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Thayer Public Library

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

TERESE STANO – LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

THAYER PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy of the Thayer Public Library is to provide guidelines for acquisition and withdrawal decisions, allocation of resources and long-range collection development in accordance with the library's mission. The Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read and View Statement have been endorsed by the Thayer Public Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of this policy.

Community Description

Library Description

Resource Sharing

The library is a charter member of the Old Colony Library Network, an automated resource-sharing consortium of libraries. (A copy of the OCLN collection development policy is available in the Reference Department.) Computer terminals provide bibliographic access to the collections of the network libraries, and a daily delivery system ensures fast availability. For those patrons with needs outside the scope of our collection or the collections of network libraries, we are able to provide interlibrary loan service through cooperative agreements with the state library system.

Library Mission Statement and Goals

The Thayer Public Library works in partnership with other community institutions to provide the informational resources and tools necessary to support formal education and life-long learning.

Goals

Commons: The Thayer Public Library will serve as a centralized, convenient community destination by providing formal and informal gathering spaces for a variety of programs, meeting spaces and events.

Current Topics and Titles: The Thayer Public Library will provide an up-to-date collection of current topics and titles in a wide variety of formats, arranged in a patron-friendly manner for easy access.

Formal Learning Support: The Thayer Public Library will provide an environment that is conducive to learning by offering materials that support intellectual curiosity and formal learning and providing activities and programs for a variety of age groups.

General Information: The Thayer Public Library will be the community's primary gateway to general information and knowledge.

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Information Literacy: The Thayer Public Library will provide training and instruction in skills related to locating, evaluating, and utilizing information resources in a wide variety of formats.

Lifelong Learning: The Thayer Public Free Library will provide a forum for the pursuit of personal growth and development opportunities and the satisfaction of individual intellectual curiosity through education, recreation, enrichment, and literary exploration.

Local History and Genealogy: The Thayer Public Library will provide opportunities for its patrons to know and better understand personal and community heritage.

II. RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

The Library Director has responsibility for collection development, operating in accordance with policies set by the Board of Trustees. Selection of materials is made by the Library Director as well as professional Library staff, who are qualified by reason of education, training, and experience. Other staff members and the general public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration. Materials may include, but are not limited to books, periodicals, newspapers, maps, audio and video recordings, and software in a variety of formats such as print, microfilm, audio/video disc, and/or digital files, as well as digital devices and other objects.

Borrowers may request that we purchase materials by filling out a “suggest a purchase” form. The library makes every effort to accommodate these requests when the materials meet the criteria for inclusion in the collection.

III. SELECTION TOOLS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection Tools

Selection tools include but are not limited to: review in professional journals or periodicals which specialize in a particular subject; individual subject expertise of staff or community members; suggestions from Braintree Library patrons, coverage, in local bookstores and newspapers, publisher’s catalogs, standard bibliographies and media.

Selection Criteria

Selection is based on recommendations in authoritative reviewing media and on requests from Library users, as well as informational, recreational, and educational needs of the Thayer Public Library community. While budgetary and space limitations make it impossible for a medium-sized library to build a comprehensive collection in all subject and interest areas, material formats and languages, the library does endeavor to offer a collection that is diversified, well-developed and as balanced as possible. Inclusion of an item in the collection does not indicate library endorsement of its content.

The following criteria provide the general framework within which selection takes place:

Whenever possible material should receive favorable reviews from recognized review sources. When unavailable, judgment is made by a trained staff member.

Material should contribute to the balance and variety of Thayer Public Library's collection as a whole, to ensure the library maintains a diverse collection that reflects as many viewpoints as possible.

Materials are evaluated with regard to artistic worth, authority, competence of presentation, comprehension by the intended age level, and contribution to the total collection.

Other considerations include: contemporary significance, usefulness or interest, importance as an historical record, availability through the Old Colony Library Network or through interlibrary loan, requests from users of the library, and physical quality of format.

Non-fiction material is evaluated with regard to authority, authenticity, accuracy, and timeliness. Presentation of ideas should be logical and clear.

Material is selected to meet the needs and interests of the general public, not to duplicate research or special collections found elsewhere. Materials are selected in various formats, both print and non-print, to meet the needs of library users. The relative permanent value of material is taken into consideration. Some items are selected knowing use will be short-lived while other materials are selected for long-term significance.

Adult Material

Fiction Collection: Every attempt is made to provide a wide selection of the various types of fiction, and to include the best works of the past and present. Each work is judged on individual merit. The number of copies purchased is determined primarily by anticipated demand or by the number of patron reserves requested on the title.

Nonfiction Collection: Selection often involves striking a balance between demand for current highly requested titles and the need to maintain and develop a collection of standard works of lasting value. Occasionally a work may be added despite an unfavorable review or in a format not generally chosen (i.e., textbook) if it fills a gap in the collection where a better work is unavailable or if we have received patron requests. Works are selected to provide a range of viewpoints on issues, recognizing the individual's right to read controversial opinions. In the case of controversial topics, variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever possible. Non-fiction titles may be excluded for inaccurate information, and text material of too limited or specialized a nature. The library cannot normally support, except through interlibrary loan, the professional needs of individuals whose interests require highly technical or very specialized information. In addition, the library cannot take the place of an academic facility as a source for a wide range of highly academic materials.

Paperback Collection: Paperbacks purchased by the library are selected from current best-selling paperbacks, and replacements are purchased for the most popular paperbacks that have become too worn for circulation.

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Large Print Books: The library selects books printed in large- type format to provide a range of fiction and nonfiction designated to meet the special needs of adult patrons. Selection is based on the same criteria as fiction and nonfiction collections, as well as availability. Not all books are available for purchase in large-print format.

World Languages: The library collects recreational and informational material in languages other than English for adults and juveniles to meet the needs of a diverse population, focusing on languages that are actively used and can be purchased, cataloged, and accessed accordingly.

Periodicals: The library provides periodicals on a wide range of subjects of reference value and recreational interest. Periodicals are selected according to the following criteria: indexed in one of the library's indexing services, inclusion in or exclusion by standard indexing sources, cost, requests by patrons, whether the periodical has local or regional interest, availability at other libraries in the area, whether a subject area needs to be expanded to help balance the collection. Periodicals are kept as long as space and their continued use requires. The library also provides availability to periodicals in digital format through subscription services and databases. Selection of titles included in digital services is not usually a function of Thayer Public Library.

Newspapers: Current issues and back files are maintained in the periodicals area of the library. Newspapers are kept as long as space and their continued use requires.

Reference: Within budgetary limits, the print materials in the Reference collection are those designed by the arrangement and treatment of their subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. They can provide quick, concise, and current information or may serve as an index to other materials in the collection. The Reference collection is designated for use within the library. In selecting for the Reference collections, the primary concern is the information needs of the library's clientele. Reference materials are located in the Reference Department.

Online Resources: Library provides a selection of online resources, including research databases, to assist with research and recreational interests. Databases are vetted yearly by librarians and are continually evaluated based on usage, cost, relevancy, and demand.

In addition to the general selection criteria mentioned above, the following criteria are considered in acquiring materials for the Reference collection: usefulness of the publication, considering the existing collection; favorable reviews or inclusion in basic reference collection guides, reputation of the author or publisher; currency of the topic; date of publication; cost; expense for ongoing maintenance, if the title in question is a serial publication which will require frequent updating. Duplicate copies of reference materials may be purchased for the circulating collection if the price is not prohibitive, and the content is suitable for that collection.

Local History

Mission

The Local History Collection is intended to serve as a resource for research, study and understanding of the Town's history. In pursuing this mission, the library will:

- collect, catalog, and preserve records of historical value relating to the Town.
- provide facilities for the retention, preservation, and research of the collection.
- provide guidance to individuals using the collection.

Scope of the Collection

The Local History Collection is housed in the Reference Department. It contains books relating to local history and genealogy. The Collection contains published and unpublished local history materials in various forms, including fragile items and items not easily replaced or that are irreplaceable.

Selection Policy

Collect material of permanent historical value relating to Braintree's history, governance, commerce, individuals, and organizations. Material on surrounding towns may be included in the collection. All published works on Braintree are acquired. In addition, books on Norfolk County and Massachusetts resources and history may be acquired according to their relevance to the Braintree area. Town histories and genealogical research materials are selectively acquired.

Multiple copies are acquired according to availability, demand, and value. Duplicate copies are housed in reference, circulating nonfiction, and/or the young adult area if appropriate.

Other Physical Materials: CD's, DVDs, and other audio and video formats will be selected in accordance with the criteria outlined for adult, young adult, and children's materials. In addition, equipment or items designated as part of the Library of Things may be selected for circulation.

Digital Materials: The library recognizes the importance and growing demand for digital materials. Databases and digital content, including materials and streaming, are purchased from several vendors. These materials are purchased in accordance with criteria outlined for physical materials. However, in many cases the library is purchasing access to a collection of pre-selected material. Some electronic resources are selected by the Old Colony Library Network and the Massachusetts Library System and shared with their members.

Microforms (microfiche and microfilm)

Currently the library houses the full run of the local Braintree paper on microfilm.

Microforms are added to the collection for one or more of the following reasons:

- acquire materials not available in any other electronic format.
- compress space required to store materials.
- preserve materials in the process of degenerating.

- serve as a backup copy for some of the high demand.

The following factors should be considered when deciding whether print or microform will be the favored medium:

- potential use of material.
- how long the print format will last.
- storage space.
- equipment for reading and printing.
- costs of various formats.

Collection Development for Children and Young Adults

The principles which guide the selection of materials for children are fundamentally the same as those for adult materials. The collection is carefully chosen for children of all ages and abilities with emphasis on materials which entertain, stimulate the imagination, develop reading ability, and enable children to learn about the world around them.

In choosing materials for this group, the selector uses age appropriateness as a determining selection principle. Materials are evaluated for reading level, interest level, and treatment of the subject for the age of the intended audience. Materials are chosen to assure a well-rounded representation of all points of view as with adult books. The selectors do not assume that all children and young adult materials will be suitable for every individual. Responsibility for overseeing a child's reading choices rests with parents. The collection does contain materials for use in completing school assignments. Materials are purchased to complement, not take the place of school resources. Textbooks are not purchased unless they contain better subject coverage than other books. Some duplication of materials is found between the adult, young adult, and children's collections when appropriate.

Since the preschooler's door to learning is part of the library's mission, priority is placed on maintaining a collection that contains a wide variety of picture books. Items that are well reviewed as well as those requested by patron demand and interest are purchased as budget allows. Board books are purchased to encourage interaction with our youngest users. Beginning readers comprise an area of high demand. Selection includes both fiction and non-fiction titles. Since some of this genre is produced strictly for monetary gain and not for literary or educational merit, selection is based on reputation of the author and publishing house in addition to positive reviews. The non-fiction collection is broad based with emphasis on animals, biographies, and the creative arts. Regular units of study in the school curriculum also influence selection. The fiction collection includes popular authors and well reviewed titles with particular emphasis on genres of fantasy, mystery, and adventure.

The parent shelf contains books on topics that are of interest to both parents and teachers. Consideration will be given to purchasing titles that are in the adult collection if demand merits an additional copy. Books on sensitive issues which are written for children shall be shelved in the general collection and not in this area.

Young Adult

Young adult materials serve as a bridge to the adult collection and are aimed at addressing the needs and concerns of young adult patrons. The needs of young adults differ in kind and intensity from those of adult users. They often look to the library for materials and resources to meet academic demands. Materials are selected using the same general criteria used in selection of the adult collection but with the focus on the experience, maturity, and interests of young people. In general, young adult services are geared to grades 7-12, overlapping somewhat with children's services at one end of the range and those for adults at the other. There are, however, many potential users of this material and this factor is given consideration when developing the collection. The themes in young adult fiction generally center on the struggle to develop an identity and set of values and to find a place in the larger community. The young adult fiction collection consists of material written for and/or appealing to this particular age group, regardless of genre. Every effort is made to provide teenagers with fiction that deals with their concerns in open, honest ways, and which meets their recreational and academic reading needs.

Teenagers read non-fiction extensively to gain information on topics of concern to them such as personal appearance, sex education, crisis and coping, school assignments, etc. Young adult non-fiction is selected in all subject areas represented in the adult non-fiction collection. Titles are chosen for their timeliness and appeal. The staff makes every effort to purchase factual books, which are clearly written and attractive in format. The general reference, audio-visual, and periodical collections include materials for young adults. The resources of the entire library are available to users in this age group.

Web Links

Introduction: The Thayer Public Library website has been created to advance the library's mission as an information center supporting the educational and recreational needs of its users and to provide access to materials beyond the local collection. The website provides guidance for patrons exploring Internet resources and assists Internet users seeking information about Library programs and services.

Responsibility for Web Link Collection Development: Library staff evaluate and select links to other web sites that have proven useful in answering patron questions or have been reviewed by reputable individuals. Patrons are encouraged to suggest links for inclusion on the web site. However, because the site is not intended as either a full or partial public forum, addition of a link is the responsibility of library staff.

General Selection Guidelines: The major considerations for selecting links are the informational, recreational, and educational needs of the Thayer Public Library community. Sites are selected to enrich, broaden, and complement material in the Library's Collection. Selectors will evaluate the links and using review sources in print publications, online and listservs. Link selection is based on relevancy, quality, currency, and navigability. While the

Library cannot control the accuracy or availability of the information accessed through the Internet, selectors attempt to select links to sites noted for reliability, authority, and accessibility.

Specific Selection Guidelines: The following criteria provide specific selection guidelines for Internet resources:

Content

- Accurate information
- Factual information
- Substantive information
- Relevant information
- Current information

Design

- User- friendly interface
- Well-organized and presented
- Easy to navigate
- Requires a minimum of additional software or hardware
- All links work properly

Access

- Stability of site
- Site loads easily
- Site is freely accessible; (except for purchased information sources)
- Site is consistently available
- If special software is required, instructions are easy to follow and application is easy to install

Authority

- Creator(s) clearly identified
- Sources of information clearly documented
- Contact information clearly stated
- Ability to ascertain status, affiliation, qualifications, and reputation of creator

Currency

- Regularly maintained and up-to-date
- Changes and grows to reflect new information

Scope

- Purpose of the site clearly stated
- Appropriate for the intended audience in relation to library policy
- Subject breadth, depth, and currency clearly stated

De-selection

Selected links may be removed from the library's website if they no longer meet the above criteria. Thayer Public Library's website will continue to evolve in response to the ever-changing nature of the Internet.

IV. WITHDRAWAL OF MATERIALS

The systematic removal of materials no longer useful is an essential part of maintaining an effective library collection. A withdrawal policy ensures that the collection remains vital and useful by: discarding and/or replacing items in poor physical condition; eliminating items with obsolete, misleading, or superseded information; and reducing the number of copies of titles whose relevance to the community has lessened. The professional staff will evaluate the collection for repair, replacement, and/or discard on an ongoing basis, using the CREW method of evaluation developed by Joseph P. Segal. This process (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) uses the following criteria to evaluate a title's current usefulness to the collection: Is content misleading or factually inaccurate? Is the item worn out and beyond mending or rebinding? Has item been superseded by a new edition or a better book on the subject? Is this item trivial or of no lasting literary or scientific merit? Is the material irrelevant to the needs and interests of our community? Date of publication, last date circulated, and average number of circulations per year are some of the useful indicators of the above criteria. For a description of CREW guidelines by Dewey classification, see appendix.

Materials withdrawn from the Thayer Public Library will be disposed of in a manner consistent with their quality and condition. Materials removed because of dated content or poor condition will not be imposed on another library or institution.

V. GIFT POLICY

The library accepts gifts of materials but reserves the right to evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. The library may choose not to accept gifts which do not meet the library's objectives and policies. A receipt providing a description of the material and the date of donation will be provided upon request. However, the Library will not provide monetary appraisal of any gift for income tax or other purposes. The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift and makes the final decision on the use and disposition of the gift. The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access of gift materials. Items with restrictions necessitating special handling or preventing integration of the gift into the general collection will not normally be accepted.

VI. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND ACCESS

The Board of Library Trustees, the Library Director, and the library staff recognize the responsibility of the Thayer Public Library to provide materials representing diverse points of view on different topics. Selection is made solely on the merits of the work in relation to collection development and in relation to the needs of library patrons. The presence of an item in the library's collection does not indicate an endorsement of the item's content. Selection cannot be restricted by the possibility that certain materials might be considered objectionable by some users on moral, religious, political, or other grounds. Well-intentioned individuals or groups may occasionally question the inclusion of an item in the collection because of fear or

doubt about the effects of the material on impressionable persons. Although the staff and trustees understand this concern, it is our position that the risk to society is far greater if public access to ideas and information is restricted. Neither an individual, group, nor the library staff has a right to decide what others may or may not read. All materials are shelved on open shelves, freely and easily accessible to the public. There will be no labeling of any item to indicate its point of view or bias. The library assures free access to its holdings for all patrons, who can select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Children are not limited to the children's collections, which are kept separate from other library collections to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading, listening, or viewing of library materials must rest with the parent or guardian, not with the library staff. The staff and Board of Trustees of the Thayer Public Library believe that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. We have adopted the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statement as official library policy. (See appendix)

VII. RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

The library welcomes the right of patrons and community members to question the desirability of materials in the collection. The question should be handled with the same respect and consideration as any other information request. The following procedure has been developed to ensure that all questions are handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

The patron will be offered the opportunity to discuss the material in question with the Director or the Assistant Director. If not satisfied with the outcome of this discussion, the patron may fill out a "Request for Reconsideration form " which is available upon request and on our website. The form will be referred to the Director. The Director will make a decision on the item and notify the person in writing. If the person wishes to appeal against the decision, he/she may send a written request to the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will discuss the concern with the patron at a board meeting. The Board will take a vote on the request. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final. A person will receive notification of the decision in writing within 7 days of the vote. Library reports all formal challenges to the Massachusetts Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee and to the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.

VIII. REVIEW OF POLICY

In order to maintain a dynamic selection program which reflects current community needs, this policy should be reviewed whenever necessary by the Board of Trustees. Revisions should be developed by the staff and presented to the Board for its acceptance. This evaluation will be performed at least once every ten years.

APPENDICES

CREW Method of Collection Evaluation (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding)

The CREW method, explained by Joseph P. Segal in *Evaluation and Weeding Collections in Small and Medium-sized Public Libraries: The CREW Method* (Revised and updated by Jeanette Larson, 2012 ,

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/tslac/ld/ld/pubs/crew/crewmeth12.pdf>)

involves judging materials using the following criteria:

Several factors must be considered during the weeding process. These factors include:

- The library's selected service responses and resultant goals
- The needs and demands of the library's community of users
- The availability of more suitable material
- The ability of the budget to provide funds to purchase more satisfactory items
- The relationship of a particular item to others on that subject
- Cooperative agreements with other libraries and the ability for patrons to use other libraries in the area
- The degree to which the library serves as an archive or local history center
- The possible future usefulness of a particular item
- The availability of more current information on the Internet
- The ability of the library to borrow the item through interlibrary loan

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to have access to materials, the library supports the following documents:

Library Bill of Rights

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

The Freedom to Read Statement

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

Freedom to View Statement

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>