

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### Purpose

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy of the Sharon Public Library is to provide guidelines for acquisition and withdrawal decisions, allocation of resources and long-range collection development in accordance with the library's mission.

### Library Mission Statement

The mission of the Sharon Public Library is to serve the informational, educational and recreational needs of all members of the Sharon community through acquiring and maintaining quality materials, and to provide programs and services within comfortable facilities offering convenient hours in a manner commensurate with responsible fiscal planning. Emphasis should be placed on information which is of immediate relevance and interest to the community. The Library's mission extends to providing access to the universe of information beyond the Library's own collections through interlibrary cooperation and efficient use of technology.

### Role of the Public Library

Public libraries play a unique role in the preservation of democracy by providing an open, non-judgmental institution where individuals can pursue their interests and gain an understanding of diverse opinions. Libraries must continue to play an essential role in safeguarding the intellectual liberty of the public and they must recognize, understand and support freedom of access.

### Intellectual Freedom and Access

The Board of Library Trustees, the Library Director, and the library staff recognize the responsibility of the Sharon Public Library to provide materials representing diverse points of view on different topics. Selection is made solely on the merits of the work in relation to collection development and in relation to the needs of library patrons. The presence of an item in the Library's collection does not indicate an endorsement of the item's content.

Selection cannot be restricted by the possibility that certain materials might be considered objectionable by some users on moral, religious, political, or other grounds. Well-intentioned individuals or groups may occasionally question the inclusion of an item in the collection because of fear or doubt about the effects of the material on impressionable persons. Although the staff and trustees understand this concern, it is our position that the risk to society is far greater if public access to ideas and information is restricted. Neither an individual, nor group, nor library staff has a right to decide what others may or may not read.

All materials are shelved on open shelves, freely and easily accessible to the public. There will be no labeling of any item to indicate its point of view or bias. The library assures free access to its holdings for all patrons, who can select or reject for themselves any item in the collection.

Children are not limited to the children's collections, which are kept separate from other library collections to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading, listening, or viewing of library materials must rest with the parent or guardian, not with the library staff.

The staff and Board of Trustees of the Sharon Public Library believe that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. The library has adopted the American Library Association's **Library Bill of Rights** and **Freedom to Read/View** statements as official library policy.

### **Resource Sharing**

The Library is a charter member of the Old Colony Library Network, an automated resource-sharing network of 29 South Shore libraries, 27 public and 2 academic libraries. Computer terminals provide bibliographic access to the collections of the network libraries and a daily delivery system ensures fast availability. For those patrons with needs outside the scope of the Sharon Public Library's collection or the collections of network libraries, the Library is able to provide interlibrary loan service through cooperative agreements with the state library system.

### **Responsibility for Collection Development**

The Library Director has overall responsibility for collection development, operating in accordance with policies set by the Board of Library Trustees. Responsibility for selection of adult, teen, and children's materials rests with the professional librarians. Suggestions from library patrons are always welcome and are given primary consideration. The final responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director.

### **Definition of Materials Selection**

"Selection" refers to the decision that must be made either to add materials or to retain materials already in the collection. Also, selection can refer to items to be removed from the collection.

### **Philosophy of Selection**

In support of its mission, the Library fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association. The Library upholds the right of the individual to secure information and materials, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Items available in the Library present a wide range of viewpoints which reflect the diverse community it serves.

### **Selection Criteria**

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Popular interest or demand
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Currency of information
- Accuracy
- Local emphasis
- Relevance to community needs or interests
- Readability or ability to sustain interest
- Treatment of subject to age of intended audience
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator
- Publisher print run
- Creative, literary or technical quality
- Nationally recognized literary or A/V awards
- Critical assessments in professionally recognized review sources
- Format and ease of use
- Circulation statistics and trends
- Cost and availability
- Relationship to existing materials in the collection
- Whether a title is part of an existing series
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries

Except in rare circumstances, the Library does not collect books that are in binders, workbooks with fill-in the blanks, or text books. The Library does not purchase formats that are obsolete such as cassettes, vinyl records, VHS tapes, or others that are not currently widely produced or used, except when the content is deemed appropriate for inclusion in the Sharon Local History collection and unavailable in any other format.

### **Scope of the Collection**

The primary responsibility of the Library is to serve Sharon Public Library patrons by providing a broad choice of materials to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

Budget and space limitations preclude the Library from duplicating locally specialized and comprehensive collections that exist elsewhere. Access to these collections is provided through cooperative networking, interlibrary loan, and direct referral.

The Library must continually assess new formats to evaluate the capabilities and enhancements it can offer over existing formats. When deciding whether to replace or augment existing formats with new media, the following factors are considered:

- anticipated improvements in information storage and retrieval
- user demand
- quality of the product
- ease of use
- equipment requirements
- cost
- staff requirements for processing, maintenance, and training

It is essential for staff to monitor technological developments so that wise and cost-effective collection decisions are made for the citizens of the Town of Sharon.

### **The Collections**

- Fiction
- Nonfiction
- New Materials
- Children's Materials
- Teen Materials
- Reference
- Jobs and Career
- Sharon History & Genealogy
- Music & Spoken Word
- Videos
- Graphic Novels
- World Languages
- US, State and Local Government Documents
- Digital Resources
- Online Databases
- Periodicals
- Professional Collection & Resources
- Grants & Non-Profit Center

## **Fiction**

The Library's collection includes a wide variety of contemporary works of fiction representing all genres, international works of fiction, classics and important novels of the past. The Library makes every effort to acquire fiction which is representative of the cultural and ethnic community that it serves and to satisfy the diversity of interests, lifelong learning and recreational needs of its users. Physical formats for fiction include electronic, print, DVD and audio. Fiction is purchased according to the selection criteria enumerated above.

## **Nonfiction**

The Library aims at acquiring materials which provide a core of basic knowledge. In addition, the Library selects, makes accessible, and promotes the use of materials which:

- address contemporary or historic issues
- provide self-help information
- facilitate continuing education
- enhance job-related knowledge and skills
- increase knowledge of affairs of the community, the country, and the world
- support business, cultural, recreational and civic interests in the community
- nourish intellectual, aesthetic, creative and spiritual growth
- present different viewpoints on issues

## **New Materials**

Copies of popular, high-demand items are available as part of the Library's New Materials collection. Anyone can put holds on these items. All print materials are prioritized by OCLN for local holds but are available to all.

## **Collection Development for Children and Tweens**

Materials for children are collected in order to promote early literacy, educational success through Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM), health and recreational interest.

Items in this section are selected for patrons from infancy through age 13 and include:

- board books
- picture books
- fiction at a variety of reading levels and formats (easy readers, beginning chapter books,
- novels, read-alongs, audiobooks)
- nonfiction (including biographies and reference)
- graphic novels
- music
- videos
- magazines

As in the adult section, many of the items listed above can also be found in a variety of languages other than English (see the Foreign Language section for more information).

### **Collection Development for Young Adults**

The Library selects materials for teens in order to encourage personal development, STEAM educational materials, life-long learning, and recreational & literary enrichment.

Items in this collection are intended for patrons between the ages of 14-17 (high school) and include:

- fiction (including electronic, print, audio and video)
- nonfiction
- graphic novels
- magazines

All music and videos, unless specifically for young children, are placed in the general CD and DVD collections. Fiction, nonfiction and graphic novels are purchased and housed in the Teen section on the upper floor in the reference area. Summer reading materials are placed in the new materials section near the upper floor circulation desk during the summer months. Duplicate summer reading materials are stored during the school year but are available upon request.

**Local History Collection** (see Local History Collection Development Policy and Gift Agreement)

### **Special Collections:**

#### **Microforms (microfilm and microfiche) and Digital Materials**

Currently the library collects two newspapers in microfilm.

Microforms are added to the collection for one or more of the following reasons:

- Acquire materials not available in print
- Compress space required to store materials
- Preserve materials from degenerating
- Serve as a backup copy for some of the high demand items

Digital Materials are added to the collection for one or more of the following reasons:

- Preserve materials from degenerating
- Make materials available to a wider audience via Digital Commonwealth and other online sources

The following factors should be considered when determining format whether print, microform or digital:

- Potential use of material
- How long the print format will last
- Accessibility
- Storage space
- Equipment for reading and printing
- Costs of various formats.

### **Rental Collection**

The Sharon Public Library maintains a small collection of popular/high demand titles available on a first-come/first-serve basis for a nominal rental fee. The collection is funded by and the

proceeds benefit the Friends of the Sharon Public Library. The collection is maintained by library staff. Titles are chosen, both fiction and non-fiction, based on popularity and anticipated high patron demand. Every title purchased for the rental collection must also have been acquired for the circulating collection ensuring that library patrons have access to the same title without being assessed a rental fee. Once the popularity/demand for a rental title eases, the title is removed and placed into the Friends book sale.

### **World Language Materials**

The Town of Sharon has a growing population of multi-cultural speaking residents. As a result, the Library has responded to this community's need for materials in their native language. With particular attention focused on print materials, the Library is making a concerted effort to acquire the works of recent popular world language authors.

### **Web Site Access to Information**

The Sharon Public Library web site has been created to advance the Library's mission as an information center supporting the educational and recreational needs of its users and to provide access to materials beyond the local collection. The web site provides guidance for patrons exploring Internet resources and assists Internet users seeking information about Library programs and services.

#### **General Web Site Link Selection Guidelines**

The major considerations for selecting materials are the informational, educational, literary and recreational needs of the Sharon Public Library community. Sites are selected to enrich, broaden and complement material in the Library's collection. Link selection is based on grant support and local priority, relevancy, quality, currency, and navigability.

### **Collection Maintenance and Deselection**

#### **Maintenance**

Maintenance of the Library's collection through constant re-evaluation ensures its usefulness to the community. This evaluation depends heavily on staff's professional expertise in providing a balanced collection and assessing community need, using circulation statistics and trends as a guide. Multiple copies and replacements of titles are purchased in response to user demand as evidenced by number of holds, anticipated popularity, and repeated requests.

#### **Deselection**

Weeding of collections is necessary to stay within space limitations of the library, but it also has positive service implications. Borrowing from CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) guidelines, the benefits of weeding are:

- Conserving space: items no longer being used are weeded to create more space for new and popular items.
- Conserving time of staff and customers: it is easier to find desired material when searchers are unencumbered by too many out of date and non-used items. Less staff time is spent in shifting to make collections fit.
- Making collections more appealing: worn, dirty, and/or dated materials are removed, and in some cases, replaced, recovered or withdrawn.
- Enhancing Library reputation: word spreads when the collection is current and it reflects a wise management of public resources. Improved ability for customers to find what they need enhances trust and confidence in the library.

- Enabling a systematic way to identify and act on collection needs.
- Those materials determined too worn or no longer of relative value are withdrawn from the collection.

Library materials are withdrawn for one or more of the following reasons:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Damage or poor condition
- Space limitations
- Insufficient use

Deselected materials may be given to local community organizations who have need of items, such as the Friends of the Sharon Public Library used book sale, schools, senior centers, and other social services agencies, etc. All remaining deselected materials will be given to a local book re-distribution company.

### **Suggestions for Purchase**

The Library strongly encourages input from its community concerning the collection. Patrons can fill out a “request for purchase” slip to request that a particular item be purchased by the Library. All requests for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials but every reasonable effort will be made to purchase the requested item. The request for purchase form can be found at:

<http://www.sharonpubliclibrary.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Request%20for%20purchase%20website%20form.pdf>

### **Requests for Reconsideration**

Town of Sharon patrons wishing to recommend the removal of a particular item in the Library collection may submit a Materials Reconsideration form, which will be reviewed by the Library Director and Board of Library Trustees in relation to the Library's mission statement and the selection criteria of this policy. After evaluating the form submitted by the patron, along with the selection criteria used to purchase the item, the Library Director will make a decision as to the final placement of the item and contact the petitioner with the outcome. The Reconsideration of Materials form can be found at:

<http://www.sharonpubliclibrary.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Request%20for%20Reconsideration%20of%20Library%20Materials%20April%202017.pdf>

**Gift Policy** (see Gift Policy)

### **Review of Policy**

In order to maintain a dynamic selection program which reflects current community trends, this policy will be reviewed by the Library Director and selection staff. This collection development policy will periodically be evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require.