

# **Westwood Public Library**

## **Collection Development Policy**

### **A. Purpose**

The Westwood Public Library exists to serve the needs of the public for information, informal education, leisure pursuits, and all activities that further individuals in their growth and understanding of themselves and the world around them. To this end, the library provides educational, recreational, and cultural materials for use by the community.

In meeting these goals, the library assembles and makes available a collection of books, periodicals, audio and video materials, and digital items, etc. Materials are selected for purchase, accepted as gifts, and discarded under the general guidance of the library staff, which operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Library Trustees.

The Westwood Public Library is aware of its responsibility to reflect both local needs and the broader traditions shared by all people. The scope of the collection shall be inclusive and present different points of view. An effort shall be made to appeal to all demographic groups recognizing that informed citizens are essential in a democracy. The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for selection of the library's collection to the Library Director. Under the guidance of the Library Director, library staff members with at least a Masters' level education in Library Science or equivalent experience select new materials and make decisions regarding material retention in accordance with the following policy. Inclusion of any item does not constitute an endorsement of its contents or viewpoint by the library staff or Board of Trustees.

The Westwood Public Library endorses the Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement, two documents issued by the American Library Association. Included in these statements is the commitment to honor the rights of an individual to use the library regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, background or social or political views. Accordingly, the staff of the library provides equal service to all library users.

### **B. Specific Criteria/ Selection**

The Westwood Public Library collects materials in a variety of formats (print, audiovisual, physical and digital). The major considerations in selecting and providing access to materials are the educational, informational, and recreational needs of library users.

Selection is a critical and interpretive process. Professional or otherwise credentialed reviews are the principal tool used in the selection of library materials. Staff members selecting library materials are also assisted by bibliographic review publications, authoritative discussions of the subject, publisher and vendor advertising and demonstrations, and requests of library patrons.

In selecting materials for the Westwood Public Library, the following criteria will be used as they apply:

- contemporary significance, current usefulness or interest
- authority and competence of presentation
- importance as an historical record or of permanent value
- relevance to existing collections
- presentation of all views on controversial issues
- physical quality of format and binding
- cost in relation to expected use, the individual title, and the overall collection
- balance of special group interest with general demand

The library welcomes suggestions from patrons and recognizes the importance of responding to individual requests. Consideration of requested material will be based upon the preceding criteria and other pertinent sections of the Collection Development Policy. Items not purchased by the library will be obtained through the Minuteman Library Network or inter-library loan whenever possible.

It is the function and duty of the library to provide objective material on controversial issues. The material should represent a variety of viewpoints so that each individual may have free access to thinking on all sides of an issue in order to make his or her own decision. Since no adequate criteria exist for judging controversial material, the professional staff exercises its judgment in determining which material will meet the popular demand, and yet preserve the balance of the collection.

Selection of materials for adults will not be inhibited by the possibility that such materials may be accessible to minors. Decisions relating to a minor's choice of materials are ultimately the responsibility of the minor's parent or legal guardian.

## 1. Children's Materials

The children's collection is made up of materials designed to meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs of children from infancy through the eighth grade, as well as adults concerned with this age group. Children's materials are selected using the same-basic guidelines followed in the selection of adult materials. Although materials in the Children's Department generally meet the needs of children, the resources of the adult collection are available for their use in accordance with Article 5 of the Library Bill of Rights.

The library recognizes that in its selection for children the decision about which book is suitable for a particular child cannot be based on age alone. Books that are too mature for some children may be appropriate for others of the same age. It is considered the responsibility of parents to

determine what their children may read and selection of materials for the children's collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain material that their parents consider inappropriate.

## 2. Young Adult Materials

Young adult materials are selected by the Teen Services' Librarian on the basis of recommendations by recognized authorities in the field of young adult literature; specific review sources such as *Kirkus*, *School Library Journal*, *Booklist*, etc. and the criteria listed above. Young adult literature ranges greatly in maturity levels and accordingly this collection will represent choices for a broad range of ages and interests. The young adult user of the library has access to the library's entire collection. Any limitations placed upon the reading materials of the young adult are left to the discretion of parents.

## 3. Islington Branch Library

The Main library on High Street and the Islington Branch (the "Branch") comprise the public library system in Westwood. While both libraries seek to fulfill the goals described on page one, the approach taken does differ. Based on an understanding of the make-up of Westwood's communities and in order to maintain a broad offering to patrons while preventing unnecessary duplication of services, concentration of resources has been allocated as follows:

- General Reading. The Main library contains the central book collection. Efforts are directed towards maintaining a representative sampling throughout the Dewey classification with special emphasis on areas where patron interest is high. Titles of continuing importance to the history of humankind and civilization are also seen as vital to the Main library collection. The Branch devotes the majority of its resources to a collection focused on current and popular materials. Staff are closely guided in purchasing by patron reading habits and demand. In order to meet these goals, titles may be sometimes purchased for one location only; all materials are available to patrons regardless of location.
- Periodicals. The Main library has a broad collection of current periodicals for research and loan. Back issues are kept according to informational quality and patron demand. The Branch maintains a collection of popular magazine titles. Both libraries make use of periodical databases provided through the Minuteman Library Network and other resources to satisfy patron requests for articles not owned by Westwood.

#### 4. Gifts

Gifts to the collection can be made in the form of money or actual materials. Gifts of books and other materials may be accepted by the library with the understanding that they will be considered for addition to the collection in accordance with the Materials Selection section of this policy. Donations must be outright and unconditional. All gifts that become part of the general collection are subject to the Materials Retention section of this policy, and the designated selectors will determine appropriate circulation procedures.

#### 5. Local Authors

Local authors are defined as writers who currently reside or have spent a significant part of their lives in Westwood or the adjacent towns. Pending evaluation, the library may accept one donated copy of a local author's work and place it in the Local Author section if it is an Adult book or in the appropriate Youth or Teen collection if it is a Youth or Teen book. All donated works are subject to the same criteria for removal as other materials. Items requested by the author to be purchased by the library are subject to the same collection development criteria as any other work. If an item is considered relevant to local history, it may be placed with the Local History Collection. If the item is considered relevant to local history and also appeals to general readers, the library will acquire two copies, placing one in the Local History Collection and one in the circulating collection.

#### 6. Local History

The Local History Collection is a non-circulating specialized collection that aims to preserve materials that document the history of Westwood and make materials available to researchers and the general public both at the library and, when possible, online. The major emphasis of the collection is information pertaining to Westwood, with a secondary emphasis on the surrounding areas, including Dedham which Westwood was part of until 1897. Please refer to the Local History Collections Policy for additional information.

#### 7. Self-Published Titles

Titles that are self-published, even if available via mainstream distributors, will be added only if they meet the library's selection criteria.

#### 8. Library of Things

The purpose of the Library of Things is to provide diverse opportunities for learning and engagement. To further this goal, the Library of Things may include:

- Home Improvement and Assistive Devices, such as a Kill-A-Watt meter and a hotspot (internet service) Music and Audiovisual Equipment, digital video camera, analog to digital conversion equipment, and musical instruments
- Science and Technology Kits, such as a digital microscope, telescopes, simple robotics
- Puzzles and Games, such as board games, card games, group games, and jigsaw puzzles
- Children's Learning Kits: kits that circulate out of the Children's Room designed to promote early literacy skills such as talking, writing, playing, critical thinking, and problem solving

The Library of Things is not intended to be comprehensive and the library is limited by a finite amount of storage space for these items.

### **C. Retention of Collections**

In order to retain relevant and reliable collections, in the space available, librarians must regularly evaluate and withdraw materials. Materials are withdrawn when they are no longer of value to the community using criteria that include, but are not limited to, lack of interest, poor condition, unnecessary duplication, or inaccurate or outdated information. Withdrawn materials are saved for Friends or library book sales, donated to other institutions, or discarded. The library does not make arrangements to sell or give withdrawn materials directly to specific patrons.

### **D. Reconsideration of Materials**

The selection of materials is predicated on the library user's right to access materials and the library user's freedom from censorship by others. Selections are made based on the merits of the work in relation to the fulfillment of the library mission and the materials selection portion of this policy. The addition of an item to the collection in no way represents an endorsement by the library of any theory, idea, or policy contained in it.

The library recognizes that some materials address issues that some individuals may find controversial. No item, however, will be removed from the collection for the sole reason that the philosophy, perspective, ideas, or view contained in the item is opposed by the individual requesting reconsideration.

Library patrons may request reconsideration of any material as follows:

- Discussion with the manager of the department in which the material is located
- If not satisfied, discussion with the Library Director
- If not satisfied, completion of a Request for Reconsideration which will be given to the Library Board of Trustees (see appendix II)

The Board of Trustees will apply the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement (see Appendix I) in addition to the selection criteria of this policy in all such matters. The Board of Trustees will make a ruling on whether the material in question will be retained, relocated, or removed and the patron requesting reconsideration will be notified as to the decision within a reasonable amount of time. The material in question will remain in the collection pending the decision of the Library Board of Trustees.

Approved March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 by the Westwood Public Library Board of Trustees