

Winthrop Public Library & Museum

Collection Development Policy

Purpose

The Collection Development Policy offers guidance to Library staff in the selection and retention of materials for the Winthrop Public Library & Museum and serves to inform the public of the Library's principles for selection and collection maintenance.

General Principles

The Collection Development Policy is based on the Library's Mission :

The Mission of the Winthrop Public Library & Museum is to provide free public library service to all citizens of Winthrop. The Library will provide a wide range of print and non-print media for recreational and personal development. The Library will also preserve and provide access to a Museum collection covering both history and art in the community.

Collection Objectives

The WPLM provides a contemporary, relevant collection of resources in a wide range of formats to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of its community. The Library endeavors to make use of new technologies and formats to offer library users the greatest access to information and ideas.

The Library maintains a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction materials. Materials and formats are not maintained past their relevance. This ensures a collection of current interest to our patrons. Textbooks and materials of a highly technical or specialized nature more appropriate for research or special libraries are generally excluded from the collection.

The Library strives to build a diverse collection that reflects our community and contains content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically represent a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.

The Museum maintains a collection of historical materials focused on Winthrop, the surrounding area, and the people in it. Items range from archival material such as books, maps, pamphlets and photos, to material objects such as Civil War artifacts, household tools and other items reflective of specific points in the past, with an emphasis on a nautical theme. Selection and removal items in this collection are based on the same principles set forth in this policy.

WPLM recognizes that there are ideas and opinions which are subject to discussion and debate. Inclusion in the library's collection is not an endorsement of a particular point of view or belief.

Resource Sharing

The Winthrop Public Library & Museum is a member of the NOBLE Library Network, an automated resource sharing network of public, academic, school and special libraries covering a wide geographical area north and northeast of Boston. For patrons with needs beyond the local library and the NOBLE system, interlibrary loan allows access to materials in libraries throughout the Commonwealth and the rest of the United States through cooperative interlibrary loan agreements. The library does not have control over the content of certain electronic collections, including those administered by NOBLE or the state, or over materials that may be available through interlibrary loan from other libraries.

Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Director delegates the responsibility for materials selection to library staff.

General Criteria for Materials Selection

When considering materials for purchase, library staff refer to patron requests, reviews in professionally recognized publications, news media, recommended lists by professional organizations, literary awards, and the popularity of similar items. Certain factors influence the selection of materials for the library's collection. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, will be reviewed in terms of the following standards:

- Community needs and interests
- The importance of the subject matter to the collection
- Authoritativeness (or reputation and qualifications of the author or publisher of the work)
- Availability of the material in the North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE) consortium or statewide delivery system
- Price and availability
- Timeliness or permanence of the material
- Favorable reviews in professionally recognized publications
- Literary or artistic merit

An item need not meet all of these criteria to be selected.

Collection Maintenance

Collection maintenance or "weeding" is part of the continuous evaluation of the library collection by the professional library staff. In order to maintain a collection that is up to date, reliable, in good condition, and relates to the needs and interests of the patrons, materials are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Materials are withdrawn when they are deemed to be outdated, inaccurate, seldom used, or in poor condition.

Replacement of Materials

The library does not automatically replace items that are withdrawn from circulation due to loss, damage, or wear. Decisions will be made based on the following criteria:

- Demand for the specific material
- Number of copies held at the library and in the NOBLE consortium
- Availability of more up-to-date materials on the subject
- Funding

Gifts and donations

Gifts/donated material may be added to the library collection, sold for the benefit of the library, or disposed of in a manner appropriate to their condition and usefulness.

Censorship and Reconsideration of Library Materials

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to an individual, and maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. The selection of library materials is predicated on the customer's right of access to information and freedom from censorship. Selections will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material itself.

Any resident of Winthrop with an active NOBLE library card who wishes to request that a specific item be reconsidered for inclusion in the collection is asked to complete and sign the Request for Reconsideration Form. The form will be forwarded to the Director who, in consultation with the other professional staff, will reexamine the item according to the "Criteria for Selection" listed above. Within 30 days, the questioned item will be reviewed, in its entirety, and once a decision has been made regarding the matter, a letter will be sent explaining the decision. If the person is unsatisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within 10 business days to the Library Board of Trustees. If the Library Board of Trustees plan to address the appeal at their Board meeting, the patron will be notified of when and where the meeting will be held. The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of public comments. The decision of the Library Board of Trustees is final. A title will be reviewed by the Library Board of Trustees only once within a five year period unless the content has undergone major revisions, or at the discretion of the Library Director or the Library Board of Trustees.