

## II. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY (*Amended 01/11/18*)

### A. Mission Statement

Washington Free Public Library believes in the freedom to read and learn, and the freedom to compare and express ideas. WFPL strives to provide educational, cultural and social enrichment for all residents of the city of Washington and surrounding areas.

### B. Purpose

This policy is a guide for Library staff in their selection decisions and a source of information for the public about how materials are selected and how the collection is developed.

### C. Responsibility

1. The Library Board of Trustees agrees to support the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read*, and *Freedom to View* statements as part of the Library's selection principles (see Resources).
2. Community and individual participation in collection development are encouraged and given serious consideration.
3. Selecting materials according to the Board's policy is the responsibility of the Director. The Director authorizes staff members qualified by training and experience to apply the policy to day-to-day decisions.
4. Questions about the policy or its execution should be referred to the Director.

### D. Selection Criteria

1. Selection of Library materials, whether purchased or donated, is based upon the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community but is limited by factors such as materials budgets, space, and content of existing collections.
2. Each potential acquisition must be considered in terms of its own excellence and the audience for whom it is intended. There is no single standard that can be applied in all acquisition decisions. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value as human documents; others are selected to satisfy the recreational or informational needs of the community.
3. Expanding areas of knowledge, changing social values, technological advances, and cultural differences require flexibility, open-mindedness, and responsiveness in the evaluation and re-evaluation of all Library materials.
4. In order to build collections of merit, all acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, will be considered according to the following general and specific criteria listed below. All criteria are measured by the professional judgment, knowledge and experience of the Washington Public Library staff and include use of the resources listed under Section VIII along with professional journals such as *School Library Journal*, *American Libraries*, and *Forecast*.
  - a. General Criteria for the Evaluation of Library Materials:
    - Attention of critics, reviews, and public
    - Present and potential relevance to community needs
    - Prizes, awards, or honors received
    - Relation to existing collection and other material on subject
    - Reputation and/or significance of author, producer, artist, etc.
    - Suitability of format for Library use

- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- b. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Non-Fiction:
  - Authority of author, producer, artist, etc.
  - Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
  - Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
  - Contribution of the work to balance the collection
  - Objectivity and integrity
  - Representation of challenging works, including extreme and/or minority points of view
- c. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Fiction:
  - Artistic expression, presentation, and experimentation
  - Effective characterization, plot, setting, or theme
  - Representation of important movement, genre, trend, or national culture
  - Sustained interest
  - Vitality and originality

#### 5. Gifts

The Library encourages gifts of materials or money to purchase them. Gift materials will be evaluated according to the criteria listed above to determine suitability for inclusion in the Library's collection. Donors will be informed that materials not selected for inclusion in the Library's collection will be disposed of. More information can be found under the Library's general Gifts Policy.

#### 6. Unique Collections

Genealogy, Local, and Family History – The Washington County Genealogical Society, Washington County Historical Society, and Washington DAR all have collections within the Grayson Archives room in the lower level of the Library. These materials are added and removed according to each organization's policies, and are not subject to the Library's Collection Development policy.

### E. Comments and Criticism of the Collection

1. Because of the rich diversity of human experience and opinion, it is inevitable that some materials in the Library's collection will be objectionable to some people in the community. The Library, in a very real sense, belongs to the whole community—to the minority as well as to the majority.
2. The Library staff and the Library Board welcome comments and criticisms of the collection as a whole or of individual items. Persons are welcome to meet with the Director and then attend Library Board meetings to discuss the statement of purpose, selection policy, Library collection as a whole, and individual items in the collection or available through the Library.
3. Procedure followed to express concern:
  - a. Complete a "Reconsideration of Library Materials Request" form and submit it to the Director.
  - b. The Director will research the request and material(s) and will provide a written decision to the requestor and the Library Board within 30 days.
  - c. If unsatisfied with the Director's decision, the requestor may appeal the decision before the Library Board of Trustees.
  - d. The Library Board has the final decision in material requests.

### F. Access

1. The Library does not restrict access to Library materials except for the express purpose of protecting material from mutilation and theft. Materials are shelved for the convenience of their

general audience and according to shelf space. Children, young adults, and adults may use any items in the Library collection.

2. Parents or guardians, not the Library or its staff, are responsible for the materials accessed by children. At the request of parents and guardians, Library staff can put restrictive messages on youth accounts, however due to the large amount of traffic in the facility Library staff can make no guarantees that restrictions will be heeded at all times.

## G. Withdrawing Materials

Weeding is an essential and accepted part of Library collection development. Obsolescence, use, damage, and normal wear and tear make the withdrawal of materials a continuous process. The withdrawn materials are sold, traded, destroyed, or disposed of in any way the Director and Library Board deem appropriate.

## H. Resources

Alabaster, Carol. *Developing an Outstanding Core Collection: A Guide for Libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association, 10.

Evans, G. Edward. *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, Third Edition. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1995.

"The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 06.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

"The Freedom to View Statement", American Library Association, January 10, 1990.

<http://www.ala.org/rt/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview>

Hughes-Hassell, Sandra, and Jacqueline C. Mancall. *Collection Management for Youth: Responding to the Needs of Learners*. Chicago: American Library Association, 05.

Johnson, Peggy. *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*, Third Edition. Chicago: American Library Association, 14.

"Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, June 30, 06.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>