

Collection Development Policy

Purpose

The Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library Collection Development Policy provides a framework for the development and growth of library collections in support of the library's mission to "enrich and improve the lives of the Alpena County community through impeccable service and equitable access to opportunities and resources. The Library strives to develop new readers, preserve, protect, and share the history of Alpena and its surrounding region, and provide and program a safe space, in which the community can learn, create, and explore." The Collection Development Policy is designed to support the library's mission statement and serves as a guide for selecting, acquiring, maintaining, and retaining materials by establishing roles, responsibilities, and a process for addressing library user concerns.

Definitions

The term "Library Materials" means books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, library programs, Library of Things, or other synonyms as they may occur in the Policy having the broadest possible meaning. This Statement of Policy applies to all library materials in the collection, including adult, young adult, and juvenile; however, this Policy and the term "Library Materials" does not apply to Internet sites available through the Library's computers or Internet collection. The Library has no control over the content of the Internet. Please see the Internet Use Policy for any issues related to computer or Internet Use.

The term "selection" refers to the decision to add, retain, or withdraw materials in the collection. It does not refer to reader guidance.

The Collection

The Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library's collection aims to meet the diverse cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of Alpena County residents. To meet this commitment, the Library collects and makes information accessible in a variety of formats that represent a wide range of views, expressions, opinions, and interests.

A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of issues as far as the availability of materials, space, and budget allow. All public library collections contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable, and in turn, public libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons consider important, both for purposes of balancing the collection or in instances when materials do not meet the selection criteria. This applies to materials for any age or audience. It is up to the patron to make decisions regarding the use of specific library materials, and the responsibility of parents, caregivers, and/or guardians to monitor children's use of library materials.

Goals of Materials Selection.

The Library's goals of material selection are as follows:

- To meet the individuals' needs for information through maintenance of a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, reference, and research.

- To help individuals attain maximum self-development through life-long intellectual and cultural growth.
- To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community.
- To assist individuals in their pursuit of occupational activity and practical affairs.
- To provide diverse recreational experience for individuals and groups.
- To assist institutions of formal education with services that will assist individual study.
- To maintain Michigan and local history collections.

Responsibility for Selection

The responsibility for selection lies with the professional staff of the Library. That staff operates within the areas of service to children, young adults, and adults. Both the public and staff members may recommend materials for consideration. The ultimate responsibility for book selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the funds budgeted for collection development are allocated appropriately depending upon the needs of the Library and the fulfillment of the above Goals of Material Selection.

General Principles.

- Selection of Library Materials is based on the relationship of such work to the needs, interests and demands of the community. Basic to this Policy is the Library Bill of Rights and the Intellectual Freedom Statement of the American Library Association to which this Library subscribes.

Selection is not made based on anticipated approval or disapproval by patrons or Library users, but solely on the merits of a work, without regard to the race, nationality, political or religious views, or sexual orientation or gender identity of the writer.

- Responsibility for the reading material of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children.

The Library respects each individual parent's right to supervise his/her children's choice of reading materials. However, the Library does not have the right to act in loco parentis (in place of the parent). Therefore, a parent who chooses to restrict the materials his/her children select must accompany those children when they use the collection to impose those restrictions.

- Further, Library Materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be sequestered, except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft. The use of rare and scholarly items of great value may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm, but no further.

- It is the responsibility of the Library to provide circulating, reference and research materials for the public and students based on the services it is expected to perform.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria outlined in this section are used for all acquisitions, regardless of format, as a guide for selection decisions. An item is not required to meet all selection criteria to be accepted.

General criteria for selection:

- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Favorable reviews by critics that ensure serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value
- Suitability of format to library use
- Availability elsewhere including area libraries and other formats
- Price and availability within the scope of the overall budget
- Relevance to current trends and events
- Relation to the existing collection
- Extent of publicity and current or anticipated demand
- Relation to other resources in the community
- Local, state, or regional historical significance

Content criteria for selection:

- Reputation and/or significance of author, publisher, or producer
- Currency of information or comprehensiveness
- Objectivity and clarity
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Sustained interest or demand
- Usefulness of the information
- Relevance to local history collections
- Local significance of author or subject
- Provides a unique contribution to a field of study

Criteria for electronic formats:

Certain databases and digital collections may change in format or content after they are acquired. When selection involves a remote resource, such as a digital collection or database, it is possible that the content of said resource may not conform to the library's selection criteria at any given time. Professional staff will review the content of such resources on a regular basis to assess their continued value.

The following selection criteria will also be considered for electronic formats:

- Ease of use
- Available to multiple, concurrent users
- Technical quality

- Remote access
- Technical and support requirements
- Vendor data privacy practices
- Not restricted by location
- Digital licensing requirements

Gifts and Donations

Gifts of materials and items donated become the property of the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library and are accepted with the understanding that they are subject to the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Items not selected for the collection may be disposed of our processed pursuant to the Library’s Gift and Donation Policy.

Reconsideration of Library Materials Procedures:

No material will be removed from the Library’s collection until all steps in this process have been completed.

1. A patron (“Requester”) who objects to library material or a program in the collection (“Library Material”) will be sent to the Director.
2. The Director will discuss the Library Materials in question with the Requester, attempting to resolve the concern to both the Requester’s and Library’s satisfaction. The Requester will also be offered a packet of information that includes the Library’s mission statement, collection development policy, the Reconsideration of Materials form, and the Library Bill of Rights. The Director reserves the right to waive this meeting and proceed with providing the Requester a Reconsideration of Material form.
3. If the Requester wishes to carry the request further, the Director will provide the Requester with a Reconsideration of Material form. The Requester is required to complete and submit a Reconsideration of Material form to the Library Director. The Library Board shall be notified when a reconsideration form has been received.
4. The Library Director will form a Reconsideration Committee composed of the Library Director, the Assistant Director, and either the Adult Services Librarian or Youth Services Librarian depending on the genre of the material. The Committee will review the reconsideration form and the material in question to consider whether its inclusion in the collection followed the criteria stated in the selection policy.
5. The Library Director shall make a written response to the Requester within ninety (90) days of the date that the reconsideration form was submitted, informing the patron of the Committee’s decision and the reasons for the decision. If the Library has received a voluminous number of appeals in the Library’s sole discretion, the Library may extend these times. The Library shall provide the requester a good faith estimate of when the Library will be able to process the request. If the concerned patron is not satisfied with the decision of the Committee, a written appeal may be submitted within thirty (30) business days after receiving the written response to the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library Board of Trustees. The Library Board will address the appeal within ninety (90) days of receiving it.

Collection Maintenance and Weeding

Professional library staff regularly review items in the collection to ensure that they continue to meet the educational, informational, recreational, cultural, and diverse needs of library patrons. This is achieved by routinely performing diversity audits and reviewing collections for accuracy, currency, diverse representation, and subject area gaps, and adjusting them accordingly to maintain a balanced collection.

It is the responsibility of professional staff to remove materials that are worn, obsolete, unused or underutilized, outdated, or unnecessarily duplicated from the collection, and to assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed, or lost. Items are not automatically replaced, but rather, professional staff will determine if it is necessary to replace an item based on overall need, demand, budget, and shelf space.

Policy Revision

This policy may be revised and updated at any time as conditions warrant and will be reviewed at regular intervals as deemed necessary by the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library Board of Trustees.

Library Board Adopted November 16, 2022

Library Board Reviewed and Revised August 21, 2024