

Wayne County Public Library Materials Selection Policy

Introduction

The Board of Trustees of the Wayne County Public Library has adopted the following materials selection policy to guide librarians and to inform the public of the principles upon which the selections are made.

The intent of the Wayne County Public Library is to make high-interest, high-demand materials readily available, as well as to actively support the lifelong learning and information needs of community residents of all ages and abilities.

The Library supports the individual's right to have access to ideas and information representing all points of view. The Board of Trustees of the Wayne County Public Library has adopted the American Library Association's **LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS** and **THE FREEDOM TO READ** statements, attached herewith.

Objectives

The Wayne County Public Library acquires and makes available materials which inform, educate, entertain, and enrich persons as individuals and members of society. Since it is not possible for any library to acquire all materials, it is necessary for every library to employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. The Library provides, within its financial limitations, a general collection of reliable materials embracing broad areas of knowledge. Included are works of enduring value as well as timely materials on current issues. Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based on community needs, both those expressed and those inferred from study of community demographics and evidence of areas of interest.

New formats shall be considered for the collection when, by industry report, national survey results and evidence from local requests, a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use of the format. Availability of items in the format, the cost per item, and the Library's ability to acquire and handle the items will also be factors in determining when a new format will be collected. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the Library's collections.

Impartiality and judicious selection shall be exercised in all materials acquisition practices. Allocation of the materials budget and the number of items purchased for each area of the collection will be determined by indicators of use, the average cost per item, and objectives for development of the collection. The Library will be aware of the resources available in surrounding libraries and will develop its collection with this in mind. In general, scholarly, highly specialized, or archival materials are beyond the scope of the Library's collections.

Responsibility For Selection

Ultimate responsibility for the selection of library materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. Those staff members who are qualified by reason of education, training, or experience share this responsibility. The Supervisors oversee the selection process and ensure that selectors' choices reflect the Materials Selection Policy of the Wayne County Public Library. The Supervisors make appropriate selection tools available. The Technical Services Supervisor tracks the materials budget to ensure a flow of new materials throughout the year, according to budget allocation. Suggestions from staff members not directly involved with selection are encouraged and given serious consideration in the selection process.

Criteria For Selection

Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, involving a general knowledge of the subject and its important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, an awareness of the bibliographies on the subject, and a recognition of the needs of the community.

To build a well-balanced collection of merit and significance, materials in all forms must be measured by objective guidelines. Since the library does not promote particular beliefs or views, the collection will contain various positions on important questions, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The Library actively strives to ensure that materials representing many differing views and a broad diversity of human thought and creativity are represented in its collection. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not necessarily an equality of numbers.

Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy. Therefore, selections will be based upon principle rather than personal opinion, reason rather than prejudice, and judgment rather than censorship. Responsibility for choosing what an individual will read rests with the individual. Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and young adults rests with their parents or legal guardians.

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following standards. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. Several standards and combinations of standards may be used, as some materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit, while others are considered because of scholarship, value as human documents, or ability to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

(1) *General criteria:*

Existing collection needs

Relevance to community needs

Customer demand

Significant or reputable author or publisher

Attention of critics and reviewers

Important human or social insight

Representation of current ideas, events, or mores

(2) *Criteria for non-fiction works:*

Accurate, clear and logical presentation

Comprehensive and complete treatment

Author's qualifications

Of lasting value or current need

Original point of view

(3) Criteria for fiction works:

Vitality and originality

Artistic presentation or experimentation

Well developed plot and characterization

Authentic setting

Representation of important genre or trend

(4) Selection may also be limited by the following factors:

Physical limitations of the building

Price and format

Availability of low-demand materials in other library collections

(5) Selection of library materials will not be influenced by:

The possibility that they may come into the possession of children or young adults.

The liability of materials to theft or mutilation.

Tools used in selection include professional journals, trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' promotional materials and reviews from reputable sources. Purchase suggestions from library customers are welcome and are given serious consideration.

Donations And Gifts

Donations of materials are gratefully accepted with the understanding that the Library may add them to the collection if they meet established standards for purchased materials, with emphasis on currency, physical condition, and need. All gifts added to the collection must be available for public use. Materials not added to the collection will be given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale or disposed of by other means. The library cannot place a monetary value on gifts for tax purposes, but receipts are provided upon request.

Since most publications of fraternal, club, and service organizations are of interest only to members, these will be accepted only if they have a broader appeal to a general audience.

Gifts of funds are always welcome and may be designated as memorials. Gifts of non-library items such as portraits or art objects ordinarily will not be accepted.

Withdrawal Of Materials

An attractive, up-to-date, currently useful collection is maintained through a continual discarding and replacing process. Materials may be withdrawn from the library collection after careful consideration of these factors:

- physical condition
- currency of information
- lack of use
- superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject

Materials withdrawn from the collection may be given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale or disposed of by other means. Individual items that are being withdrawn may not be saved for specific individuals.

Requests For Reconsideration

The choice of library materials by library users is an individual matter. While an individual may reject materials for himself/herself, he/she cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others. Recognizing that a diversity of materials may result in some requests for reconsideration, the following procedures have been developed to assure that objections or complaints are handled in an attentive and consistent manner. Once an item has been approved for purchase, based on the selection policy of the Board of Trustees and the criteria for selection, it will not be automatically removed upon request. (See Addendum 1)

Addendum 1 Procedure Request For Reconsideration

A. Any individual expressing an objection to or concern about library material should receive respectful attention from the staff member first approached. This staff member should offer the option of speaking with a supervisor or filling out a "Request for Reconsideration" form. He/she may ask for a reconsideration in the following manner:

- 1) A "Request for Reconsideration" form (see Addendum 2) must be completed and returned to a staff member at the appropriate service desk. The form will be given to the department supervisor or branch manager, who will forward a copy of the form to the Library Director. The Director may respond in writing to the individual, advising him/her that there will be reconsideration of the item and enclosing a copy of the "Selection Policy of the Wayne County Public Library".

- 2) The Director will appoint an ad hoc committee including but not limited to the appropriate supervisor and the selector for the subject area to reconsider the item. The supervisor will send the reviewers copies of the form and any reviews that the supervisor has located.

- 3) The reviewers will put their comments in writing to the appropriate supervisor prior to meeting to discuss the title.

- 4) The supervisor will convene a meeting of the reviewing committee, compile the comments, and forward the comments and reviews to the Director, along with a recommendation.

- 5) The Director will then make a decision regarding the disposition of the material. The Director will communicate this decision, along with the reasons for it, in writing to the individual who initiated the request.

B. If the individual desires further action, he/she may appeal in writing to the Library Board of Trustees, requesting a hearing before the Board. If a hearing is granted, the individual will be notified of when he/she may address the Board. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. (Delete -The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Wayne County Public Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director.)The Board will evaluate the request for reconsideration in the context of stated policies and procedures and will uphold or override the decision of the Director. The Board's decision is final.