

KIMBALL LIBRARY

MEETING ROOM POLICY

Purpose & General Guidelines

The intent of this policy is to ensure that library spaces are available for library programs and for use by Atkinson residents on an equitable and legal basis in accordance with the library's mission and role, and the guidelines and priorities articulated below. Access is granted regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting the use of a room. **The use of a meeting room signifies acceptance of the terms of this policy.**

The Kimball Library recognizes the rights of free speech and free assembly guaranteed in the First Amendment and in the United States Constitution. Permission for a group to use a library meeting space does not constitute an endorsement of the group's purpose, views or speech or reflect the objectives of the Library. No group may imply in its publicity that the Library has sponsored or supported its meeting unless prior permission is given by the Library Director.

Library programs and activities have priority over all other uses. The policy below does not extend to library programs or events. The Friends of the Kimball Library are also exempt. Exceptions can be made by the Library Director.

Eligibility for Use of the Meeting Rooms

The meeting rooms of the Kimball Library are available to Atkinson organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, charitable, advocacy, civic or political activities. Atkinson governmental or school groups may reserve a meeting room. Any nonprofit not based in Atkinson requesting use of a meeting room must show substantial connection to the Town through its stated mission, service area, or membership and receive the approval of the Library Director. Organizations and individuals agreeing to the terms outlined below are welcome to meet in an available room.

Groups who wish to use the Large Meeting Room shall contact the Library Director and complete an application, which is available at the Library and on our website. For the large and small conference rooms and the Game Room, online booking is available; please see our website. Reservations must be made at least 24 hours ahead of use and may be made up to one year in advance for up to twelve (12) meetings annually. Reservations are restricted to one a day. Reservations shall be accepted, subject to the provisions of this policy, in the order received.

For individuals or small groups who are not organized as non-profits but wish to use a room, the Large and Small Conference Rooms are available to Atkinson residents with a Kimball library card on a first come, first served basis and by reservation. The memorial Game Room may also be reserved for the purpose which it is intended. The conference rooms and the Game Room are available for walk-in use whenever they are not reserved.

Restrictions

There will be no commercial use of the meeting rooms. Meeting rooms may not be used to conduct commercial business or to provide services for a fee. They may also not be used for social

gatherings, family events, or fund-raising functions except for library-related events or civic functions connected with events to benefit the Town.

The Conference and Game Rooms may be reserved for up to 4 hours for a maximum of three sessions in any room per month. If the room is not wanted by another party at the end of 4 hours, it may be possible to stay longer with the understanding that the room must be vacated within 10 minutes should another party request it. The Library Director may make exceptions.

The meeting rooms are available for use during the library's normal hours of operation; reservation times include setup and breakdown time. The Conference Room, Small Meeting Room and Game Room must be vacated 15 minutes prior to the library closing. With the Library Director's permission, it may be possible for a gathering in the Large Meeting Room to run later than the library's closing on weeknights. In such cases, a monetary donation to the Kimball Library is suggested. This will help to cover the cost of keeping the building open past closing. No one may be in the building after 10:00 PM.

All programs must be free and open to the public. No fees, dues, or donations may be charged or solicited by the sponsor or group for any program except to cover the cost of materials required for use of the program. Authors and artists may offer their works for sale incidental to a lecture, program or performance. The Library Director may make exceptions for seminars, lectures and programs held in cooperation with the Library, or for adult education courses sponsored by an established educational non-profit institution.

Food is not allowed in the Library unless the Library Director makes an exception and then only light refreshments may be served in a meeting room. Coffee, cookies, appetizers, finger sandwiches are examples of light refreshments. Drinks with covers are allowed. No open flame, such as candles or food warmers are allowed in the Library.

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on library grounds. Smoking on library grounds must be a minimum of one hundred feet from the building. Library visitors are requested to put their cell phones on vibrate mode and take calls in the lobby area or outside of the building.

Advertising / Implied Sponsorship

The Library is content neutral. Granting permission to use library spaces does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of a group or individual's philosophy, goals or activities. No group or individual may imply in any communication that the Library has sponsored, supports or endorses the group or individual or any particular program or event.

The Library may be identified as the location of a meeting and its address may be listed in promotional materials in a font that is smaller and less prominent than other text. The Library may not be mentioned in the event name and use of the library's logo, image or likeness, phone number, email address or website is forbidden. Advertising should indicate that the views expressed do not represent those of the Library. A contact person and contact information for the program should be included.

The Library is not responsible for promoting events organized by outside groups or individuals.

Other Policies

If a government agency or other organization wishes to make a written agreement for the use of meeting spaces for a period of up to one (1) year, the Library Director is authorized to sign such an agreement, if

1. The room use is consistent with this policy.
2. The written agreement incorporates the rules and regulations of this policy, and
3. The agreement has been reviewed and approved by the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library is not responsible for any articles left at the Library. Equipment, supplies, or personal effects cannot be stored or left on library property before or after use of the library space.

If a group requires the library audio-visual equipment, the user must be thoroughly trained in advance and will be held responsible for any damage to hardware or software. Library staff is happy to demonstrate use of the equipment by appointment; staff is not able to run equipment during an event.

Arrangement and setup of the furniture is the responsibility of the group using the room. Groups are required to leave the room in a neat and orderly condition. The group using the room is responsible for placing all trash in the waste baskets provided, wiping all surfaces, and returning the furniture to its original location.

Restoration or repair of any damage is **required**. Each organization or individual using a meeting room will be held financially responsible for all damages to the room, fixtures, or furniture or extra required cleaning. Charges will be billed to the Applicant/Sponsor. Any group violating library policies, rules, and procedures may have future privileges for use curtailed or denied.

Attendance at meetings will be limited to each room's capacity as follows:

Game Room – 4; Conference Room – 15; Small Conference Room – 6; Large Meeting Room - 80

During periods of pandemic and mask wearing, the capacity is reduced to allow for social distancing:

Game Room – 2; Conference Room - 10, Small Conference Room -6, Large Meeting Room - 40.

If the Library is forced to close as a result of storms or other extraordinary circumstances, the closing will be posted on our website, social media and electronic sign. It is each organization's responsibility to notify those who would be attending any meeting. The Library is not responsible for any cost incurred by an organization as a result of such closing.

The Library reserves the right at any time to reschedule previously approved meetings or to move a meeting to a different space. Such changes will always be a last resort necessitated by unforeseen circumstances or by the need to prioritize library-sponsored programs or to allocate limited spaces as equitably as possible.

No animals except those trained to assist the disabled as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act are allowed in the building. Requests for exceptions should be made to the Library Director.

Parents, guardians, or caregivers attending a program in the meeting rooms and accompanied by small children must comply with the Kimball Library Unattended Children Policy.

When a large group is planning to use the large meeting room, visiting group members are asked to park in the upper parking lot if possible, so as not to disrupt the parking ability of other patrons utilizing the Library for normal activities.

If an individual or group is unable to keep their reservation, it is important to contact the Library to let us know. We want as many residents to be able to take advantage of these community resources as possible. Groups or individuals with a reserved space who repeatedly fail to use or cancel their reservation or who otherwise violate library policies may be denied further use of meeting spaces.

Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the Library Director if deemed the best means of furthering the mission and goals of the Library. Exceptions are valid when they are received in writing from the Director.

Library staff have the right to monitor and enforce the proper use of any meeting space in accordance with this and other library policies such as the Behavior Policy. Staff are authorized to terminate an event at their sole discretion in accordance with these policies.

Other Basic Rules for Use of Meeting Spaces

All events must be conducted in an orderly manner and in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations including the policies of the Kimball Library.

Use of meeting spaces must not interfere with the regular operation of the Library.

Materials may not be attached to walls, ceilings, windows doors or furnishings.

Door exits may not be blocked or concealed.

If there is an accident or emergency, contact a library staff member immediately.

Damages shall be reported to library personnel promptly.

The Library assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items. Any items left behind will be placed in the lost and found box in the library lobby.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on October 21, 2009
Amended by the Board of Trustees on September 15, 2010
Amended by the Board of Trustees on February 20, 2019
Amended by the Board of Trustees on February 16, 2022
Amended by the Board of Trustees on March 16, 2022