

## **Procedures for Handling Patron Complaints**

The Winthrop Public Library & Museum is willing to re-examine its position on any item in the library's collections. No item shall be removed or restricted because of a complaint except in accordance with this procedures.

**1. Initial Complaint.** Complainants who come in person, or submit complaints by telephone or by letter should be offered a copy of the REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS form (attached) on which their formal complaint may be submitted. To activate the reconsideration procedures, a complaint must be in writing on the approved forms.

**2. Preliminary Review.** As soon as a complaint has been filed, the objections should be reviewed by the person(s) that selected the item or is responsible for that part of the collection. The item should be reevaluated by the selector, the original reasons for purchase should be evaluated, and objections should be considered, and the opinions of the various reviewing sources used in materials selection.

**3. Preliminary Response.** The objections and the preliminary response should be forwarded to the Library Director, who should review the response and either add relevant comments or return the response to the individual selector for further clarification, following which the Director should make a written response to the complainant.

**4. Alert the Trustees.** Simultaneous with the preliminary review and the formulation of a preliminary response, the Library Director should routinely notify the Trustees that a formal complaint has been made.

**5. Appeal.** If the complainant still feels that the problem has been dealt with inadequately, a final appeal to the Trustees of the Winthrop Public Library & Museum can be made. The appeal should be submitted in writing and will be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Trustees meeting, at which time the Board will conduct a challenge hearing to provide the forum for the complainant to air objections to the title in the collection and the recommendation of the Library Director. It should be announced at the beginning of the hearing that the Board will issue its decision at the following regularly scheduled meeting, and that the hearing is simply to hear all sides of the issue.

Approved by Board of Trustees  
March 10, 2022