Collection Development and Maintenance Policy

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library supports an informed community, lifelong learning and the love of reading by promoting access for all town residents to the universe of ideas and information. The library aims to provide a useful collection of materials representing different points of view for library users. Materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents and should represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

In developing and adopting this policy, the Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents of Newtown.

Purpose of the Policy:

The purpose of the Cyrenius H. Booth Library Collection Development and Maintenance Policy is to provide guidelines for day-to-day acquisition and withdrawal decisions, resource allocation and long-range planning of collection needs in accordance with the library's mission.

Objectives:

To provide resources and materials which inform, educate, entertain, and enrich our community

- To include works of enduring value as well as timely materials on current issues
- To select materials based on community needs and interests
- To supplement resources through the use of electronic access and interlibrary loan
- To help people learn new skills and improve literacy
- To increase social awareness and community involvement
- To advance and acknowledge equity, diversity, and inclusion through our resources
- To preserve and encourage the free expression of ideas essential to an informed citizenry

Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination:

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We recognize and embrace the strengths of our differences and celebrate the varied experiences and viewpoints that make up our global community. To ensure a

collection that is reflective of these ideals, we are flexible and conscientious in our selection and evaluation of materials. We affirm that this work is a continuous process and a crucial part of our overall mission.

All library materials are evaluated and made available in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Section 46a-64 of the CT State General Statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

Scope of the Collection:

The library provides materials and services that reflect the diverse informational, educational, and recreational needs of its users. In so doing, the library provides access to content through print, multimedia, and digital resources. The library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, the Cyrenius H. Booth Library provides materials in a variety of formats, including but not limited to:

- Print – such as hardcovers, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers
- Non-print – such as audio and visual formats
- Digital resources – such as online databases, digital and audio books, audio and visual recordings, images, and digital historical archives
- Equipment – such as new technology and specialized hardware

Adult Collection Selection Critera:

All or some of the following criteria are considered when adding new items to the collection:

- Accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, durability, and ease of use
- Cultural significance and critical acclaim
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- Diversity of viewpoints and experiences
- Literary merit
- Price, format, and availability
- Public appeal or local interest
- Relevance to the present and potential needs of the community
- Periodicals are added to the collection on the basis of relevance, price, and community interest.
- Technology is selected based upon usefulness, interest, and the broadness of its implications and importance.
- Audiovisual material is added to the Library's collection with consideration to patron demand and budget constraints.
- The Library does not purchase textbooks or other materials to support educational curriculums.

All criteria need not be met for purchase consideration.

Juvenile Collection Selection Criteria:

The Children's Library offers developmentally appropriate materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of children ages birth through twelve. In addition, the Children's Library collects materials on child-rearing for parents and legal guardians. The Children's Library maintains a collection that is relevant, of appropriate size and quality, and that represents a diversity of views and expressions. To ensure that all parts of the collection are appropriate and well-chosen, the children's librarians consult professional review sources before purchase. The children's librarians also rely on the recommendations of readers, including children, educators, parents, and legal guardians. Major factors that influence the selection of children's materials (which include print books, digital books, audiobooks, and DVDs) are:

- Content
- Authority
- Literary merit, artistic quality, originality, and creativity
- Accuracy, objectivity, clarity, logic, and effectiveness of material
- Relevance to the needs of the community
- Current interest in subject matter
- Local interest in subject or author
- Popular demand
- Limitations on space and funds

Some materials in the Children's Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. Only each child and their parent or legal guardian can decide what material is suitable for that child to read.

The Young Adult Collection consists of material considered of particular interest to adolescents in grades 6-12. Because of the wide range of maturity and reading levels among individuals in these grades, the suitability of any particular item must be determined on an individual basis by the parent or legal guardian.

Digital Collections/Databases:

Electronic materials play an important role in the library's collection. These materials include databases, e-Books, e-Audiobooks, and downloadable and streaming media. Criteria used in selecting digital resources include ease of use, uniqueness of content, technology requirements, vendor reputation and customer service, availability for remote access, and cost. Certain digital collections the Library makes accessible to users are governed by the vendor's specific terms of service, including patron residency and minimum age requirements. Some material available in a broader digital collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. Only each child and their parent or guardian can decide what material is suitable for that child to read or view. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure appropriate access to broader digital collections. The fact that children possibly may access materials their parents or guardians consider inappropriate does not impact the library's selection of databases and digital platforms.

Responsibility of Selecting Library Materials:

Librarians responsible for the selection of materials are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides residents with the widest array of informational, educational, and entertaining materials. These designated selectors and material specialists work collaboratively to ensure a robust, relevant, and inclusive overall collection. Ultimate responsibility for materials chosen and resource access rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of this policy. All staff members are encouraged to participate in the selection of library resources.

Collection Maintenance:

In order to provide the best service to our community, the collection is regularly evaluated using professionally accepted standards. To keep the collection fresh and relevant, the library maintains a schedule of evaluation, applicable to both print and digital resources. Librarians review library and educational material within a public library using professionally accepted standards: material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age appropriate or grade-level material, and continued demand of material.

Patron Suggestions:

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library welcomes purchase requests and recommendations for books and audiovisual materials. Requests are considered using the same selection criteria outlined in this policy. In the case of digital materials (e.g. e-Books), cost will be a significant factor in the purchase decision. Should the library decide not to purchase the suggested material, we will attempt to obtain the item via Interlibrary Loan for current Newtown residents.

Donation and Gifts:

Materials donated to the library are accepted only with the understanding that they are subject to the same selection, evaluation, and withdrawal criteria as material acquired through purchase. Donated material not added to the collection may be returned to the donor. Donations that are not added to the collection may be recycled or given to the Friends of the C.H. Booth Library for their book sale, the proceeds of which benefit the library.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship:

The inclusion of an item in the collection does not imply the library's endorsement of the author, publisher, or subject matter. The library provides materials representing a wide variety of opinions and perspectives, which can apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox viewpoints. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material, the value of which is determined in its entirety and measured against the selection guidelines described in this policy by the library in its sole discretion. The library recognizes parents and legal guardians as the parties responsible for the reading and viewing habits of their children. The selection of materials for the adult collection is not impacted by the

possibility that children may obtain materials their parents or guardians consider inappropriate.

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

- First Amendment of the Constitution
- Library Bill of Rights Adopted June 19, 1939. Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 23, 1980; January 29, 2019; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.
- The Freedom to Read Statement – Adopted June 25, 1953; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.
- Freedom to View Statements from ALA

Request for Reconsideration:

The library welcomes expressions of opinion from the public about library materials. The library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or programs to residents of Newtown. Please see our Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and Form located on the Cyrenius H. Booth Library website at chboothlibrary.org/about/policies/