

Collection Development and Management Policy

Purpose of the Policy

The Altoona Public Library supports and connects Altoona residents by providing free and unrestricted access to information, materials, and services that contribute to lifelong learning and enjoyment for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Altoona Public Library provides print and non-print materials for educational, informational, recreational, and cultural purposes. The collection is a diverse and unbiased source of information that addresses individual and community needs and interests.

The library strives to build a collection of popular and current interest materials, as well as materials with enduring value. Because of the volume of publishing, as well as budget and space constraints, the library must have a collection development and management policy. This policy is used by the library staff for the selection, withdrawal, and reconsideration of library materials. It also serves to acquaint the public with the principles of materials selection.

The ultimate responsibility for collection management rests with the Library Director. The Library Director will operate within the framework of the policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees in all collection management and development decisions.

Selection

The actual task of selection of materials has been delegated to the Library Director or other qualified designee who chooses materials for residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The Library Director uses a variety of resources to select materials for the collection such as: professional journals and reviews, material demand levels, and requests from patrons. When evaluating items for selection, consideration will be given to, but not be limited by, the following criteria:

- Is the item in popular demand?
- Is the item relevant?
- Existing library holdings. Does the item contribute to a useful, balanced, and diverse library collection?
- Is the item's information current/up to date?
- Is the item's information grounded in good scholarship?
- Is the format suitable for the collection and for community needs?
- Does the item's purchase fit into the library's budget?

The collection should reflect the diversity of people and their experiences worldwide. The collection should also contain various positions expressed on important or controversial questions, including unpopular or controversial beliefs or views. This provides an arena for individuals to freely examine issues and to make independent

decisions. Selection of a given item for the library's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

The library's policy of selecting materials is intended to make available materials that reflect a range of opinions, interests, experiences, and expressions. The library's role is not to endorse or censor materials, but rather to make diverse materials available to members of the Altoona community.

The selection of library materials takes into consideration, but is not limited to, the following factors:

- Materials are judged on the work as a whole, not on a single part, section, or sentence that may be taken out of context.
- Professional reviews of the material(s) by persons with specialized knowledge of the subject matter presented. The lack of a review, or an unfavorable review, is not sufficient to refuse consideration of material(s) for purchase.
- Public appeal and/or local, community, and regional interest.
- Reputation of the author and/or publisher of the material(s)
- Relevance of the material(s) to the existing library collection, while respecting collection balance and diversity of viewpoints.
- Availability of the same or similar material(s) in the MORE Library Consortium.
- Budget and/or space constraints.
- Date of publication and/or copyright.
- Quality and effectiveness of the material(s) under consideration.

The library's primary, but not exclusive, sources of reviews are Booklist, ALA recommended lists, area newspapers, the New York Times Best Sellers/Review of Books, book seller reviews, and other library journals. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for not selecting a title which meets other selection criteria. The library also depends heavily, but not exclusively, upon library user demand for materials when making purchasing decisions.

Intellectual Freedom

The Library and the Library Board of Trustees uphold the democratic right of all Americans to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. We support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thoughts and ideas. The Library Board of Trustees considers reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. The Library Board of Trustees believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and

responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).

The Library and the Library Board of Trustees adhere to the principles stated in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement published by the American Library Association (Appendices A, B, C, D, pp.37-46). The Library Board of Trustees has also adopted a Resolution Against Book Bans (Appendix E, p.47). These supporting documents can be found as appendices at the end of this policy manual.

The library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained to help people find the materials they want. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned.

Constitutional Protection

The Library Board of Trustees considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Wisconsin State Constitution. If a court having jurisdiction over the Altoona Public Library decides that any material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material will be removed. Materials under court consideration will remain available to patrons until a final court ruling is made and after all appeals are exhausted.

Gifts & Donations

Generally, the Library does not accept donations of used books or other materials due to space and time limitations. However, the Director may accept a limited number of new or current lightly used donations by applying the same criteria as would be applied to the purchase of new materials. The Director must deem them needed and/or appropriate for the collection per this collection development policy. Likewise, memorial gifts of specific book titles or other items may be accepted after consultation with the Library Director. When funds are gifted specifically for materials, but no specific title or item is requested, the Library Director will make the selection according to this policy.

Withdrawal/Weeding

A current, attractive, and useful collection is maintained through a process of continual withdrawal and replacement called weeding. Items may be withdrawn based on these criteria: lack of item demand, item's physical condition, current relevance or accuracy, usefulness, publishing date, availability of newer or more valid materials, and space limitations.

Withdrawn materials will be donated to the Friends of the Altoona Public Library annual book sale and the ongoing book sale within the library. The Friends of the Altoona Public Library may donate unsold materials to other MORE Consortium libraries, local resale establishments, or choose to recycle or dispose of the materials. This ongoing process is authorized by the Board of Trustees and is the responsibility of the Library Director.

Review/Reconsideration of Materials

Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitability for the library collection. The library will challenge the censorship of any materials in an effort to provide complete and accurate information on all sides of an issue and to foster intellectual freedom.

Parents and legal guardians always have the right and the responsibility to educate their minor children about the books and other materials that may be best for them. No other adult should make those decisions for other parents' or guardians' children.

Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

Procedure for Requesting Material Review/Reconsideration

Library users with a concern about a material owned by the library may:

- Complete a "Request for Materials Review/Reconsideration" form which is available for download at www.altoonapubliclibrary.org, or a paper copy may be obtained directly from the library.
- Submit the completed request form to the Library Director in the supplied envelope.
- Attend Altoona Public Library Board meetings.

The *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form is included as an Appendix to this policy, and copies of the form may be obtained from the Altoona Public Library circulation desk.

Library Response:

- The Library Director reviews the request and presents its findings to the Library Board of Trustees.

- Alternately, the Director may request that Library Board President appoint an ad hoc committee comprised of three (3) Library Board of Trustees; none of whom posed the challenge, is related to the challenger, or is affiliated with the organization bringing the challenge; to review the request with the Director and to present findings to the full Library Board of Trustees.
- In all cases, materials are to be judged based on the entire work, not on selected excerpts.
- The individual requesting material review will be notified of meeting dates.
- The library item under review shall remain in place and accessible throughout the entirety of the process.
- One copy of the final report from the Library Board of Trustees shall be given to the petitioner, one copy to the Library Director, and one copy shall remain in the Library Board of Trustees' official records. The decision of the Library Board of Trustees will be final.
- Requests to reconsider materials, which have previously undergone the reconsideration process, will not be reevaluated unless more than 60 months (five years) have passed since completion of the last review.
- See appendices for the full text of ALA resolutions and statements, as well as further information regarding them.

Collection Development and Management Policy approved by the Altoona Public Library Board of Trustees on September 19th, 2023.