POLICY 006

SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

I. General Statement:

The Library will attempt to provide materials on a wide range of subjects, and to offer these in various media insofar as its budget, physical facilities and staff permits. Every attempt will be made to provide materials on the most important issues of the day, with coverage in depth where it is deemed especially necessary.

The Library will make every attempt to provide literature which represents a wide variety of interest and types of thought and opinion. It will always endeavor to offer thoughtful materials on as many sides of controversial issues as possible. Censorship, which is the selection or non-selection of materials based upon personal taste rather than professional judgment, is not appropriate to this institution.

Selection procedures for adult, young adult and juvenile materials will involve the search for the best that is available, relying on published reviews and the considered judgment of the professional staff.

In selecting materials, the contribution they make to the education of the reader, their aesthetic or inspirational value and their usability will be considered. In addition, the Library will attempt to make a comparison between new materials under consideration and those already published. Many works important to our culture contain isolated elements to which some individuals may object. The Library's selection will be guided by the value or impact of the work as a whole — the impact of the entire work; transcending the specific words, phrases or incidents of which it is made.

The Library will provide books and other materials for young adults and children, which are suitable for these age groups. Whenever possible, these collections will be clearly labeled; but the Library will not follow a selection policy which prevents young adults or children from reading mature literature.

The Library will not follow a selection policy, which in any way discourages adults from reading mature literature because of the possibility that such works may fall into the hands of children.

II. Treatment of Specific Areas:

A. Censorship:

The Library Board is in agreement with the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement, which says in part: "We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject obscenities. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be 'protected' against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression."

The Library Board recognizes censorship as a purely individual matter. The Library Board declares that, while anyone is free to reject for himself books of which he does not approve, he cannot exercise this right of censorship in a manner restrictive to the freedom to read of others.

Censorship of books urged or practiced by volunteer arbiters of morals or political opinion, or by organizations that would establish coercive concepts in these areas, must be opposed by the Library in maintenance of its responsibilities to provide public information and to provide a variety of diverse points of view.

The Board of Trustees realizes that there is the possibility that certain material [s] in the Library may be regarded by some as unpleasant or offensive, or in political opposition to local beliefs. The Library must have in its collection materials of varied points of view, even those views which may be regarded by some as controversial, if it is to fulfill its obligation of providing a balance and thoughtful collection for the benefit of the public it serves.

In no case shall any book be excluded from the collection merely because of the race, nationality, gender or sexual orientation, or of the political or religious views of the author. Books and other reading material
shall not be proscribed or removed from the Library shelves because of political, moral or doctrinal disapproval.

No book shall be judged for exclusion by taking single passages out of context and basing condemnation of that book on such “lifted” passages.

The Library Board wishes to emphasize that the presence of a magazine or a book in the Library does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Library Board or its staff.

B. RESTRICTIVE LABELING AND SEGREGATED LOCATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS.

1. The Library does not indicate, through the use of labels or other devices, a particular philosophy outlined in a book or held by an author, since to do so might tend to establish a judgment in a reader’s mind before he has had an opportunity to examine the materials personally.

2. All library materials will be kept on open shelves, except materials, which are [1] in poor physical condition, [2] are not replaceable, or are difficult to replace, [3] are extremely rare, [4] are subject to mutilation and/or destruction and/or theft, [5] are extremely expensive, or [6] are extremely fragile.

3. The Library does not in any way segregate materials because they are “too adult.”

C. RELIGION AND POLITICS:

The Library attempts to maintain a balanced and impartial recognition of all religious and political viewpoints as found in Library materials. The Library’s selection of literature in these areas should be broad and tolerant, without partisanship or propaganda.

Religious materials of a devotional or instructional nature are considered a province of individual religious institutions, unless a given title is in such widespread demand that it becomes necessary to purchase same for the Library’s general collection.

D. TEXTBOOKS:

It is the responsibility of school systems to supply the textbooks required in school courses. It is the responsibility of the Public Library to furnish supplementary materials for both formal and informal education. As a general rule, textbooks are purchased for the Library’s general collection only if they are the best or sole titles available in a given subject area.

E. NON-BOOK MATERIALS:

In addition to books, the Library will select and provide such non-book materials including but not limited to sheet music and other printed non-book sources; as well as DVDs, Blu-Rays, music CDs, Books on CD, video games, Library of Things or other audio-visual materials as may be necessary to supplement and improve the resources of the Library.

F. THE FACTOR OF PUBLIC DEMAND:

The Library Board recognizes the factor of public demand as a legitimate basis for the selection of such materials for inclusion in this Library’s materials-collection.

G. GIFTS:

1. Materials offered to the Library as gifts may be accepted or rejected by the Library’s Director. Acceptance shall be on the basis that the Library is free to keep or dispose of such materials, as it may seem fit.
2. When determining whether a gift item is to be added to the collection, the same standards are applied with respect to it as are used in the normal selection of an item for purchase.

3. In the case of memorial gifts, the Library Director or other professional Library staff member should offer to assist the donor in selecting materials suitable as a gift and a memorial. The Library Board reserves the right to review any proposed gift or memorial, which the Library Director deems to be unsuitable for the collection or to the buildings and grounds of the Library.

H. **DUPLICATES:**

In most cases, duplication of books in demand should be on the basis of one [1] book for every five [5] requests, this insofar as funds will permit.

I. **EXCLUSIONS:**

If a given piece of material is not chosen for the Library’s collections, it has been excluded because [1] it does not meet the Library’s standards for selection in a given area, [2] the Library already has adequate coverage on the subject, [3] budget limitations, [4] the material in question is too scientific, technical or specialized for the general readership of the community.

J. **INTER-LIBRARY LOAN:**

Library staff will make every reasonable effort to borrow materials from other libraries in the County, State or Nation if the Library’s holdings do not meet the specific requirements of patrons.

K. **PROVISIONS FOR REFERRAL AND REVIEW:**

Since the Library does purchase a large quantity of book and non-book materials, and since the process for selection of these materials is a highly subjective nature, it is possible to make an occasional mistake in the application of principles of materials selection. The Library Director stands ready to review individual decisions upon the written request of a District resident/taxpayer. The written result of this review will then be presented to the Board of Trustees for further review and disposition.

*Reaffirmed by Board of Trustees: October 16, 2003
Under Revision, October 2003
Approved by Board of Trustees: April 19, 2023*
HEWLETT-WOODMERE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Request for Reconsideration of Material

The trustees of the Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library have established a materials selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the Library Director.

Hewlett-Woodmere Public Library
1125 Broadway
Hewlett, NY 11557

Date ________________________________
Name ______________________________
Address ______________________________
City __________________ State/Zip __________
Phone __________________ Email __________________

Do you represent self? ______ Or an organization? ______
Name of Organization ____________________________

1. Resource on which you are commenting:
   ____ Book  ____ Movie  ____ Magazine  ____ Audio
   ____ Digital Resource  ____ Game  ____ Newspaper  ____ Other

   Title ________________________________
   Author ________________________________

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

   __________________________________________

3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

   __________________________________________

4. What concerns you about the resource?

   __________________________________________

5. Are there resources(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

   __________________________________________

6. What action are you requesting the library to consider?

   __________________________________________