Collection Policy

This policy exists to guide the Library Director in selecting materials and to inform the public about the principles guiding collection development decisions. Responsibility for collection development lies with the Library Director and/or his/her designee(s) applying professional knowledge, experience, and this policy in making decisions.

Collection Development

The West Branch Public Library provides free service to all individuals in the community, both children and adults. Its objectives include the provision of expertly selected materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, culture, and recreation.

Materials selected for the collection will meet both the current and long-term needs of West Branch residents of all ages. The library strives to offer the widest possible range of subjects and views in a variety of formats, treatments, and levels of difficulty, within the limits of cost and space and considering current holdings and demand. Collection development will support priorities of the library's long-term plan.

The library subscribes to the principles embodied in the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements adopted by the American Library Association (ALA). Including materials in the collection does not constitute endorsement of their contents. The library recognizes that any given item may offend some patrons, but, because the library follows accepted principles of intellectual freedom, it will not remove specific titles solely because individuals or groups may find them objectionable. Responsibility for materials used by children rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection of materials for the collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate.

The library welcomes suggestions and comments from the public and will consider requested materials of reasonable cost and value to the collection for acquisition. Specialized resources available in other local libraries will not be needlessly duplicated. The library adds curricular materials only when these also serve the general public. The library participates in programs designed to provide patrons access to materials not owned, such as interlibrary loan, reciprocal borrowing agreements, and access to internet resources.

Request for Reconsideration

Patrons who wish to object to materials in the library's collection may do so by requesting a challenge packet, which includes the Library Bill of Rights, ALA Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, Collection Policy, and a reconsideration form. Completed reconsideration forms will be considered at the next regularly-scheduled library board of trustees meeting or at the meeting of a special committee designated by the Library Board of Trustees.

Forms must be received at least 24 hours prior to the meeting to be considered. Challenged materials will not be removed from the public shelves while awaiting resolution of a request for reconsideration.

Collection Maintenance

To ensure that the library's collection is up-to-date and relevant to the community's needs, the usefulness of materials previously added to the collection is reevaluated on a regular basis. Materials will be withdrawn if they are out-of-date, badly worn, damaged, or no longer being used. Space, the cost of replacement, and the appearance of the collection are also factors. Locally significant materials are not held to these standards and are generally retained. Withdrawn materials may be sold, recycled, or discarded.

Gifts

The Library accepts gifts of books, DVDs, CDs, and other media formats that are also available in the library collection. Gifts may be considered by the library for inclusion into the library collection if they meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. The library staff reserves the right to decline gifts and to decide when a gift previously added to the collection will be withdrawn. Gifts not added to the collection may be accepted on behalf of the Friends of the West Branch Public Library for the purpose of book sales benefiting the library and all donations of such materials become property of the Friends upon receipt.

Donations may also include monetary gifts. Contributions by corporate or philanthropic organizations; bequests or gifts by will or trust; memorial donations; securities, allocations or distributions from external foundations or investment entities; or real estate, will be deposited to the West Branch Public Library Trust & Agency Account and administered by the Library Board.

All gifts are subject to review by the Library Director, Trustees and/or their representatives to ensure that the donation meets with the spirit and intention of the library’s mission. Restrictions may not be placed on gifts or donations, unless approved in advance by the Library Director and/or his/her designee.

In the case of cash gifts for the purchase of memorial books or other materials, the selection will be made by the donor in consultation with Library staff. The name of the donor and/or person memorialized will be entered on a bookplate if so requested. Memorial items are subject to the same collection maintenance criteria outlined above and the Library will not be responsible for notifying donors of withdrawal or replacement of gift items.

Monetary gifts are also accepted through the Friends of the West Branch Public Library.

Gifts are tax-deductible but library staff may not set fair market or appraisal values for donated materials. Receipts are available upon request.

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