

PROSPECT LIBRARY - COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

OBJECTIVES

The Board of Directors of the Prospect Public Library recognizes that within Prospect there are individuals with diverse interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, social values, and needs. The Board further recognizes that the Library needs to serve and provide materials to all of the people of Prospect regardless of their age, race, creed, national origin, or political or social views.

The library collection will strive to provide an unbiased and diverse source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. The objectives of the Prospect Public Library are to select, organize, preserve, and make freely and easily available to the people of the community print and non-print materials, within the limitations of space and budget. The collection is intended to provide individual access to information and materials in various formats to serve a wide variety of needs.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Responsibility for the development of the collection rests with the Library Director under the authority of the Prospect Library Board of Directors. The Library Director utilizes qualified staff to help choose materials based on accepted standards of material selection using standard reviewing sources. Suggestions from library users are always welcome and given serious consideration.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each item will be considered for its value, its format, and the audience for which it is intended. No single criterion is applicable to all purchase decisions. Librarians apply their judgment and experience in selecting material according to criteria listed below. All criteria do not apply to each item. Works of imagination, (i.e. fiction), are judged by different standards than are works of information and opinion, (i.e. nonfiction). Materials are judged as a whole rather than on isolated passages.

Examples of criteria are but not limited to:

- Relevance to present or anticipated needs and interests of the community;
- Permanent value as a resource material;
- Relation to existing material in the library;
- Suitability of format for library use in this community;
- Literary style, accuracy of information, reputation of the author;
- Need for multiple copies of materials in high demand;
- Price and availability of funds.

Electronic resources enhance the Library's collection by providing convenient access to expanded and consolidated information. Databases and Internet access enable the Library to provide new technologies, which are essential tools for information delivery.

All of the above criteria relevant to the selection of materials in traditional formats apply to electronic resources as well. However, because machine-readable formats require nontraditional means of acquisition, storage, and access, some additional criteria will be considered:

- Ease of access and number of access points;
- Hardware and software requirements, including maintenance;
- Vendor support and contractual requirements;
- Comparison of content with other formats available;
- Ownership of product;
- Staff training and/or patron assistance;
- Cost and availability of the product format.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of the collection includes discarding, replacement, rebinding and repair. If an item is lost or damaged, it may not necessarily be replaced depending upon the number of duplicate copies or similar materials in the collection, existence of adequate coverage of the subject field, and demand for the specific author, title or subject. It is sometimes preferable to purchase current materials rather than replace older ones. The Director and/or Designee serves as arbiter in such instances.

WEEDING

Weeding is a term used by libraries to describe the removal of materials from their collections. Such items may contain outdated or inaccurate information, have multiple duplicate copies, may no longer circulate, inconsistent with evolving community standards or in poor condition. Weeding is performed as a regular, ongoing process by qualified staff and the Library Director in the interest of keeping all collections current and useful. Weeded materials in good condition may be sold, donated, or disposed of however the Library deems appropriate. Generally, standard titles of permanent value and materials of local significance are spared weeding even if they may meet the criteria for so doing.

GIFTS

The Library welcomes gifts of books and other materials for the collection and applies to them the same standards of selection that govern purchases. Gift materials are accepted with the understanding that those that meet the Library's selection criteria may be retained and those that do not may be redistributed to the Friends of the Prospect Library, other non-profit organizations; (See the Library's Gifts Policy Page on the Library website for more information).

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIAL

- The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by some patrons. Selections of new material will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall library patron community.
- Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and teens. Materials may be reassigned among these sub-collections based on the age appropriateness of the content. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children.

- Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion concerning materials in its collection. A Prospect Library cardholder who wishes that a specific item be reconsidered for inclusion in the collection, that is to say removed, is asked to complete and submit the **REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL FORM**; available online via the Library's website, Front desk or Library Director's Office

Written requests for reconsideration of items will be directed to the attention of the Library Director, who will review the item at issue and perform such investigation as deemed necessary. The Library Director will report on the request for reconsideration at the next scheduled meeting of the Library Board of Directors. The Library Board will review the request for reconsideration and will determine whether any action will be taken. The final authority regarding removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Directors. The Director will notify of the Board's decision by letter to the individual who made the request for reconsideration.

A resource that has previously been reconsidered by request will be exempt from additional requests for reconsideration for two years. The Library Director shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for reconsideration during that two year time period.

ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION

The Library Board considers reading, listening and viewing to be individual, private matters. 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 by the Library. 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 collection will be organized, marked and maintained to help patron find the materials they want. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or subject matter will not be sanctioned. Library materials may be sequestered for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft. The Library Board supports the *Library Bill of Rights* and endorses the *ALA Freedom to Read* and *Freedom to View* statements.

Adopted by the Prospect Public Library Board of Directors – October 12, 2023

Susan McKernan,
Library Board Chair