

CURRENT POLICY

1. SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS POLICY

Approved by the Petersburg Public Library Board 2/28/11

1.1. General Statement of Purpose

The Petersburg Public Library strives to inform, enlighten, and empower every person in our community. The Library and the Library Board upholds the democratic right of all Americans to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. We support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thought and ideas.

In support of these ideals the Petersburg Public Library offers a collection of materials that is diverse, inclusive and protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Section 1.5 of the Alaska State Constitution. The Library Board endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and all interpretations pertinent to the selection and use of library materials.

1.2. Objectives of the Collection

The Library is responsible for providing materials to residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The library collection taken as a whole will be an unbiased and diverse source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. Subjects will be covered in sufficient depth and breadth to meet anticipated and expressed individual and community needs.

The collection is presented to provide individual access to information and materials in various formats to serve a wide variety of needs:

- To enhance humanity and the enjoyment of life according to the full exercise of free choice
- To assist in developing the skills and abilities needed for economic success
- To develop the social awareness and knowledge needed for self-government and successful participation in a diverse community
- To encourage and enhance personal, artistic, and intellectual growth

The Library neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political or social views of the author. Selection of materials by the Library does not mean endorsement of the contents or the views expressed in those materials.

The Board considers reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. The Board believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject

materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read, view or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).

The Library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained to help people find the materials they want. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned.

The Board recognizes that library resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries, and electronic and other methods of information access, are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs.

1.3. Selection

The responsibility for the collection rests with the Borough Librarian under the authority of the Library Board. Direct selection of library materials is delegated to staff members qualified for this duty by education, training, interest and job classification.

Factors considered when adding specific material to the Library collection include, but are not limited to:

- Collection objectives
- Present collection composition
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- Timeliness
- Public interest
- Level of demand
- Audience for material
- Community relevance
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Effective expression

The nature of the media and the technical quality of production are additional factors to be considered in selecting audio, video, electronic, and other non-print formats.

Websites linked from the Library's homepage or catalog are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials.

The Board recognizes that full information on issues of public concern may require access to information sources which exemplify those concerns. Individual items, which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some patrons or staff, may appropriately

be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the balance and effectiveness of the Library collection as a whole.

The Library encourages public suggestion of items and subjects to be considered for the collection. Serious consideration will be given to purchasing patron-requested materials when these requests meet collection objectives. Remaining requests may be met through resource sharing with other libraries, electronic retrieval or other means.

Gift items are subject to the same selection criteria used for purchased materials.

1.4. Constitutional Protection

The Library Board considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Alaska State Constitution.

If a court having jurisdiction over Petersburg Public Library decides that any material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material will be removed. Material under court consideration will remain available to patrons until a final court ruling is made after all appeals are exhausted.

1.5. Withdrawal of Materials

The Board recognizes that withdrawing materials from the collection is an important part of maintaining the library collection. Withdrawal of library materials is vested in the Borough Librarian who may authorize qualified staff to assist. The withdrawal policy of the Library shall include the same factors as the selection policy and is not intended to sanction removal of library materials based upon any controversy. Such materials will be deemed to have been withdrawn by the Board according to the guidelines stipulated in the library's Intellectual Freedom/Reconsideration of Materials Policy.

1.6. Gifts

The library accepts donations of materials or money to purchase them, with the understanding that gifts to be added to the collection must meet established selection criteria. Gifts not retained for the collection may be given to other libraries, schools, or nonprofit groups, sold, or otherwise disposed of, the choice being the library's entirely.

No condition or restriction on gifts can be honored unless agreed upon by the librarian and donor before delivery of the gift. The library cannot legally appraise gifts for tax purposes. Gifts of money, real property, and/or stock will be accepted if any conditions attached to them are acceptable to the Library Board.

1.7. Copyright

The Petersburg Public Library intends to abide by copyright law. Patrons who use library materials are responsible for the legal use of those materials.

2. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM POLICY

Approved by the Petersburg Public Library Board 4/2005

The library does not promote particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of any item imply endorsement of its views. The purpose of the public library is to be a resource where individuals can examine many points of view and come to their own conclusions. The library attempts to provide materials representing different sides of controversial issues. Access to library materials will not be restricted beyond what is required to protect materials from theft or damage.

The Petersburg Public Library Board endorses the America Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read Statement*. These documents are considered guiding principles for this collection development policy and are appended to these policies.

Responsibility for the reading and information access of children rests with their parents and legal guardians. Parents who wish to limit or restrict the reading of their own child should personally oversee that child's choice of library resources. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that items may be seen by children. The library encourages parents to be involved with their children's reading and library use and will work with parents to find materials they deem appropriate for their children.

2.1. Reconsideration of materials

The content or manner of expressing ideas in material that is purposely selected to fill the needs of some library users, may, on occasion, be considered to be offensive by other library users. The library recognizes the right of any individual or group to reject library material for personal use, but does not accord to any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of that same material. The Library welcomes expression of opinion by patrons, but will be governed by the Materials Selection Policy in making additions to or deleting items from the collection.

Should a patron have a complaint about library materials, the following sequential process will be followed. Questioned materials will not be removed or restricted at any point in this process unless an official determination has been made to do so.

- Informal discussion with the Borough Librarian. The selection policy will be explained and a copy of the collection development policy provided if the patron wishes it.

- If the patron is not satisfied with the informal discussion, the patron may submit a written Materials Selection Inquiry to the Borough Librarian explaining his or her concerns and actions desired.
- Upon receiving the Inquiry, the Borough Librarian will make a decision whether to retain the material, remove it, or take other appropriate action. The patron will be notified immediately of the decision and given a full explanation of the decision. Information concerning the process to appeal the Librarian's decision will also be included.

If the patron is not satisfied with the decision of the Borough Librarian, he or she may file a written appeal with the Petersburg Public Library Board. The Library Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Petersburg Public Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director based on the library's Material Selection Policy. The board shall notify the complainant of its decision in writing. No further appeals will be heard. No other reconsideration of this material will be addressed unless the grounds for complaint are substantially different from the previous reconsideration