends of the Beaman Endowment meetings and activities
3. Municipal meetings or programs
4. Other local non-profit groups may use rooms once a month for meetings as scheduling permits. Programs, such as storytimes, lectures, or craft events, should be co-sponsored by the library. Occasionally, a group may use the rooms more often if such use does not inhibit other groups from using the space.

Procedure:

- All requests to use the meeting rooms must be made in advance by anyone aged 18 or above who takes responsibility for the group's compliance with the Library's meeting rooms policy and procedures.
- All Library policies apply to meetings taking place in a Library meeting room, including the *Policy on Appropriate Library Use*¹ and the *Child Safety Policy*². Copies of these policies are available on our website. Violations of any Library policies may lead to a meeting being ended early or restrictions on future meeting room use. By agreeing to the terms of the Meeting Room Policy, patrons are also agreeing to comply with all other library policies during the meeting.
- Reservations may be requested by not-for-profit organizations and agencies no more than 3 months and no less than 3 weekdays in advance of the meeting. The applicant will receive a confirmation when the request is approved. The meeting rooms are not officially reserved until confirmed via email from the Director. Reservations are considered in the order they are received.
- The Library Director shall have the right to cancel, reschedule, or transfer meeting rooms locations or dates that conflict with Library sponsored programs and/or special events. In such cases, the Library will make its best effort to give advance notice.
- The group is expected to adhere to the stated purpose of the meeting.
- Meetings must be free and open to the public. No admission fees can be charged, and no collections or donations can be solicited. Presenters may offer items for sale during events co-sponsored by the Library, with prior authorization from the Library Director. Attendance is not contingent upon purchase. Sales pitches are prohibited during events, and presenters may only announce sales at the start and conclusion of their events. Items offered for sale are not endorsed by the Library, may not meet collection development policy, and the Library is not obligated to purchase them for its collection.

¹ A copy of this policy is available at beamanlibrary.org/policy-on-appropriate-library-use/ or at any service desk.

² A copy of this policy is available at beamanlibrary.org/child-safety-policy/ or at any service desk.

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- The meeting rooms are not to be used for events favoring a single political candidate or political party. However, office hours for sitting candidates representing the community are permitted, provided that they are open to the public and focused on communication with constituents rather than campaigning. Politically-oriented citizen groups may also be permitted, provided that their meeting is free and open to the public. Religious organizations may use the rooms for community events and event planning, but partisan religious material may not be distributed during the event. Commercial activities and individual use, including solicitation for personal causes or businesses, are prohibited. Organizations may not solicit for new members while using a Library meeting room. Fundraising is only allowed if it directly benefits the Library.
- Groups using the meeting rooms will be held responsible for any costs incurred by the Library or the Town as a result of that use. The Library Director reserves the right to determine whether any proposed use of the meeting rooms will require a police detail or other extraordinary police protection, and if so, the anticipated cost thereof which shall be the responsibility of the group. Payment shall be made to the Library prior to the event.
- The meeting rooms are available during regular Library hours. Meetings must start and end at the originally scheduled time. All changes to start and end times must be approved by the Library Director. Failure to vacate the meeting room at the end of a scheduled booking period may result in loss of privileges for future room use. Events co-sponsored by the Library and fundraising events benefiting the Library may operate outside of open hours.
- Light refreshments may be served, with permission from the Library Director. Please note your intent to serve refreshments on the application form. Applicants must provide their own paper goods and kitchen supplies and are responsible for kitchen cleanup after use. All food, beverages, and supplies that were brought for meeting use must be removed from the kitchen immediately after a meeting. The group will be responsible for removing the garbage and trash, and wiping down tabletops at the end of the meeting.
- No custodial services are provided in connection with use of the meeting rooms. Storage facilities are not provided. The condition of the rooms must be neat when vacated. All furniture must be set up by the group and must be back in original positions after use of the meeting rooms. If using paint, markers, or other supplies that may leave stains, a table covering must be used. All supplies brought in such as food, napkins, towels, etc must be taken home, including leftovers. Trash is to be taken with you. A vacuum cleaner will be provided if needed. Groups failing to comply with the room cleaning procedure of this policy will lose meeting room privileges and/or will be liable for damage or loss caused by room use.
- The capacity of each meeting room is limited based on the available amount of seating. The Stiles Room can seat up to 80 people, and the Story Hour room can seat up to 20. Please set up a meeting to view the rooms beforehand so you can see the layout.

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- No alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere in the Library unless a temporary liquor license is approved by the Town for a special event. Such an event will need permission from the Library Director and Board of Trustees.
- All activities must be confined to the meeting rooms. Approaching Library users for the purpose of encouraging participation in the group's activities is prohibited.
- The Library offers a projector, SMART Board, and PA system for meetings. Groups that wish to use the Library's technology during their meeting are required to complete a technology demonstration with the Library Director at least one week prior to the meeting. Library staff may be available to help with basic troubleshooting during a meeting, but the Library does not guarantee staff will be available to help immediately or resolve all technical issues.
- Permission to meet at the Library does not in any way constitute or imply endorsement of the users' policies, beliefs, or programs by Beaman Library staff or Board of Library Trustees.
- Groups using the meeting rooms agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Town of West Boylston, the Board of Library Trustees, the Beaman Memorial Public Library, and their employees, officers, agents and representatives, from any and all suits, actions, claims, or demands of any nature arising out of or brought on account of any injuries or damages sustained by any person as a consequence or result of the use of the rooms, its furnishings, or its equipment.

Any exceptions must be approved by the Library Director before a reservation is made. Failure to follow the meeting room policy and procedures may result in the cancellation of your reservation and/or loss of future use of the meeting rooms. Questions of interpretation will be referred to the Library Director. Final determination rests with the Board of Library Trustees.

Approved by the Trustees of the Beaman Memorial Public Library on May 14, 2024