

## **MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY**

*(Revised and approved by the Board of Trustees of the G.A.R. Memorial Library – April 13, 2021)*

### **I. Objectives of the Library**

The G.A.R. Memorial Library of West Newbury ("Library") strives to fulfill the informational, educational, and recreational needs of its users by providing quality materials.

### **II. Responsibility for Materials Selection**

The Board of Library Trustees has the responsibility to adopt a Materials Selection Policy and hereby authorizes the Library Director to administer this Policy. The Director may designate staff to make material selection and acquisition decisions subject to the Director's approval. The Director allocates the materials budget annually.

Under the general supervision of the Library Director, the librarians select and withdraw Library materials. Librarians are qualified through training and experience; however they must of necessity work within limitations of space and budget. Recognizing that sensitivity to the needs and interests of the community is essential to the development of Library collections, the G.A.R. Memorial Library welcomes suggestions from patrons. However, librarians and the Library Director are solely responsible for determining the needs of the collection and making the final selection of materials.

### **III. Scope of the Collection**

The Library strives to provide materials that reflect the diverse educational, information, and recreational needs of its users. In so doing, the Library provides access to content through print, multimedia, and technology. The Library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that Library patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, materials are provided in a variety of formats, including:

- Print – such as hard cover books, paperback books, magazines, and newspapers
- Non-print – such as audio and video formats
- Digital resources – such as online databases, digital books, recordings and software programs
- Downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, magazines and videos
- Non-traditional items such as audiovisual equipment, technology (laptops, tablets, launchpads, and hot spots), tools, and other home materials

### **IV. Criteria for Materials Selection**

Librarians exercise judgment, experience, and expertise in the application of the following criteria, making acquisition decisions as objectively as possible and with due consideration of

the community needs and interests. The collection includes items representing a wide range of viewpoints, literary styles, and historical contexts, and an item will not necessarily be excluded from the collection because of frank or controversial content. Evaluation and selection of a candidate material or work includes the entire material or work, not just individual parts. Overall contribution to the collection is an important determinant for acceptance or rejection. No single criterion can be applied to all materials, and various criteria carry different weights in different circumstances. Contextual considerations including budget constraints, space availability, and interlibrary loan availability also shape the selection process.

The Library considers all materials acquisition, whether purchased or donated, in terms of the following criteria. An item does not have to meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable:

- Popularity and user demand
- Current usefulness or interest
- Authority and accuracy
- Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- Price and availability
- Format, durability, and ease of use
- Suitability of format for subject and user's needs
- Favorable reviews and inclusion in reputable resources, such as bibliographies, publishers' catalogs, and professional or trade journals

#### **V. Additional Materials Selection Policies for Children and Young Adults**

The Children's Collection is targeted to children from birth through age 11 and must meet the same criteria as all other materials selected for the Library's collections.

The children's collection strives to provide children with materials necessary to aid and enhance their personal and educational development. Some items may be included that are not considered appropriate for all children of all ages. While some materials may be too mature for one child, other children may be ready for them. Materials should exhibit no stereotypical attitudes, although new editions of classics and some titles which reflect the beliefs of other times or other cultures may be acceptable. Only the child and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) can decide what materials shall be used by that child, and neither the Library staff nor other Library users shall make these decisions for other people's children. Classroom textbooks and readers are not considered appropriate for the collection and are not generally purchased. The Library does typically attempt to provide supplementary materials to enrich the resources available to local students and teachers.

**The Young Adult Collection** is a collection targeted to the educational, recreational, and personal growth of patrons between the ages of 11 and 20. The focus of this collection is not only to provide a bridge between the children's and adult collections but also to reflect a variety of viewpoints, provide information on various sides of controversial or sensitive issues,

exemplify a range of genres and literary styles, offer materials spanning a wide scope of reading levels and maturity levels, and encourage the love of reading.

## **VI. Gifts**

Gifts of books and other materials in good condition are welcomed by the Library. However, material is accepted with the understanding that it may be used or disposed of as the Library unilaterally deems necessary or appropriate. Donated material will be checked to see if it meets the Library's criteria for selection. The Library does not make monetary appraisals or valuations of donated materials, nor does it assume the responsibility of returning to donors any items not added to the Library collection.

NOTE: Policies for considering acceptance of gifts of art or historical documents and objects are addressed in separate Board of Trustees policy statements, which are available upon request from the Library Director also via the Library's website.

## **VII. Maintaining the Library Collection - Routine Removal of Materials**

The same criteria will be used in removing (i.e., "weeding") materials from the collection as are used in materials acquisition. In order to maintain the collection in its most attractive and useful condition, the librarians will use their experience and professional judgment in routinely removing from the collection materials that are no longer useful or are not in a condition suitable for circulation. The Library will repair or rebind books that are in a deteriorating condition if appropriate. Books and other materials no longer currently useful to the Library may be given to other libraries or sold for the benefit of the Library.

## **VIII. Reconsideration of Library Materials**

The Library is willing to re-examine any item in the Library's collections. Library patrons may request reconsideration of Library materials by following the process for reconsidering materials owned by the Library outlines below. No item is to be removed or restricted because of a complaint except in accordance with this process.

The G.A.R. Memorial Library supports freedom and endorses the [American Library Association \(ALA\) Freedom to Read Statement](#), [Freedom to View Statement](#), the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and all relevant [Library Bill of Rights Interpretations](#). Patrons wishing reconsideration of library materials must complete the G.A.R. Memorial Library Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials and Programs Form in its entirety (Appendix G). Only signed forms will be considered.

The following steps shall be taken when a completed written request for reconsideration is properly submitted:

1. The Library Director shall review the reconsideration form and the material in question to determine whether the material or its selection follows the criteria stated in the G.A.R. Library Materials Selection policy.
2. Within 15 business days, the Director shall make a decision and send a letter stating the reasons for the decision by U.S. first class mail to the person who requested the reconsideration.
3. While a request for reconsideration is under consideration, the material in question shall remain in circulation in the library collection.
4. If the person who requested reconsideration wishes to appeal the Director's decision, s/he must submit a written appeal to the G.A.R. Library Board of Trustees within 10 business days of the postmark date on the Director's letter.
5. The Board of Trustees shall notify the individual when and where the Board will meet to review the request.
6. The Board of Trustees reserves the right at such a meeting to limit the length of comments by the person submitting the appeal and the public.
7. Neither the Library Director nor any other staff member shall remove the item from circulation until this process is complete.
8. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.
9. Any withdrawn book shall be donated to the Friends of the Library for disposal according to its discretion.
10. A copy of the reconsideration request form, the Director's decision, and the Board of Trustees decision (if any) without identifying patron information will be mailed to the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee after the reconsideration process has concluded.

Appendices:

G. Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials or Programs Form