

Poestenkill Library

Policies & Procedures

Materials Selection & Collection Development Policy

The Trustees and/or Director of the Poestenkill Library acquire materials for the public that will fill educational, informational and recreational needs of the community and attempts to anticipate and plan for future needs. These materials shall represent the broadest spectrum of print and non-print media available. An effort shall be made to cover all subject areas; concentrations may be placed on particular fields with heavy public demand. Priorities may be determined by budgetary constraints.

Guiding Principles

Free and convenient access to the world of ideas, information, and the creative experience is of vital importance to every citizen today. The materials in the Poestenkill Library shall be selected, organized, preserved, and made available to all library users.

The Trustees and/or Director shall make known to the community via website, newsletters, and the media, the availability of its services and attempt to reach unserved areas of the community through such methods as deposit collections, service to shut-ins, and the like, wherever it may be deemed appropriate and feasible.

Objectives of Selection

Selection may be defined as the decision that must be made to add materials to the collection, or to retain materials already in the collection. The primary objectives are:

1. To maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, reference, and research. Emphasis will not be placed on scholarly works, but on materials that will be considered accessible to the lay reader.
2. To provide materials which support educational, cultural, and civic activities in the community.
3. To collect materials of contemporary significance, as well as permanent value.
4. To provide materials for recreation and enlightenment.
5. To provide a selection of transitory, as well as experimental, materials.

Criteria used in selecting materials for the collection include usefulness, readability, appearance in standard review sources, authority or significance of author, quality of writing, relationship to present collection and availability of similar material, reputation of publisher, timeliness and permanence, format, organization of work, index, bibliographies, price, etc. For non-fiction works, the primary criteria will be the timeliness of the material, particularly in areas that become quickly outdated.

Responsibility for Selection and Guidelines

The Director has ultimate responsibility for materials selection. The Director may designate other staff with expertise in certain areas to order materials in those areas. Guidelines to be used in materials selection may include:

- Favorable review in an accepted review source, or professional library standard lists, including newspaper reviews;
- Probability of heavy demand, and/or several borrower requests;
- Recognition by the Director of a need for particular material in the collection.

Replacements

Titles withdrawn because of damage or loss are replaced based on the same considerations applied to original selection. Whenever possible, classics should be replaced when copies in better condition, format, or edition are available. In addition, the following factors are to be considered:

1. Authority and importance of the author.
2. Value of the individual title, whether for literary quality, subject appeal, etc.
3. In the area of non-fiction, the availability of newer editions and high quality material in the field.
4. Timeliness of the material.
5. Requests for the title or subject.
6. Comparison with other books still in the library.

Gifts

1. Gifts will be evaluated by the Director and/or the Board of Trustees for their suitability for inclusion in the permanent collection or if they might serve the Library in some other manner.
2. Gifts on which the donor places restrictions or special conditions, may not be accepted by the Director and/or the Board of Trustees unless those restrictions or conditions are specifically accepted by the Board of Trustees.
3. Gift items will be formally acknowledged, if the donor wishes. The Director and/or the Board of Trustees will not appraise or estimate the value of gift donations. The responsibility of such assessment lies with the owner.
4. Donors may be requested to sign a waiver relinquishing ownership.

Discarding

The Board of Trustees maintains a policy of withdrawal based on the elimination of unnecessary items, outdated material, books no longer of interest or in demand, duplicates when not needed, and worn or mutilated copies if their repair is not warranted. Frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer and more valid materials are of prime consideration. Fiction, once popular, but no longer in demand, may be discarded, as well as non-fiction books which were purchased to meet demands that no longer exist.

The Director and/or the Board of Trustees will retain materials, however, which may not circulate frequently but are considered part of a core collection. Responsibility for “weeding” the library collection and deciding which items to discard rests with the Director. Materials withdrawn from the collection may be given to other libraries, sold for the benefit of the Library, or discarded.

Approved by Poestenkill Library Board of Trustees on March 25, 2002

Amended by the Poestenkill Library Board of Trustees on November 24, 2008