

Fairbury Public Library Collection Development and Request for Reconsideration Policy

The Fairbury Public Library is a public institution funded by the City of Fairbury to fill the informational and recreational reading needs of the community. As the only public library containing over 20,000 volumes in Jefferson County many of its patrons come from the surrounding small towns and rural areas. The library supports the collections in the smaller surrounding towns through an extended loan program. Though in recent years the community has seen an increase in ethnic minorities, a majority of county residents are of German heritage and conservative lifestyle. A significant number of residents are over 65. This group and pre-school children account for the largest number of library patrons.

Fairbury Public Library strives to serve the needs of all county residents. Because of a large population of retirees and the relatively smaller population of professionals or highly skilled workers, the Library's primary roles are providing materials for recreational purposes and providing basic, accurate and useful materials for life-long learners. The Library strives to provide these materials in many different formats to increase access by all patrons.

A. Core Collection

Fairbury Public Library maintains collections for all ages and includes print, audio and video materials, fiction and non-fiction titles. Contemporary authors representing common genres make up the bulk of the adult fiction collection. Titles judged to be classics of English literature will be retained as space permits. The majority of the adult non-fiction collection will reflect the need for basic information in areas of common interest such as gardening, crafts, domestic arts, home repair, auto repair, health care and other interests as identified by circulation and patron requests. An attempt to keep several titles in less popular areas will be made as space and budget permit. Basic reference materials such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and atlases will be provided in print or electronic format. The library will make an effort to offer information in electronic form that can be accessed from outside the library through the Internet.

The children's collection consists of award winning titles from past years as well as books from contemporary authors. Fiction titles in reading levels from pre-school to eighth grade constitute the bulk of the collection. Non-fiction covers all disciplines with an emphasis on science and history.

The Library maintains a special collection of local history and genealogy materials. In addition, materials that focus on Nebraska authors, information about Nebraska, or titles featuring Nebraska in some way, can be found throughout the general collection.

The Library also maintains a selection of newspapers and periodicals for both adults and children providing current information on local, state and national news, popular culture, hobbies, health, and finance.

B. Types of materials added

The Library adds materials both print and non-print to its collections on subjects of interest to the community. In selecting these materials, the Library endorses and abides by the *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read* statement as adopted by the American Library Association. Care will also be taken to ensure that no one patron or group unduly influences the selection or withdrawal of library materials. Orders for library materials are placed at intervals throughout the year to insure a regular flow of acquisitions. Items of local significance are added to the collection whenever possible and are generally not discarded or circulated if deemed irreplaceable. In an effort to serve changing populations special collections are added as the need arises and the budget permits.

C. Selection guidelines

The final responsibility for selection of materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies set by the Fairbury Library Board of Trustees. Staff may make suggestions for materials to be purchased and the Director when deciding on a purchase may seek their input. At least one of the following criteria will be used in material selection: needs and interests of the library's users and anticipated users, inclusion on bestseller or award lists, significance of the subject, author's qualifications and reputation or the item's relationship to the rest of the collection. A patron wish list is maintained and items are purchased as the budget allows when it is felt the material suggested will be of general interest or will be of use in the collection. Given the aging demographic of the area, large print selections will be offered whenever possible.

D. Donations and memorials

The library accepts unrestricted gifts of books and other materials in good condition. It is understood at the time of donation that materials become the property of the library and may be used at the library's discretion without accounting to the donors. The Director will evaluate the materials and make decisions regarding the use of donations which may include being added to the collection, sold, donated, or recycled. Items deemed in poor condition, old encyclopedias or other reference materials, and periodicals, will not be accepted. Prior gifts will be evaluated as any other materials for withdrawal from the collection.

Patrons wishing to make a memorial gift are encouraged to select materials recommended by library staff as both appropriate to the collection and relevant to the memory of the deceased. A card is sent acknowledging all memorials and items will be marked with an appropriate bookplate. Memorial items will be evaluated as any other materials for withdrawal from the collection.

E. Weeding

Weeding is an important part of maintaining an active collection. The Library Director and Children's Librarian will systematically weed the collection to keep the library's collection relevant, more attractive and easier to use and to make room for new acquisitions. Other staff members may suggest materials to be weeded based on the following criteria as they see the need. Weeding criteria may include: obsolete, inaccurate or outdated information, last circulation date, damaged or dirty condition, duplicates no longer needed, or parts of incomplete sets or series.

F. Reconsideration of materials

If a patron requests material be withdrawn from the collection or access be restricted he/she must complete a written Request for Reconsideration of Material (attached). The Library Director will review the patron's request and respond in writing within seven days. The Director may choose to withdraw the title from the collection, move it to another location in the library, or leave it in its current location on the shelf. If the patron is not satisfied with the Director's response he/she may schedule with the Library Director a time to appear before the Library Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting for their ruling on the complaint. This option will be offered to the patron in the Director's written response if their request for withdrawal has been denied.

If the Board feels that it is not sufficiently familiar with the title in question to make a decision, the Board president will appoint one board member and the Director will choose one staff member to read, listen to or view the title in question and make a recommendation to the Board at the next regular meeting.

The decision of the Library Board will be final.

Request for Reconsideration and Instructions for Filing a Complaint

Serious objections to titles owned by the library should be in writing. The library provides a *Request for Reconsideration* form that is to be filled out and signed by the patron. The Library Director will then examine the complaint, the material in question, and the circumstances involved in the complaint. Based on the library's *Collection Development Policy*, a decision will be made to withdraw the title from the collection, move it to another location in the library, or leave it in its current location on the shelf. The Director will respond in writing within one week after receipt of the request of the decision.

If the Library Director elects to return the title to the shelves, the complainant may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing before the Library Board of Trustees at their next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the library so a written intent to appeal should be made to the Library Director no later than the last Wednesday of the previous month to be put on the posted agenda.

If the *Request for Reconsideration* appeal is referred to the Library Board, please be prepared to attend the two (2) Board meetings this process will involve. The first meeting will allow the Board to hear you present your request. The second meeting will allow the book review committee (a board member appointed by the board president and a staff member appointed by the library director) to have an opportunity to review the title and determine a recommendation. Upon hearing the recommendation of the book review committee, the board will make a determination on whether to remove, relocate, or retain the title. The board's decision is final.

The Library Board recognizes that while individuals are free to reject materials for themselves which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom to read of others. Items that are offensive to individuals or groups will not be removed from the library in response to those objections. Whenever the question of censorship is involved, no library material shall be removed except under unanimous vote of the Library Board.

Additionally, as a public library, the Fairbury Public Library has an obligation to provide unrestricted access to all items in the library. We will not restrict any group's access to any material in the library. If the decision is made to move an item to another location in the library, parents and guardians are still ultimately responsible for supervision of their minor's use of library materials.

Request for Reconsideration Form

Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Resource to which you object _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

What is your objection?

Did you examine the work in its entirety? If not, what parts did you review?

For print or published media: Have you read any reviews of the material?

Are there any positive aspects to the material?

Please make any further comments you see as relevant. For additional space, please use the reverse side of form. You may attach additional explanatory materials, etc. if necessary.

Signature _____