

## **Cloquet Public Library**

### **Collection Development Policy**

Reference: Adopted by the Library Board

(Original date unknown)

Revised and adopted by the Library Board, June 22, 2010

#### **Mission Statement**

The Cloquet Public Library helps to build a democratic and engaged community by providing a welcoming space, resources and programs that support children's literacy and the fulfillment of lifelong learning, interests and goals.

#### **Library Goals, from the Strategic Plan**

1. Adults will maintain active minds, keeping pace with their recreational interests and essential life skills.
2. All children will develop an enthusiasm for reading and learning, and be able to read independently by age nine.
3. Community members will be aware of and participate in local activities and decision-making.
4. Students will get the out-of-school help they need to achieve their educational potential.

#### **Goals and Objectives**

The basic objective of the Cloquet Public Library is to make available library materials— including books, periodicals, pamphlets, audiobooks, music, films, computers, computer software, and other materials for the educational, recreational and informational needs of the people in its service area.

These materials help people to:

- keep up with change in all areas of their lives
- educate themselves continually
- become better members of their family and community
- become socially and politically aware
- be more capable in their occupations
- develop their creative abilities and spiritual capabilities
- appreciate and enjoy literature and art
- contribute to the overall expanse of knowledge and stimulate their own personal and social well-being.

This library selects all print and non-print materials in accordance with these objectives.

#### **Purpose of this Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to guide the library's professional staff in the selection, retention, and withdrawal of materials, and to inform the public about the principles upon which the decisions are made. This policy has been adopted by the Cloquet Public Library Board, which assumes full responsibility for any and all legal actions which may result from the implementation of any of the practices stated herein. The Library Board supports the staff responsible for the selection and withdrawal of library materials, and delegates to such staff the authority to purchase those books and materials considered essential, useful, and within the scope of this collection development policy. For background and guidance, the Library staff and board follow the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association (and the interpretations of parts of that Bill of Rights), referenced at the end of this policy.

## **Materials Selection**

**Responsibility for selection:** Responsibility for the collection rests with the Library Director, under authority from the Library Board.

According to the ALA Bill of Rights:

- “1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the information, interest, and enlightenment of all the people in the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. A person’s right to use the library should not be denied or abridged because of his or her origin, age, background or views.
4. Exhibit spaces and meeting rooms will be made available on an equitable basis. . .”

**Criteria for selection:** Certain factors influence the selection of library materials, including:

1. The importance of the subject matter to the collection.
2. The author’s reputation and significance as a writer.
3. Availability of material in the System, in other libraries, or in print.
4. Timeliness or permanence of the materials.
5. Authoritativeness of the material.
6. Inclusion of the material in standard bibliographies or indexes.
7. Price.
8. Format, including type and legibility, as well as the possibility of rebinding.
9. Suggestions from library users.

**Scope of the collection:** The library recognizes its obligations to provide reference and research materials for the direct answering of specific questions and for continuing research. However, it will not needlessly duplicate the functions or materials of other libraries in the area.

This library acquires textbooks and other curriculum-related materials when such materials serve the general public.

The library acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history and will, therefore, seek to acquire state and municipal documents. It also will take a broad view of works by and about Minnesota authors, as well as general works relating to the State of Minnesota, whether or not such materials meet the standards of selection in other respects.

However, the library is under no obligation to add to its collection everything about Minnesota, or produced by authors, printers, or publishers with Minnesota connections, if it does not seem to be in the public interest to do so.

**Children’s Material:** Every effort will be made to select the best material available.

The decision as to what library materials a minor may read, listen to or view is the responsibility of his parent or guardian.

At the same time, selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of minors.

**Non-Print Material:** Videos, films, audios, art prints, and other non-print material shall be selected according to the basic principles outlined in this policy.

**Gifts:** The library director may, on behalf of the Library Board, accept unconditional gifts, donations, and contributions to the library. However, gifts or donations made conditionally require the approval of the library director, and may require the approval of the Library Board.

Generally, collections of books with restrictions which necessitate special housing or which prevent integration of the gift into the general library collection will not be accepted.

The same standards of selection that govern purchases by the library will govern the acceptance of gifts. If material is useful but not needed by the library, it may be disposed of at the discretion of the librarian.

**Labeling:** No book or other library material will be labeled for the purpose of rating the suitability of its contents, or for making some form of prejudgment of an item for the prospective user.

**Censorship:** The selection of library books and other materials is predicated on the library patron's right to read, listen to, and view what he wishes, as well as his freedom from censorship by others.

Many materials are controversial, and any given item may offend some persons. This library will make selections based solely on the merits of the material in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the library's users, and not on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval. This library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter. While anyone is free to reject for himself books or other materials of which he does not approve, he cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

### **Maintaining the Collection**

**Withdrawal of materials:** An important part of maintaining a library's collection is to systematically remove materials that are no longer useful or are out of date, in order to maintain relevant resources. The same criteria used in selecting and acquiring materials will be used in weeding materials from the collection. The decision to withdraw materials shall be based on:

- the physical condition of the material
- use of the material, as determined by the last date of loan, or by the number of loans in the last five years
- age of the material as a misinformation factor, especially in the area of sciences

Library staff members are to be thoroughly instructed in the necessity, frequency, and manner of withdrawing library books and materials.

**Freedom to Read:** This Library respects the right of persons to express their opinion, and provides the concerned citizen the right to challenge the inclusion of specific library materials in the collection. No library materials will be removed from the collection until the challenge is acted upon and a decision is reached.

(For background, see the "Challenged Materials" Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, referenced at the end of this policy.)

### **Procedure for challenge of library materials:**

1. The library user will request the form "Statement of Concern About Library Resources" from a library staff member. (See Appendix A)
2. The library user must fill out the form completely, and return it along with the library material in question to the library director.
3. The library director will review the materials and notify the library user in writing, within 30 days, of his/her decision.
4. If the library user questions the decision of the library director he/she may meet with the library director to discuss the matter. If the library user wishes to further discuss the matter with the Library Board, the matter will be included on the agenda of the next regularly-scheduled Board meeting. Action taken by the Board will be final.

*Revised and adopted by the Cloquet Public Library Board on June 22, 2010.*

## **American Library Association Library Bill of Rights**

*(latest version)*

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

*Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

### **Challenged Materials**

#### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined materials selection policy in written form which reflects the Library Bill of Rights, and which is approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged materials which meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the library should not be removed under any legal or extra-legal pressure. The Library Bill of Rights states in Article 1 that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," and in Article 2 that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Freedom of expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is a part of this procedure.

Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

*Adopted June 25, 1971; amended July 1, 1981; amended January 10, 1990 by the ALA Council.*

*Adopted by the Arrowhead Library System Governing Board February 9, 1995.*

*Adopted by the Cloquet Public Library Board May 25, 1995.*

## **Expurgation of Library Materials An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Expurgating library materials is a violation of the Library Bill of Rights. Expurgation as defined by this interpretation includes any deletion, excision, alteration, editing, or obliteration of any part(s) of books or other library resources by the library, its agent, or its parent institution (if any). By such expurgation, the library is in effect denying access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work intended to express. Such action stands in violation of Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the Library Bill of Rights, which state that “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation,” that “Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval,” and that “Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.”

The act of expurgation has serious implications. It involves a determination that it is necessary to restrict access to the complete work. This is censorship. When a work is expurgated, under the assumption that certain portions of that work would be harmful to minors, the situation is no less serious.

Expurgation of any books or other library resources imposes a restriction, without regard to the rights and desires of all library users, by limiting access to ideas and information.

Further, expurgation without written permission from the holder of the copyright on the material may violate the copyright provisions of the United States Code.

*Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.*

*Adopted by the Arrowhead Library System Governing Board, February 9, 1995.*

*Adopted by the Cloquet Public Library Board, May 25, 1995.*

## **Diversity in Collection Development An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other topics of a potentially controversial nature.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities. Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits or programs.

Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the Library Bill of Rights: “Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.” A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an

equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community which the library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the library patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the First Amendment, no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs and interests of all persons in the community which the library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of toleration in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

*Adopted July 14, 1982; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.*

*Adopted by the Arrowhead Library System Governing Board, February 9, 1995.*

*Adopted by the Cloquet Public Library Board, May 25, 1995.*