

BURLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY

Accepted 3/10/99; Revised 6/10/04

GENERAL

The Library seeks to acquire, organize and make easily available materials, which meet ongoing or anticipated educational, cultural and recreational needs of Burlington's residents and business community. Library materials and information come in a wide variety of formats, therefore all formats will be considered in selection.

Basic to the Library's Material Selection Policy is the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association. Both are appended to this document.

RESPONSIBILITY

Parents, guardians and caretakers have the exclusive responsibility of determining what their child may read, view or hear.

Ultimate responsibility for the Library's collection rests with the Board of Trustees. Under the direction of the Board, the Library Director manages the collection development and material selection. The Library Director delegates material selection activities to senior members of the staff.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Collection development decisions are made on the basis of staff judgment and expertise, and by evaluating reviews in library reviewing journals and other library selection tools. In selecting materials for the library collections, librarians use the following general criteria in no particular order.

- Appropriateness to library's mission and service roles
- Levels of funding and cost of item
- Community interests and needs
- Quality and usefulness of a work's text, illustrations, photos, maps, index, binding, etc., for the intended audience
- Suitability of format for user's need and subject including nature of medium, and technical quality of the production for non-print formats
- Reputation of author, illustrator, or publisher
- Contribution to diversity or breadth of the collection
- Historical significance
- Availability elsewhere for costly or specialized materials

In no case is any material excluded on the basis of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or political or religious views.

The Library will provide, as far as possible, reasoned, well-written materials on all sides of controversial issues. These shall not be proscribed or removed from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

The Library does not generally purchase or accept donations of materials, which are solely in languages other than English unless community demand deems it necessary. As part of the Library's long term planning process, surveys are conducted to measure community demand.

GIFTS

The Library welcomes gifts of materials with the understanding that they will be evaluated for acceptance into the collection under the same general criteria as new materials.

Gift materials not acceptable for the collection will be dealt with in the manner most beneficial to the Library.

The Library does not accept special collections with the condition that they are kept together as a separate physical entity. Valuable items (by independent appraisal) or extensive collections will be accepted only with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Monetary gifts for memorial purchases are welcome. Library staff will make the selection in consultation with the donor and/or family of the deceased.

REMOVAL OF OLD MATERIALS/REPLACEMENT

To keep the collection up-to-date, useful and appealing, material is removed when it becomes outdated, superseded or unused, or when its physical condition makes it unsuitable for the collection.

Works of local historical value are not subject to the above criteria.

Materials which are lost or withdrawn because of damage or wear are considered for replacement by either title or subject matter under the same criteria as new materials.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

All complaints concerning library materials must be documented on the Request for Reconsideration of Title or Item form, signed by the complainant and given to the Library Director who will respond in writing within 30 days. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the complainant may request consideration by the Board of Trustees.

Any meeting with a complainant will be conducted in a business-like manner. If the complainant meets with the Board of Trustees, the meeting will be subject to the open meeting law.