**GENERAL POLICIES**

**A. Who May Use the Library**

1. Free library service is available to any resident of Cresco, Iowa; Iowa resident who qualifies for Open Access by living in an incorporated city with a library; or a city or rural area that contracts for library services.

2. Persons confined to their homes or institutions because of physical, mental or emotional limitations are entitled to personalized or mail delivery service.

3. The use of the library or its services may be denied for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return books, pay penalties, the destruction or abuse of library property. In addition, the following practices are not allowed: smoking in undesignated areas, use of food or beverages in the library, running, leaving children unattended, disruptive or threatening behavior, use of nonpublic areas or harassment of staff, or other violations of library policy.

4. The library board and staff believe strongly in an open policy under which the contents of the library are available to users regardless of age. It is the responsibility of parents, who wish to do so, to monitor their children’s use of the collection. Parents are best suited to ascertain the taste and sensitivity of their child, and staff will not enforce parental restrictions. The Cresco Public Library encourages parental involvement with their children.

5. Library cards can be purchased by patrons who do not qualify for a free library card or Open Access for a comparative rate proportional to the taxpayers.

**C. Services of the Library**

1. The library staff will select from the mass of available materials, and organize for easy access, those materials best to meet the needs of the community.

2. The library staff will provide guidance and assistance for people to obtain the information they seek as recorded in print and audio-visual resources.

3. The library staff makes every reasonable effort to extend its services outside the library to reach those who have difficulty in using the library due to age, infirmity, lack of transportation or geographic distance within the area served.

4. The library staff will initiate programs, exhibits, book lists and brochures to stimulate the use of the library materials to meet the educational, recreational and practical needs of people of all ages.

5. Cooperation with other community agencies and organizations will be maintained to meet the educational needs of the community, and provide such services as programs, planning, discussions, special bibliographies, materials and exhibits.

6. The library staff accepts responsibility for securing information beyond the library resources through Interlibrary Loan by borrowing for patrons with serious interest, materials which are not owned by the library or materials for which demand does not justify purchase.

7. Library materials will be provided to other libraries through interlibrary loan requests when demand allows. Cresco Public Library cardholders have priority in the use of materials.

8. Library services will be provided during the hours best meeting the needs of the community and through service outlets located at points of maximum convenience to the public.

9. Periodic review will be made of library service to determine whether the needs of the community indicate that present services should be discontinued or other services should be added.

**D. Fees for Library Services**

1. Subscription Fees: Public libraries fill a unique role in our society by providing the following services: 1) access to information so that citizens of our democratic society can make informed decisions; 2) information to aid people in their personal or professional development; 3) recreational materials to add to the quality of time available for leisure.

Quality library service is a necessity in contemporary society and ranks equally with other government services provided for the common good, such as general education, transportation and security services.

The effect of such fees is to diminish the responsibility of government to provide such services, and to exclude large segments of our society from access to information services. Individual fees are a severe form of economic discrimination weighing most heavily on those people least able to afford them; students, the elderly, the unemployed and underemployed.

The Cresco Public Library, therefore, will accept revenue from general taxation to permit their constituents to use the public library, and taxation from any contracting cities for their patrons to use library services. This policy will be maintained in any and all negotiations, agreements or contracts for direct service from the Cresco Public Library.

The Cresco Public Library may require a deposit or fee for programs with limited participation and/or high supply and instructor costs. This fee must be approved by the Director. Deposits will be returned after the completion of the program. Patrons must advise library staff they cannot attend 24 hours in advance for the deposit to be returned.

**Minor fees may be charged for special materials or equipment with high maintenance costs, such as photocopy or audio-visual equipment. Such fees will be charged on an individual transaction basis and will be kept as low as possible while offsetting costs of operation of such equipment.**

**The Library offers a variety of payment methods. In agreement with the City of Cresco, Credit Cards (CC) are accepted with a 2.95% service charge, with a $1.00 minimum service fee.**

**E. Physical Facilities**

1. To achieve quality library service, the Board of Trustees accepts the responsibility to see that a public library facility is provided which will adequately meet the physical requirements of modern, aggressive library service. Such a facility will offer to the community a compelling invitation to enter, read, listen and learn. The building will fit an expanding program of library service.

2. The Board of Trustees accepts the responsibility to secure the funds for needed facilities.

3. The Library Director and the Board of Trustees, as a team, will endeavor to sustain the facilities to meet recognized standards and the needs of the community.

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