Collection Development Policy (Revised April 19, 2023)

Collection Responsibilities and Selection Procedures

Final authority for the determination of policy in the selection and acquisition of library materials is vested in the Board of Trustees of the Bitterroot Public Library. The responsibility of materials for the library rests with the Library Director. The purpose of the selection process is to obtain materials to supply information and reference assistance, and to provide recreation. The library's policy is to purchase, within budget limitations, the materials which satisfy patron needs, following established criteria for selection which includes evaluating each title by:

- Permanence or timely value
- Clear presentation and readability
- Social significance
- Importance of subject matter to the collection
- Author's reputation and significance as a writer
- Publisher's reputation
- Fact-based presentation of controversial issues
- Avoidance of what is trivial, deliberately distorted, or primarily sensational or offensive
- Patron requests
- Cost

The Library Director currently purchases, or delegates the purchasing of, materials for the adult fiction and non-fiction areas of the collection. The Director cannot be expected to personally review all titles and materials due to the sheer number of items published. Therefore, along with examining titles, (s)he will rely on valuable review sources to select materials that are suitable for the collection. Among these are:

- Booklist
- Kirkus Reviews
- Library Journal
- Patron requests
- Purchase Alert report from the Montana Shared Catalog

Reviews are a major source of information on new materials, but they are not followed blindly. No one publication is relied upon exclusively, and critical opinions are checked against each other. Selection is based on principle rather than personal preference, reason rather than prejudice and judgment rather than censorship.

The Library does not collect or maintain items that meet the legal definition of pornography or obscenity.

The Community Librarian is responsible for maintaining the adult non-fiction collection including the Reference Collection.

The adult non-fiction will be evaluated, weeded and updated using the selection criteria outlined in this policy. This collection will continue to be evaluated to maintain community value and accuracy.

The purpose of the Reference Collection is to provide readily available on-site access to resources that fit into the following categories:

- Works meant to be consulted briefly for historical, statistical, or background information
- Works that are best accessed as a set, example: World Book Encyclopedia
- Indexes or abstracts
- Works whose availability or content predisposes them to theft or loss if circulated, example: The Montana Code Annotated Regional and local information
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Additionally, the Library maintains a diverse selection of informational and entertainment magazines and newspapers representing local, state, regional, and national coverage. Due to limited space, the Library keeps back issues of monthly magazines for one year and magazines received weekly or biweekly for 6 months. Back issues of our newspaper subscriptions are kept for two weeks.

The Reference collection will continue to be evaluated quarterly, moving seldom used materials to circulation and marketing the collection, such as facing books out, associating our online resources with our OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) and promoting the collection through shelf displays and website announcements.

The Library recognizes that reference information is available online and that this format provides both currency and ease of access (24/7) that normally cannot be matched by print sources. The library purchases online resources as well as those resources available through statewide database licensing. When selecting electronic sources, the Library considers ease of use and cost; frequency of updating; remote access capability; and whether or not there may be duplication with a print source already in the collection.

Reference items are selected primarily by the staff from review sources, publishers' information and patron/staff input.

The Youth Services Librarian selects items for the children's, juvenile and teen collections. The library provides a wide range of youth materials in all formats to fulfill the informational, cultural, learning, and leisure needs of children of all ages. The composition of the collection reflects interests of youth in the community as determined by analysis and experience on the part of the library staff and the Youth Services Librarian.

Evaluation and Selection of Youth Resources reflect the same guidelines outlined at the beginning of this document for the Library's Collection Responsibilities and Selection Procedures. These include:

Permanence or timely value

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- Clear presentation and readability
- Social significance
- Importance of subject matter to the collection
- Author's reputation and significance as a writer
- Publisher's reputation
- Fact-based presentation of controversial issues
- Avoidance of what is trivial, deliberately distorted, or primarily sensational or offensive Patron requests
- Cost
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In addition to the above guidelines, the evaluation and selection of Youth materials may focus on materials that fit the following:

- Materials representative of artistic, historic, and literary qualities or significance of author.
- Literary award winning materials or materials represented in reputable literary resources.
- Materials directed toward various age groups, intellectual levels, interest levels, and reading levels.

Self-Published Works

The library wishes to support local authors and provide patrons access to unique materials relevant to Ravalli County and Western Montana while maintaining the necessary standards of its permanent collections. Self-published works which are donated to the library or recommended for purchase will be considered using the following criteria and processed using the following guidelines:

- Authors must be Ravalli County residents, or the book must take place in Ravalli County, or otherwise demonstrate a strong local interest. Priority for purchase or addition to the collection will be given to materials which would be added to the library's Montana Collection.
- Books must meet the existing collection development guidelines and these guidelines will be applied when selecting self-published works.
- Brief listing for the book will be created in the Library Catalog, so that borrowers may access the item by title or author.
- Books will be processed similar to other materials, including a barcode and BPL ownership marking.
- Items may be withdrawn after one year, unless they have circulated regularly.
- Materials that are donated become the property of the Bitterroot Public Library and as such cannot be returned to the donor.

Donation Policy

Gifts are a valuable source of enriching the library's service and collection. The Bitterroot Public Library encourages public support of the library by accepting donations, memorials, and gifts in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Donations of monetary gifts are encouraged. Monetary gifts for purchase of specific books or materials will be accepted when the requested purchase is in accordance with the standard, criteria and policy of the library. Monetary gifts designated for new and improved library services are accepted when the requested services are part of the library's plan or when the Library Director approves and determines the feasibility of the proposal.
- Donations of physical materials will be added to the collection only if they meet the same criteria required for purchased materials. Whenever a gift is no longer needed, it will be disposed of in the same manner as purchased materials.
- Receipts for donated materials are given to the donor upon request. The receipt shall be given for the number and types of items received. No monetary value will be placed upon gift items by the library; the donor will accept this responsibility.

Collection Maintenance

The Bitterroot Public Library strives to provide its community with a relevant, current, diverse, and dynamic collection that speaks to its needs. To complete this task, library staff continually reviews, evaluates and possibly discards materials not meeting our selection standards. Weeding is an effort to provide a responsive, living collection and not an outdated archive for our patrons. The selection and de-selection of materials is largely based on user demand and the guiding principles of our mission statement. Items that do not meet the goals of the library or that are no longer of use or interest to the library's patrons will be de-selected or weeded from the collection. A de-selection program is necessary for a healthy library for the following reasons:

- To save space.
- To improve access; an organized, stream-lined approach makes materials easier to find for patrons and librarians.
- To save money; it eliminates the costs of maintaining unused materials.
- To make room for new materials.
- Makes the library more aesthetically pleasing, increasing customer traffic.
- Enhances the collection for reputability and currency. Candidates for discarding are materials which contain outdated or inaccurate information, have been superseded by newer editions, are worn or damaged and/or are seldom used, unless the material is of historic or literary value. Withdrawn materials are disposed through organizations which include the Friends of the Library book sales or other appropriate non-profit agencies such as nursing homes or local detention centers.

Reconsideration of Materials

The Bitterroot Public Library acknowledges that occasional objections to materials will be made despite the care taken and the procedures followed in selection or rejection. Each request is taken seriously; the decision will be based solely upon whether the material is appropriately selected under the Collection Management Policy.

Only materials owned by the Bitterroot Public Library are subject to the Reconsideration of Materials process. Items owned by other libraries and available through resource sharing, such as Interlibrary Loan, are not eligible for reconsideration because they are not owned by the Bitterroot Public Library.

Materials being reviewed will not be removed or added during the review process.

Reconsideration requests will be addressed individually and in the order in which they are received.

The presence of material in the library does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the library board of trustees, staff or funding agencies.

To ensure intellectual freedom for our patrons, the Bitterroot Public Library Board of Trustees and library personnel support the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" (see Appendix).

Procedures for Reconsideration of Materials

1. Citizen's concerns about materials in the library shall be referred to the Library Director who shall attempt to resolve the concern informally.
2. If an informal resolution is not possible, the citizen shall be invited to complete and return a signed Reconsideration Request form (available upon request.)
    a. The citizen must be a current Bitterroot Public Library cardholder and be at least 18 years old.
    b. Separate forms shall be completed for each item to be reconsidered.
    c. In the absence of a fully completed form there is no complaint and no action shall be taken.
    d. Reconsideration will not occur if the material has been reconsidered in the last three years.
3. Upon receipt of a completed request form, the Chair of the Board of Trustees shall appoint a review committee, if one is not currently standing, and shall appoint a committee chair. The committee shall consist of the Chair of the Board of Trustees, one other trustee, the Library Director, one community library professional and one community member at large. The committee shall be appointed within 30 days of the receipt of the written comment request.
4. Each committee member shall review the material(s) or topic(s) in question and make an

individual assessment. Committee members shall follow the "Instructions to the Review Committee" (Appendix) and any other information which may be provided in the review packet. The committee shall complete the review in a reasonable length of time.

5. The Committee Chair shall arrange a meeting of the committee members to discuss the concern(s). The committee shall submit a written report, including its recommendation in the form of a resolution, to the Library Board of Trustees.
6. The resolution will be on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting at which the Board of Trustees shall vote to adopt or not to adopt the committee report in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall inform the citizen in writing of the Board's decision. The Board's decision is final.

Appendices

Instructions to the Review Committee

- Committee members shall study the information provided in the review packet. The packet shall include "Instructions to the Review Committee," the library's "Collection Management Policy" and any other pertinent material which may aid in making a decision.
- Committee members shall examine the material being reviewed in its entirety. Passages or parts should not be taken out of context. Each committee member shall consider the merits and the faults of the material based solely upon whether the material is appropriately selected under the Collection Management Policy and the citizen's action request to make an individual assessment.
- The Committee Chair shall arrange a meeting of the committee to discuss the concern(s). The committee shall submit a written report, including its recommendation in the form of a resolution, to the Library Board of Trustees. A minority report may be submitted.

First Amendment of the United States

Constitution Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. 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.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996