



DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY

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JAMES C. SEIDL, City Librarian



MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY MEETING

Saturday, May 2, 1987

9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

- I. Review of minutes of March 21, 1987 meeting
- II. Five minute presentation by each Board member of their views concerning the policy.
- III. Review of Library Bill of Rights

MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY

The Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees held a special meeting on May 2, 1987, at 9 a.m. to discuss the material selection policy. Members present were Mr. Mueller, Mr. Akin, Mrs. Lutovsky, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Rossiter, Mr. Seidman and Mr. Sorensen. Members absent were Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Alpi. Staff present included Mr. Seidl, Mr. Merrick and Ms. Humphreys.

The Board discussed several ideas for revision to the present policy.

The Policies, Public Relations and Personnel Committee met on Thursday, May 7, 1987 at 7 p.m. in the City Librarian's office to continue the discussion on the material selection policy. Members present were Mrs. Alpi, Mrs. Lutovsky, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Rossiter and Mr. Sorensen. After more discussion, the Board requested that Mr. Seidl prepare a draft incorporating their ideas.

A copy of that draft is attached.

MATERIAL SELECTION AND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

- I. Decatur Public Library's primary function is to provide materials to meet the educational, cultural and informational needs of the residents of the city of Decatur. As a community institution, the library is dedicated to the concept of service to everyone. A fundamental part of this service is the selection, acquisition, organization, circulation and promotion of appropriate materials.

Free and convenient access to the world of ideas, information and creative experience is of vital importance to every citizen. Therefore, the Decatur Public Library recognizes the following principles:

- A. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of their origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.
 - B. The library should provide materials and information representing all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
 - C. The addition of any item to the library collection in no way represents an endorsement by the library of any theory, idea or policy contained in it.
 - D. The library should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of its responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
 - E. The library should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
 - F. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, religion, background or social or political views.
 - G. The library should provide meeting rooms that are available to the public they serve on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- II. Selection of materials for the library collections is based upon five factors:
 - A. Mission of the Library

The Decatur Public Library will select, acquire and organize materials in all media:

To meet the individual's needs for information.

To help the individuals attain maximum self-development through life-long intellectual and cultural growth.

To supplement both formal and informal educational experiences of individuals.

To provide practical and vocational information that will improve occupational capabilities.

To stimulate thoughtful participation of the individual in the life of the family, the community and the world.

To serve as a resource center for the informational, educational and recreational needs of the community.

To serve as a storehouse of knowledge for both the research and cultural needs of the community.

To assume an active role within the community.

To document and preserve local community information and history.

B. The community as a factor in selection.

In order to serve the community, the public library must have knowledge of the needs of the people it serves as well as information on the availability of resources in other community agencies. The Decatur Public Library provides service to any city resident.

The library desires to cooperate as fully as possible with:

Local businesses and industries, since they play an important role in Decatur's economic growth and development.

Local libraries, library systems and their members and the State Library, to provide the best library service while avoiding duplication of services and resources.

Local agencies, groups and organizations whose purposes and activities are related to library objectives.

The educational community to provide materials which supplement and enrich the reference, research and

recreational needs of students of all ages.

C. Selection based upon clientele to be served.

The selection of materials for clientele will be based upon the following guidelines:

Material should be of immediate or anticipated interest to individuals or groups in the community.

Subject coverage should be as broad in scope as the interests of the community and, within the constraints of budgetary considerations, provide such variety and depth as demand may indicate.

Materials should meet acceptable standards of quality with respect to content, expression and manufacture.

Materials should meet commonly accepted standards with respect to accuracy and responsibility of opinion.

Non-print material shall be acquired to illustrate and extend the value of printed materials in the library and to increase the general usefulness of the library to all segments of the community.

The volume and nature of requests by the public will be given serious consideration.

The specific aim of the Young Adult collection is to provide a wide range of materials that can be used to promote a life-long pleasure and interest in reading and to introduce adolescents (age 13 and older) to the world of adult literature by relating to their recreational and informational needs and to the world they live in. Recognizing that adolescence is a period of rapid physical, mental and emotional growth, and taking into account the many levels of sophistication and maturity of this age group, materials are selected which vary in format, content and reading difficulty. In order to provide for readers of different abilities and backgrounds, materials should include readable and relevant adult and children's materials as well as those specifically for teenagers. Materials for young adults are selected with a view toward helping young people understand their own development and responsibilities and providing a basis for informed decisions. The collections are for browsing rather than for reference, and are designed for the self-motivated recreational, emotion and informational needs rather than for school reference needs.

The children's collection will provide materials which anticipate and meet the diversified needs, interest, tastes

and backgrounds of boys and girls from infancy through age twelve. These materials should provide enjoyment, inspire and cultivate in children a love of books and reading, help children know more about themselves and their world, prepare them for thoughtful participation in social and political affairs, stimulate their creative powers and appreciation of beauty, stimulate them to develop their mental capabilities, meet their personal informational needs, and help them recognize a broad spectrum of moral and social values.

Children are not limited to materials in the juvenile collection, although juvenile collections are kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for materials selected by a child must rest with his or her parent or guardian, not with the library.

In addition, material will be selected for the homebound, visually and physically impaired, individuals with learning disabilities, adult beginning readers, and people for whom English is not the principle language.

D. Selection criteria by format.

The format of material is important in the development of a well-rounded collection on which serves the needs of a broad spectrum of users. In building collections of merit and significance, material will be considered according to objective guidelines subject to rare exceptions. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following:

Suitability of physical form for library use.

Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium with respect to content.

Demand for material in a given format or medium.

Relationship of material to other material some collection or to material in other forms in the library.

1. Books

Case bound books are the principle format. Spiral bound and loose-leaf forms will not normally be considered. Paperback books are acceptable for less-used material and where case-bound books are not available. Textbooks, laboratory manuals and other instructional materials are purchased when they are the best organized or most useful format for presentation of content.

2. Newspapers

The library will collect all local newspapers, a representation of nearby cities and selected large U.S. cities. A permanent microfilm file of local newspapers and the New York Times and Wall Street Journal will be maintained as newspapers of record.

3. Periodicals

A large selection of periodical literature will be purchased and retained by the library. Inclusion of a title in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature requires that a title be subscribed for and retained as long as that volume of the Guide is retained.

4. Pamphlets

Pamphlets will be purchased and organized by subject.

5. Maps

Maps will be acquired to meet general or specific defined interest in the community.

6. Government Documents

The library is a partial U.S. government depository and is subject to government regulations with respect to the depository collection.

7. Filmstrips

Filmstrips are acquired in limited numbers primarily for public programming in the library.