

Program Development Policy

Purpose of the Policy

This Program Development Policy upholds the mission and goals of the G.A.R. Memorial Library by setting guidelines for the planning and operation of Library programs and events. It is also used to inform the public about standards and principles that are applied to the program selection and management process.

Library Mission Statement

The mission of the G.A.R. Memorial Library, as a tax-supported public library, is to strengthen community connections and enrich civil society through programs, services, and collections designed to cultivate literacy, civic engagement, and cultural appreciation, as well as to preserve West Newbury's unique identity, history, and sense of place. *Approved by the G.A.R. Memorial Library Board of Trustees September 13, 2022.*

Responsibility for Program Development

Responsibility for program development rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. Program planning and facilitating is conducted by the Library Director and other staff members based on their job responsibilities and areas of expertise. The Library Director and staff members are guided by this policy and utilize professional skills, collections, equipment, facilities, and feedback from the community in planning and delivering library programs.

Program Types and Objectives

The G.A.R. Memorial Library defines a program as an activity or event in a group setting, developed to meet the educational, social, recreational, cultural, or informational needs of community members. Programs can be a single event, a short series, or continuously recurring.

Programs may include, but are not limited to: lectures, forums, visual and performance art, interactive classes or workshops, continuing education, fairs, discussion groups, technology programs, story times, class visits, library tours, community outreach, exhibits, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or recreational purposes.

Programs may take place at the Library, offsite locations, and online and may be delivered by Library staff or library partners. Programs may be live-streamed or recorded for later playback, either in person or via web-enabled technologies.

Criteria for Program Development and Selection

When making decisions regarding program selection, content, presenters, and related resources, the Library Director and library staff will consider the following:

- Relevance to the Library’s mission, strategic plan, and service goals
- Community needs and interests, including feedback and suggestions from West Newbury constituents
- Potential to promote, supplement, and encourage the use of Library collections and resources
- Presentation quality as evidenced by presenter’s background, record of presentation, and qualifications in content area
- Historical, cultural, or educational significance
- Space required, and the availability of that space
- Available budget
- Available staffing
- Balance in light of other programs currently being offered at the Library
- Connection to other community programs, exhibitions, or events outside the Library
- Safety of patrons and staff
- National and local observances, commemorative months, and initiatives (e.g., National Library Week, Women’s History Month, Veterans Day, etc.)

The Library reserves the right to decline a program for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, staffing, budgetary constraints, space, scheduling, or lack of compliance with this or other Library policies.

Program Funding and Financial Restrictions

The Library receives funding for library programs through grants and support from charitable organizations that support the Library. The Library may also partner with other institutions, organizations, or individuals to offer Library programs. Library programs are open to the public and offered free of charge. At the discretion of the Library Director, a fee may be instituted to programs and goods that benefit the Library including book sales, raffles, and other types of fundraising.

Library programs are non-commercial in nature. Programs may not be used for the direct solicitation of business. Presenters and performers, whether individual or organizational, shall not use a Library program to petition, advertise, or recruit members or customers. While the Library welcomes professional experts to present at its events, Library programs cannot be used to directly further commercial, religious, political, or partisan financial purposes, except as specified below.

- Presenters may receive permission from the Library Director to sell creative works as part of a Library program. Sale of these works and/or other products at Library programs is not permitted unless specifically authorized beforehand by the Library Director or their designee.
- Presenters are permitted to have business-related brochures, flyers, or other information available for attendees to pick up if interested. However, presenters cannot distribute such materials as part of the event.

- Presenters may donate their creative work to the Library for possible inclusion in the collection, subject to either the Library's Material Selection Policy or the Art Gift Acceptance Policy.
- Programs sponsored by charitable organizations whose purpose and mission are to directly support the G.A.R. Memorial Library may include the sale of merchandise as a means to fundraise for the sole benefit the Library.

Program Presenters and Co-Hosts

The Library Director has the responsibility and full discretion for contacting potential program presenters and for scheduling programs. The Library Director may delegate this responsibility to library staff as necessary. Anyone interested in presenting a program may submit a written proposal that will be reviewed by the Library Director and staff using this policy as a guideline.

The Library welcomes informal cooperation with individuals or organizations that promote civic engagement and support the Library's mission and strategic goals and may choose to co-host programs with these persons or organizations. Co-hosts must comply with all Library policies. Co-hosts may receive acknowledgement in Library-generated publicity materials.

Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by presenters or participants. The G.A.R. Memorial Library offers a wide variety of materials and programs to support its mission of providing cultural and learning opportunities to all. The Library respects the freedom of information of its users and adheres to the principles expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements. All presenters must adhere to these principles and to the policies of the Library on intellectual freedom. The Library Director has the authority to terminate a program at any point should presenters or co-hosts fail to adhere to these policies.

Open Access to Programs

All library-initiated programs are open to the public, but some meetings and programs may be designed with specific audiences in mind, such as programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their interests and needs. Adults who wish to attend a program specifically designed for children must be accompanied by a child. Tween and teen programs are limited to tweens and teens only, except when they require an adult assistant or companion. Programs targeted toward specific audiences are to be publicized as such. Parents and guardians are responsible for overseeing their minor children's program attendance and use of the Library's collections and services. The G.A.R. Memorial Library does not stand in place of a parent and is not charged with a parent's rights, duties, and responsibilities.

Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, when safety, cost, or the success of a program requires it, attendance may be limited. In these situations, admittance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either through advance registration or at the door. The Library reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone

becoming disruptive or disrespectful to audience members or the program facilitator and to anyone in violation of other Library policies.

Program Cancellations

Programs may be cancelled for any reason, including severe weather, absence of the presenter, or low registration. Cancelled programs are not automatically rescheduled. When possible, advanced notification of program cancellations will be made on the Library's online calendar of events and by other appropriate communication channels.

Reconsideration of Program Scheduling

Concerns about programs scheduled at the Library or materials directly related to these programs may be expressed by filling out and submitting a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials or form at least 2 weeks in advance of the scheduled program date and otherwise in sufficient time for reconsideration. Forms must be submitted in writing to the attention of the Library Director either in person or c/o G.A.R. Memorial Library, 490 Main St., West Newbury MA 01985; forms may also be submitted electronically via email. If time permits, patrons submitting a Request for Reconsideration will be given copies of the relevant G.A.R. Memorial Library policy, including, as appropriate, the ALA Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Freedom to Read Statement, and the ALA Freedom to View Statement. Anonymous requests for reconsideration will not be considered, nor will submissions from individuals or stakeholders not residing or located in West Newbury, MA. During the reconsideration process, the program will remain as scheduled.

A request for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Library Director or their designee, who will respond in writing to the patron initiating the request. The patron may choose to appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final.

Approved G.A.R. Library Board of Trustees July 11, 2023