

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

Responsibility for Selection

Library material selection is and shall be vested in the Library Director and under his/her direction, such members the staff who are qualified by reason of education and training. Material selection is made on the basis of reading selection guides, buying lists and reviews. Final decision however is based on the value of the material to the Library and its public and its limitations of budget, space and patron demand.

The Library Board, recognizing the need for professional service in selecting, reviewing and procuring of reading materials, hires the Library Director as its agent. The ultimate responsibility for the selection of reading and other library materials as with the management of the entire Library resides in the Library Board.

Selection of Materials

Materials selected as part of the Library collection will be consistent with the above purpose of the library. Recognizing that the effectiveness of our library is measured by the number of residents making use of the library, materials of whatever type; printed, recorded, visual, or electronic, will be chosen to maximize such use. As new types of materials are developed, the library should be aware of changing trends and gradually include such new developments as interest increases and funds are available.

Materials selection is necessarily limited by size of both the facilities and the budget. Selection is also influenced by the need for added material in existing collections, by format and by the existence of specialized materials, which are available to the library through system services.

Because the library strives to readily supply needed materials, there should be a supply of requested items sufficient enough to make the library a dependable source. Thus within space and budgetary restrictions, the library will duplicate items as deemed necessary by public use.

Gifts and Donations:

Materials donated to the library are accepted with the understanding that they become the property of the Marion Public Library and may be used or disposed of at the discretion of the library director as follows:

1. May be added to the collection.
2. May be added to the book sales with proceeds being used for the benefit of the library.
3. May be disposed of if not useable in the above manner.

Donations may be refused for reasons of space, condition or types of books at the discretion of the Library Director.

Criteria for Selection:

To build a collection of merit and usefulness, materials must be measured by objective guidelines. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following standards. Clearly, however, an item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. When judging the quality of materials, several standards and combinations of standards may be used. Some materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit, while others are considered because of scholarship, value, or ability to satisfy recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

General Criteria

1. The author's reputation and significance as a writer.
2. The importance of subject matter to the collection
3. Suitability of physical form for library use.
4. Availability of material in other libraries or in print.
5. Timeliness or permanence of the material
6. Present and potential relevance to community needs
7. Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject
8. Attention by critics, reviewers, professional book selecting aids and the public.
9. Accuracy of content

10. Quality of the physical format, including adequate binding, print size, durability, and illustration for print format; technical and production quality, creativity, originality, and availability of equipment for non-print formats.
11. Price.

In applying these criteria, the selectors will use the following guides:

1. Knowledge of the community.
2. Professional literature available to the selector.
3. Professional ability to evaluate
4. Needs of the collection
5. Comparison with other materials.

Censorship

Censorship is an individual's personal choice, and although a person may reject certain library materials because of his or her own convictions, a patron cannot exercise this right of censorship in restricting the freedom to read of other persons.

The Board therefore defends the Freedom to Read Policy and whenever the question of censorship arises, no book or library material will be removed from the library except by the action of the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees adopts and declares it will adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement adopted by the American Library Association both of which are part of this policy.

Challenges of Controversial Materials

The Library Board of Trustees realizes that the world is filled with many varying opinions and approaches. Thus the library, in mirroring the world, will add materials to its collection which may be controversial. The library provides a procedure for the public to air their criticism. The library director is available to discuss the interpretation and application of these selection principles.

If a criticized material is deemed by the Marion Library Board to have been properly selected by the terms of this policy, public use of it shall not be denied or abridged in any way. A material is evaluated as a whole work, not by detached excerpts. A material is not evaluated as to the rightness or wrongness of the author's views, as that would allow personal opinion to sway over "the free marketplace of ideas" which the library represents.

Complaint Procedure:

When any patron has a complaint about a book that is serious enough for them to request that the Board of Trustees remove the book from the library shelves, that complaint should be made according to the following procedures.

1. The patron should be asked to make the complaint in writing, citing the areas which are the cause of the complaint. A form is supplied by the Library Director for this and is part of this policy.
2. The patron will be asked whether this is an isolated portion of the book, which caused the dismay, or whether it is the whole book which is at fault.
3. Once the complaint has been put in writing, the complaint will be considered at the next meeting of the Library Board.
4. The patron should realize that consideration by the Board does not necessarily mean that the board will agree with the patron. It does mean that the book will be individually considered.
5. After the Board of Trustees has reviewed the complaint, it will:

Write a letter to the patron, or ask the patron to attend a special meeting to discuss the complaint.

Adopted 10/15/02

Reviewed 08/21/2018