

## **Meeting Rooms Policy**

The goal of the Bartow County Library System is to encourage library usage by providing meeting room space for the community. Because the Library is intended for the use of all members of the public, all meetings are free and open to the public. All library programs take precedence in the scheduling of meeting rooms.

### **Policies**

The meeting room policy reflects Article 6 of the Library Bill of Rights, which states, "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." The use of meeting rooms does not imply the library's endorsement of any ideas expressed in the meeting nor of the goals, objectives, or ideals of the person or organization using library facilities.

All advertisements, announcements, press releases, flyers, etc., relating to meetings must clearly state the event is not sponsored by the Bartow County Library System. All advertising and public notices must clearly designate the organizational sponsorship. An organization or group may not use the library for its official address.

Users of a meeting room are expected to observe the rights of other library users and staff members, to use the library for its intended purposes, and to leave the meeting space in the condition it was found. Users are expected to abide by the library's Rules of Behavior/Conduct policy.

The library is not responsible for any accident, injury, loss or damage to the private property of individuals or organizations using the facility. The user/use permit holder agrees to the Hold Harmless Agreement included with the Meeting Room Application. The user/use permit holder is liable for any damage to library property that may occur during use. The user/use permit holder shall be the only person authorized to make changes in the reservation.

The Bartow County Library System provides meeting rooms for civic, cultural, educational, and public informational meetings held by community and business groups. If a question is raised about the goals or activities of any organization, group, or individual requesting use of the meeting rooms, the Library Board shall be the final authority in granting or refusing permission for the use of the rooms. All activities occurring within the meeting rooms must not be closed to any person regardless of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disabling condition or any other legally protected category.

No member of a group utilizing library facilities will receive financial benefit from any activity held on library property. Exceptions to this guideline include fundraisers to benefit the library, sponsored by the Friends of the Bartow County Library System or other library-related groups, and the sale of books or other items by authors or artists as part of a library program.

All meetings held at the library must be free of charge. No admission, collection, or donations may be taken. Exceptions to this guideline include supply fees for courses of an educational or cultural nature to be pre-approved by the library.

Displays, posters, and literature associated with a meeting may not be placed anywhere within the Library except in the meeting room during the meeting. Displays, decorations, and other materials are not permitted on the walls of the meeting rooms. Library fixtures may not be removed. Exits must be clear at all times. All materials must be completely removed after use of the room; the room must be left in the same condition as found.

### **Reservations and Scheduling**

Reservations will not be accepted by telephone or email. The Application Form with all fees and deposits must be submitted at least two weeks in advance. Confirmation of room reservation will be issued per the method requested on the Application Form.

Maintenance and other fees for the use of meeting room facilities and equipment have been established by the Board of Trustees. Fees apply to all applicants except meetings of the agencies of local government funding the Library.

All equipment must be scheduled in advance. The Library encourages groups using the audiovisual equipment in

the meeting rooms to make an appointment with a staff member for a brief overview of proper equipment use. Staff is not available to run equipment during meetings.

Hours of scheduling shall include the total time involved in the meeting, from the time the organization requires the room for setting up, to the time the room is vacated. The rooms may be scheduled before or after regular library hours by special arrangement, subject to a security fee and the approval of the Library Director. No meeting may be scheduled on a library holiday.

Scheduling is on a first-come, first-served basis. The library reserves the right to cancel a reservation if the meeting room is needed for library use. Whenever possible, a twenty-four (24) hour notice will be given. This right will not be exercised except in emergency situations.

Reservations must be made by an adult (18 years or older). A group composed of minors (under eighteen years of age) must have an adult chaperone attend the event and assume responsibility for the group's activities and for the care of property and facilities.

### Regulations

Library staff may enter and remain in a meeting room at any time during a scheduled event.

Rulings of the local county Fire Marshall as to the capacity of people in the rooms and other matters of safety shall be observed at all meetings.

The event cannot disrupt the ability of the library to conduct its business in a normal or orderly manner because of noise or other factors which will not be permitted.

No group may assign its reservation to another group.

Any group wishing to meet upon a repeating basis must submit separate Application Forms.

There is an additional maintenance fee of \$5.00 per hour when food is served in any meeting space. Light refreshments only may be served.

The library does not provide storage space for property or supplies of groups or organizations using meeting rooms.

Library staff will not take or deliver messages for meeting participants.

All participants must abide by the Library's Rules of Behavior/Conduct Policy.

Only those arrangements for staff assistance approved and paid for in advance will be available on the date of the event.

Children under the age of 12 (twelve) accompanying an adult to an event must remain with the adult at all times.

The contact person for each meeting is responsible for ensuring that each event participant is aware of and abides by these regulations.

Future use of the meeting rooms may be restricted or denied for any violation of these regulations.

The library system is not responsible for the loss or damage of any items left in the meeting rooms. The individual who checked out the room is liable for any damage to library property that may occur during room use.

The library will not provide supplies and/or equipment. Wireless access is available in all rooms.

### Hold Harmless Agreement

All meeting room users are required to sign the "Hold Harmless Agreement" which states:

The user/use permit holder agrees to hold harmless the Bartow County Library System Board of Trustees for any injury or damages to the person or property of any person in the use of said premises or incurred during users/use permit holder's use of said premises and to defend that users/use permit holder's expense, any legal action that may be brought against the Bartow County Library System Board, the City of Cartersville, Bartow County Government or its agents, officers, board members or employees for personal injury and/or property damage during the period of use.