WALLINGFORD
PUBLIC LIBRARY

VOLUNTEER

HANDBOOK

Volunteer Handbook
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WELCOME TO WALLINGFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Thank you for volunteering at the Wallingford Public Library. We know there are many places in our community where you can donate your valuable time and we are honored that you have chosen to volunteer at the Library. The service our volunteers provide is critical to our success as an organization. You make this a better library and we are grateful!

You were selected to volunteer at the Wallingford Public Library because we believe you have the qualities we look for in our volunteers: dedication, thoroughness, and a commitment to the Library's mission and values. We will strive to make the Wallingford Public Library a pleasant place for you to volunteer and a place where you know that your efforts are appreciated.

This handbook has been prepared to help acquaint you with the Library's purpose, history, and basic policies and practices. As you read this handbook and become more familiar with the Wallingford Public Library, we encourage you to ask questions and to make suggestions for improving your volunteer experience.

We are delighted to have you on our team.

Sincerely,

Jane Fisher, Director   *Deborah Ward, Volunteer Coordinator*

ABOUT THE WALLINGFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mission

By offering a wide array of resources and experiences and by connecting people in our community with ideas and with each other, the Wallingford Public Library ensures every resident has the opportunity to be inspired, enriched, and informed.

Vision

- The Wallingford Public Library will be viewed as the hub of the community where all are welcome.
- The collection will evolve to meet the changing needs and demographics of our community, including the continued expansion of digital materials.
- Our programs will act as opportunities to bring community members together – to learn together, to support one another, and to be inspired.
- We will expand the array of supports for access to online information and materials, for both consumption and creation, and continue to be a go-to place for helping our community with technology.
- The configuration of our facilities will be assessed to best meet the needs of our patrons and to ensure the building's long term maintenance.
- As one of our strongest assets, our staff will feel valued and will have opportunities for professional development.
- Our Board of Managers will be a committed, engaged group of community members, representative of our diverse community.
- We will work in collaboration with our community partners to ensure our collective efforts address the needs of the community.
- The Library will foster a strong sense of community identity, spirit and pride through its collections, programs, facilities and other services.

Values

- Access for All: We provide equal access to our collections, programs, facilities and services.
- Excellence: We maintain high standards of customer service and strive for excellence in the services and resources we provide.
- Respect: We embrace people from all walks of life and treat individuals with respect and dignity.
- Personal Growth: We strive to provide all people with the opportunity to grow and achieve their life goals.
- Kindness: We show compassion and offer support to our patrons.

- Innovation: We actively seek out opportunities to blend new ideas and methods into our work.
- Responsibility: We offer high quality services in a safe, secure and fiscally responsible environment.

Background

The Wallingford Public Library was organized October 4, 1881, with a fund of $1,000 and a book stock of 1,384 volumes, some of which had come from an earlier social library, "The Old Town Library," which had operated from 1833 to 1867. The Library's original name was The Ladies' Library and Reading Room Association and it was incorporated by a Special Act of the State Legislature, dated March 15, 1882. The objectives of the Association were to advance civilization through the cultivation of the intellect; to stimulate a thirst for scientific and useful knowledge; to promote the interests of education in general; and to encourage the more educating and refining influence of society.

In 1899, the Library became a free public library when the Town passed the first appropriation of funds. The Town stipulated that funding would continue as long as the Library was maintained as a free public institution, and the Association stipulated that the Library would remain free as long as the Town continued its support. The original building, with the 1931 addition, served as the Town Library until 1982. The problem of insufficient space had become so acute by 1976 that it was necessary to transfer the juvenile collection to Yalesville, making that branch into a Children's Library. A new Library, constructed at 200 North Main Street by the Town at a cost of $3,200,000 and opened in June, 1982 was enthusiastically received by the public and has made possible a whole new range of community activities as well as a greatly increased use of printed materials.

The 1982 building was designed with an open and flexible floor plan that would accommodate many changes in its 25 year life span. There were no computers for either staff or public use when the building opened in 1982. Shortly after, the Wallingford Public Library joined with the Meriden Public Library, the Russell Library in Middletown, the Guilford Free Library, the Public Library of New London, and the Otis Library in Norwich to form Libraries Online (Lion) a library consortium that has grown to 22 members to share resources and support technology for its members.

Media including VHS, CD, and DVD formats became increasingly important library services throughout the 80s and 90s. The growing importance of the Internet and the need for public access to this vital information source greatly impacted library services for the new century. In 1994 the Library closed its card catalog, and in 1995 WPL introduced its first Internet home page.

In 2000, the Library Board of Mangers identified space as the most important priority for improving and maintaining service, and in 2005 the Town of Wallingford agreed to fund a $12,065,000 expansion of the library building at 200 North Main Street. The 67,000 square foot renovated and expanded building was dedicated in May, 2008 with beautifully expanded areas for children, teens, Internet users, and readers. In 2012, the Library renovated its Yalesville branch, improving the library experience for our patrons and making the building more energy efficient.

The Library has become a center for community activity in Wallingford, and it is fulfilling, with contemporary methods, the purpose stated by its founders over 125 years ago.

LIBRARY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Volunteer Conduct and Library Rules

To ensure orderly operations and to provide the best possible environment, Wallingford Public Library expects volunteers to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the library. The following are a few examples of infractions of rules of conduct.

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.

- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

- Fighting or threatening violence in the library.

- Possession of a firearm or other weapon in the library, regardless of lawful licensure for possession elsewhere.

- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of Wallingford Public Library-owned property.

- Disrespectful conduct.

- Violation of safety or health rules.

- Sexual or other unlawful harassment.

Attendance

At the Wallingford Public Library, we appreciate your commitment to volunteering. In the event that you are not able to volunteer on a given day, please contact us at (203) 265-6754 to let us know. We may not be able to extend ongoing volunteer opportunities if you have excessive absences without notice.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The Wallingford Public Library believes that our patrons have a right to privacy concerning the library books they read, the films they view, the services they receive, the questions they ask, the programs they attend, and the things they search for on our computers. Volunteers are expected to keep confidential any library records they encounter that can be used to identify any library user, or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of format. Examples of such records include borrowing records, program sign-up sheets, overdue notices, reserve requests, and anything else that attaches a person's name to library materials and services.

Personal Appearance

Acceptable personal appearance is an ongoing requirement of volunteering at the Library. Volunteers are expected to dress in a manner that is normally acceptable in similar public service surroundings. Volunteers should not wear suggestive attire, baseball hats, hoods, or inappropriate attire that does not present an appearance suitable for a library environment. Inappropriate attire is defined as, but not limited to, exposed undergarments, halter tops, tank tops, tube tops, shorts, (shorts that reach the mid-thigh or longer are acceptable), midriff tops, t-shirts with offensive slogans or pictures, beach costumes, see-through or mesh clothing, and ragged or dirty clothing. Volunteers are expected to wear clean and practical footwear suitable for public service assignments.

Cell Phone Use

Personal cell phones should not be used for calling or texting during volunteer hours. If you receive a phone call that you must answer please come to the back staff area to use your phone.

Smoking

In keeping with Wallingford Public Library's intent to provide a safe and healthy environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the library and on the grounds. This policy applies equally to all employees, customers, volunteers and visitors.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Drug and alcohol use is highly detrimental to the safety and productivity of volunteers in the library. No volunteer may be under the influence of any illegal drug or alcohol while in the library or while operating equipment owned by Wallingford Public Library.

The unlawful manufacture, possession, distribution, transfer, purchase, sale or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on Wallingford Public Library property is strictly prohibited.

Safety

Your safety and security matter to us. If during the course of your volunteering you feel unsafe in any way please inform the volunteer coordinator or the person in charge.

Each volunteer is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution in all activities. Volunteers should report any unsafe condition to the volunteer coordinator or the person in charge.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, volunteers should notify the volunteer coordinator or the person in charge who may ask you to complete an accident report.

Emergency Closings

In the event of bad weather please contact the library to see if we are open. If the Library closes early or has a delayed opening due to severe, inclement weather conditions or other emergencies, it will be listed on our website. Notification may also be provided on television and/or by calling our main number (203) 265-6754.

Any volunteer who judges that his/her safety is endangered by weather conditions may notify the library that they do not intend to volunteer that day.

Fire Procedure

If you hear the fire alarm:

- Follow the instructions of the person-in-charge.
- Go out the nearest exit. If the nearest exit can't be used due to fire or smoke, use an alternate exit.
- Meet in the far southwest corner of the parking lot.

If you discover a fire:

- Pull the nearest fire alarm pull station
- Notify the person in charge or any staff member
- Go out the nearest exit. If the nearest exit can't be used due to fire or smoke, use an alternate exit.
- Meet in the far southwest corner of the parking lot.