HIGH PRAIRIE MUNICIPAL LIBRARY

BYLAW AND POLICY MANUAL

POLICY C-1

COLLECTIONS

SELECTION, PURCHASE AND DISPOSITION

OF LIBRARY RESOURCES POLICY

**Background**

*STATEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM*

*Adopted by the Canadian Library Association*

*Winnipeg, 1974 (With Amendments 1983, 1985)*

*All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation’s Bill of Rights, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity, and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.*

*Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom. It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.*

*It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library’s public facilities to all individuals and groups who need them.*

1. **Selection of Library Materials.**

Responsibility for selection of materials will rest with the Library Manager keeping in mind the policies set by the Board

1. **General Criteria for the Evaluation and Selection of Materials**

As a community resource, library will attempt to provide a wide range of materials that will meet the cultural, recreational and educational needs of its community as budgeting and space limitations allow.

All materials, whether donated or purchased, will be examined and evaluated in terms of the standards that follow. Items need not meet all the criteria to be acceptable.

**General Evaluation Criteria**

1. Suitability of physical format for library use.
2. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience.
3. Present and potential relevance to community needs and interests.
4. Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content
5. Importance as a document of the times.
6. Relationship to existing collection and other material on the subject.
7. Recommendation or notation by critics, reviews or public.
8. Budgetary and space priorities
9. The High Prairie Library Board acknowledges the multicultural nature of our community and, therefore, will provide library materials in languages other than English.
10. **Visually Impaired**

The High Prairie Municipal Library, to the best of its ability, will try to supply library materials to those who are unable to use conventional print material. Due to limited financial resources, the policy of the Board is to make full use of the services offered by the Peace Library System and other agencies, such as C.N.I.B.

**Complaints**

1. The Board recognizes that there will be complaints. When a complaint is made, the Library must ensure that the complaint is handled seriously and at the same time make certain that the fundamental principles of intellectual freedom are upheld.
2. The procedure detailed below addresses challenges to materials. The same procedures apply to challenges with the goal to add the material to the Library’s collection or to limit the Library’s ability to weed the collection. This policy and its procedures apply to any and all challenges to the Library’s collection.
3. Steps in the citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials procedure, detailed below, must be followed by citizens when challenging materials and by the Library Staff, Manager and Board of Trustees when reconsidering challenged materials, and making a decision about these materials. If citizens do not follow steps in the order elaborated, their complaints will not be considered further by Library Staff, Manager or Board of Trustees.
4. As a standard practice, every written complaint is investigated.
5. The Procedures for dealing with citizens’ complaints is as follows:
6. Try to handle the initial complaint in an informal and helpful way.
7. Focus on the issue of choice, diversity of views and so on, explaining the Library’s Intellectual Freedom Policy.
8. Explain that censorship is a two-edged sword, i.e. it cuts both ways, and people who object to material that the complainant may well find satisfactory could argue that once objectionable materials have been removed for one person, other materials based on their objections should logically be removed as well.
9. If the informal approach does not work, then the matter should be referred as quickly as possible to the manager or the assistant manager. If unavailable, proceed to providing the complainant with the *Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Material* (<http://www.epl.ca/ResourcePDF/f502.pdf>)

Please note that the *Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration* form formalizes the process and for the average enquiry it could be considered formidable and a deterrent to obtaining some simple information and explaining the concept of intellectual freedom. When the patron wishes to continue to pursue the complaint, then the citizen concerned should be asked to complete the form.

1. The staff member should request the complainant to complete the form *Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Material (Appendix 1)*
2. Explain that the complaint for (Appendix 1) will be used to investigate the matter and as the basis for a response. No promise would be made that the material will be removed. Inform the patron that they will receive a response within one month’s time.
3. The Manager sends a letter to the patron (Appendix 2) notifying them in writing that their concerns will be investigated and they will receive a written response from the Manager within one month.
4. The item and form are forwarded to the Library Manager who delegates the investigation to the appropriate selection librarian or designate.
5. Within one week the selection librarian gathers together documentation regarding the item (e.g. book reviews, circulation/use statistic, author’s reputation, awards)
6. The selection librarian reads/views/listens to item and prepares a recommendation a rationale with two weeks.
7. The reviewer forwards the item, documentation, recommendation (retention, removal or other options), and supporting rationale to the Library Manager.
8. The Library manager considers the recommendation, makes a decision and draws up a written response to the customer that includes the Freedom to Read brochure. The response is sent out within a month of receipt of the *Citizens Request for Reconsideration*  form at the service point and is copied to the originating service point manager.
9. A customer may appeal the decision subsequently, to the Board of Trustees.

**Gifts and Contributions**

**Background**

Although the community served is primarily responsible for the financial support of the Library, the Board welcomes donation of money and materials.

1. The library accepts gifts but reserves the right to evaluate and dispose of them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Gifts of items which do not support the library’s objectives and policies will be refused. No conditions may be imposed relating to any item after its acceptance by the Library.
2. Any person wanting to purchase specific gifts for the library should consult with the Library Manager to determine what materials should be accepted. A reasonable amount of publicity may be allowed regarding gifts.
3. Except for temporary exhibit purposes, the library will not accept responsibility for historical documents or objects owned or controlled by groups or individuals.
4. In the case of monetary donations there shall be no restriction on how the funds are used. Donated money for the collection will not be used for general operation of the library service point (i.e. salaries).
5. The Library maintains a fund for the purchase of materials in memory of an individual. The Manager will consult with the surviving family of the individual for guidance in selecting a fitting purchase. Materials will be processed to include a formal acknowledgement of the memorial or donor if desired.

**Subscriptions**

1. Subscriptions to periodicals of interest to the patrons are welcome. Donating cash is preferable.

**Tax Receipts**

1. Charitable monetary donations totalling over $10 will be acknowledged with a tax receipt. Receipts will be issued in January for the previous year.

**Challenges to Material**

The Board recognizes many materials are controversial and that any given items may offend some patrons. Not all materials selected, therefore, will be suitable to every patron or group of patrons. Unless an item is officially prohibited from entering the province; it cannot be legally withdrawn from the library shelves. If an individual objects very strongly to a particular item she/he will have the right to make an official complaint. Each complaint will be dealt with in the following manner:

* Patron will complete appendix 1. Only written complaints will be dealt with on an individual basis. The Librarian will review the material noting areas of contention. The patron will be informed (appendix 2) of the review procedure and when to expect a reply from the complaint.
* Reconsideration Committee composed of the Manager and two board Members will meet to review the concerns and decide the future status of the material.
* The Board will infor the citizen by letter of the review outcome.

**Parental Responsibility**

Responsibility for children’s reading rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection of materials for adult collections is not restricted by the possibility that children many obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate. The Library believes in the freedom of the individual and the right and obligation of parents to develop, interpret, and maintain their own codes of values in their families.

**Weeding**

1. The collection is assessed by the Manager on an ongoing basis in order to maintain a high standard
2. The materials will be examined to determine suitability for the collection on the following criteria:
3. Physical condition
4. Currency of subject matter
5. Usage
6. Age
7. Weeded materials will be disposed of at the discretion of the Manager by the following means:
8. Exchange/donation to another library
9. Donation to schools
10. Sale to the public
11. Destruction

CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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