

# Selection of Library Materials Policy

## **Objectives**

The Hingham Public Library places major emphasis on informational, recreational and educational functions. It recognizes the importance of basic materials of permanent value and timely materials on current issues. Materials will be purchased in the format that best suits patron needs.

## **Guidelines**

The Trustees of the Hingham Public Library support the Library Bill of Rights promulgated by the American Library Association, and it serves as the basis for this policy and other lending policies of this library. Choice of materials will result from a variety of professional activities on the part of the Library Director and specifically designated staff for materials selection activities. Reviews of new books from both professional journals and popular reviewing media form an important tool in the selection process. Recommendations from the staff and the public are also welcome and evaluated within the framework of the acquisition process.

## **Responsibility**

The Library Director has the final responsibility for the selection of all materials to be incorporated into the library's collection, regardless of the mode of acquisition. Selection and purchase of library materials rests with the library director who may delegate some responsibilities to other staff members. Staff will adhere to accepted professional practices when making selection decisions. The recreational, educational, and informational needs of the community, as they fit within the selected services responses, will be considered in selecting materials.

It is the Director's responsibility to provide materials that are of both current interest and permanent value, that are up-to-date, that are responsive to the interests and needs of every segment of the community and that do not discriminate against any political, religious, economic, or social view or group through deliberate exclusion of their views. The Director shall try to provide for a diversity of materials without exercising either direct or implied censorship. The Director shall be responsible for expending available funds in an equitable manner so that all divisions of the collection receive a just proportion of said funds.

## **Selection Criteria**

### General

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the standards listed below. However, an item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. Materials are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather than individual parts. When judging the quality of materials several standards and combinations of standards may be used. The following principals will guide selection:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Community interest
- Accuracy of content
- Reputation and/or authority of the author, editor or illustrator
- Literary merit
- Relation to existing collection and to other materials on the subject
- Price, availability, and demand
- Format and ease of use
- Scarcity of information in the subject area
- Availability of material in other area libraries
- Attention of critics, reviewers, media and public

The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some patron. Selection or retention of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval of any group of patrons, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered, except to protect it from theft. Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians.

#### Material Specific

Magazines are purchased to supplement the book collection, provide recreational and professional reading, and/or provide material not yet available in book form. Selection of magazines will be based upon their consideration as authoritative, objective, of local interest and demand, and indexed in standard periodical indexes.

Gifts of books and other items will be accepted on the condition that the Director has the authority to make whatever disposition he or she deems advisable. Gifts will be judged using the same basis as purchased materials.

#### Collection Maintenance

To maintain the effectiveness of the library's total collection, the library will attempt to systematically remove materials no longer useful. The library does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear. Need for replacement is weighed with regard to several factors: number of duplicate copies, existence of adequate coverage of a field, similar material in the collection, later or more authoritative materials as well as current demand for the particular subject or title.

Library Board of Trustees November 19, 1975