

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Belfast Free Library is committed to serving the informational, educational and recreational needs of its community. The Collection Development Policy herein outlines the basic criteria for selection and retention of materials and electronic resources in the library collection.

The collection shall be carefully chosen for its value, timeliness, and its suitability in meeting the needs of our community. Responsibility for book selection rests with the library, operating within the framework of the policies enunciated herein and adhering to generally accepted professional practices

Materials shall be selected on the basis of probable appeal to a reasonable section of the community. Each item will be considered on the terms of its merits, its intended audience, and the library's budget. Criteria for selecting materials include the following:

1. Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
2. Contemporary significance
3. Accuracy
4. Literary and artistic excellence
5. Clarity of presentation
6. Relevance to the existing collection
7. Role in maintaining a balanced collection representing many points of view
8. Requests from library users.

Aids used in the selection of material include:

1. Reviews in the trade journals
2. Publishers forecasts, advertisements, and catalogs
3. Bibliographies listing items of interest and importance
4. Suggestions by members of the community

No book or other library material shall be excluded from the library's collection because of the possibility that such materials may come into the possession of children. The responsibility for the use of materials by children and young adults rests with their parents or legal guardian. The library does not stand in loco parentis.

The Belfast Free Library believes that reading, listening and viewing are individual, private matters. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or for their own minor-aged children, the freedom of others to read, listen or view cannot be restricted. The Library Board of Trustees has endorsed and supports the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association.

The Belfast Free Library does not endorse particular beliefs or views represented in the collection. Content that may be offensive to some community members does not disqualify an item from inclusion in the collection. Materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents, and no materials are marked to restrict their use by ages. No materials are sequestered except to protect valuable items from damage or loss.

De-Selection or Weeding: The withdrawal of materials, also called de-selection or weeding, is an ongoing process used to maintain the collection's usefulness, currency, and relevance. Professional library staff has the sole responsibility to weed the collection.

Gifts: The library welcomes gifts but accepts them with the understanding that it has the right to handle or dispose of them in the best interests of the library. Materials may be added to the collection provided they meet the library's standards of selection. Although the library acknowledges gifts for tax purposes, it cannot be responsible for assigning a monetary value to gifts.

The library serves as a repository for materials pertaining to local history. The library collects and cares for materials of historical significance to the Belfast area as part of the special and archival collections. These materials are subject to the criteria outlined above.



#### Statement on Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

An individual with borrowing privileges at the library who wishes to challenge the selection of any material for inclusion in the collection may do so by filing a formal "Request for Review of Library Material" The form may be obtained from the Library Director and should be submitted to the Director for consideration at the next meeting of the Library Board of Trustees. The Board will discuss the request with the Library Director and will determine what action to take regarding the material. The individual who submitted the request is welcome to attend the meeting. No material will be removed from the library collection before the Board meeting.

The decision by the Library Board of Trustees will be final. Once an individual has requested reconsideration of a title, the individual may not request reconsideration of that same title again. If the library receives multiple reconsideration requests for the same title within a five-year period, the Board may adopt essentially the same written decision for each request, without repeating the entire procedure.

APPROVED 5/28/24