100-03 — Program Development

Statement of Purpose

The Program Development Policy provides guidance to staff for the planning and development of high-quality, library-sponsored programs that meet the needs of the community, within the limits imposed by funds and space, and that fulfills the Library's mission and aligns with the Library's long-range plan of service.

Library-sponsored indicates that the program is developed by library staff; however, it may be presented in conjunction with our community partners or visiting artists. For policies regarding programs solely developed and/or sponsored by outside organizations and individuals, please refer to policy *100-02 Rooms*.

The Library recognizes that individuals within the community have diverse interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, social values, and needs. The Library realizes that expanding areas of knowledge, changing social values, technological advances and cultural differences require flexibility, open-mindedness, and responsiveness in the planning, evaluation, and reevaluation of all library services. The Library will deliver free, open, and equal access to ideas and information for all residents, regardless of national origin, age, background, or personal beliefs.

Programming is an integral component of library service that:

- Expands the Library's role as a community resource
- Introduces patrons and non-users to Library resources
- Provides entertainment
- Improves access to information
- Provides opportunities for lifelong learning
- Encourages civic engagement and community building
- Expands the visibility of the Library

The Library believes that while anyone is free to reject for themselves programs of which they do not approve, this cannot be exercised to restrict the freedom of others to attend or participate.

Planning Responsibility

The Fairport Public Library is chartered by the New York State Board of Regents and governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees retains the power and duties of Trustees and Institutions, as prescribed by the New York State Education Law.

The responsibility for library programs and services rests with the Library Board. Responsibility for the planning and development of library programs and services rests with the Director, who is accountable to the Library Board of Trustees. That responsibility is delegated by the Director to their staff, who shall carry out this policy. By tradition and practice, the task of planning library programs lies with professional librarians within each age level and specialty; however, because the Director must answer to the Library Board for actual program choices made, the Director has the authority to reject or select

any program or service contrary to the recommendation of staff. Recommendations for programs from our patrons are welcome and will be evaluated with the same criteria used for the planning of other programs.

Program Development

Library programs and services represent a comprehensive range of interests, tastes, viewpoints, values, and levels of ability. The Library seeks to provide access to programs and services for people of all ages.

General criteria for developing library programs and services are listed below. A program or service need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- contemporary significance or popular interest
- public demand, interest, or need
- prominence, authority, and/or competence of presenter
- presentation quality
- timeliness of topic
- relation to existing services
- alignment with the long-range plan of service
- availability of program space
- treatment of content for intended audience
- cost versus overall budget and potential audience size
- historical or educational significance
- connection to other community organizations, programs, exhibitions, or events
- relation to the Library collections, resources, exhibits and programs

Library programming should not exclude topics, books, speakers, media, and other resources because they might be controversial. Program development will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely based on this policy's guidelines. Acceptance of a program topic by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of the group's or individual's policies or beliefs.

Program Evaluation

In order to offer vital, appealing, and up-to-date programs and services, which meets the needs and interests of the residents of the Fairport Central School District, the Library continually evaluates its program offerings. Programs are discontinued on a systematic and continuing basis when they are judged to be ineffective, suffer from low attendance, lowered priority due to constraints on time/funds, presenter or speaker no longer available, or otherwise no longer appropriate.

Resources and Presenters

In addition, the Library may draw upon other community resources in developing programs, and actively partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals, to develop and present co-sponsored public programs. Professional performers and presenters that reflect specialized or unique expertise may be hired for Library programs. External organizations or individuals partnering with the Library on programs must coordinate marketing efforts with the Library staff. Programs may be held on site or off-site.

Any sale of products at Library programs must be approved by the Library Director and benefit the Library. Library-sponsored programs are not to be used for commercial, religious, or partisan purposes or the solicitation of business.

Performers, presenters, topics, and resources will not be excluded from consideration because of their origin, background, or views, or because of possible controversy. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or of any views expressed by the presenter or participants.

Participants

The Library's philosophy of free and unrestricted access to information and ideas extends to Library programming, and the Library does not knowingly discriminate through its programming. All Library programs are open to the public; however, some programs, such as those that confer a certificate of completion, may have a cost, and some programs may be designed with specific audiences in mind (i.e., children's programs, teen programs). Programs that have a cost or are targeted toward specific audiences will be publicized as such. Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited.

ADA

We welcome all community members and try to make services and programs available for patrons of all abilities, including those with disabilities. To request specific accommodations, including sign language interpretation, please contact the Library at least five days ahead of the program you would like an interpreter for.

Photography

Our staff often take photos at library events to use in library publicity materials. If you prefer your photo not be used, notify the staff before the end of the program. We will honor that request. We will not use personal information such as labeling, tagging, etc. in our library publicity materials.

Cancellation

Anyone who is registered but cannot attend is asked to cancel their registration. This will allow someone on the waiting list the opportunity to attend.

In the event the Fairport Public Library building is closed due to an emergency, our on-site programs are also cancelled. If the Library needs to close for any reason, it will be announced through an email, the Library's website and social media accounts, and broadcast television stations.

All programs are listed on our Events Calendar at www.fairportlibrary.org. Upcoming events and cancellations are listed on this site.

Programs may be cancelled for several reasons, chiefly: severe weather, power outage, absence of the presenter, or low registration. Cancelled programs may not be rescheduled for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to space and/or presenter availability.

Intellectual Freedom and Reconsideration

The Library shares with other American public libraries the responsibility of defending the individual's right to free and unrestricted access to information and a commitment to the principles of intellectual freedom. In the interest of protecting those rights, the Library supports the following documents:

- The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (**Appendix A**)
- The Library Bill of Rights (**Appendix B**)

Patron Request for Reconsideration of Programs

It is inevitable that a public institution serving a diverse people will be unable to please all those people all the time. Not all programs will be suitable for all members of the community. Program development will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely based on the principles stated in this policy. The Library also encourages parents or legal guardians to take an active role in helping their children engage with the Library and its programs and services; parents have the primary responsibility to guide and direct their own minor children.

No presenters, speakers, or programs will be excluded from the Library solely because of their race, nationality, political, religious, or social views. The only acceptable form of censorship is self-censorship. Individuals are free to reject programs and services for themselves. They cannot, however, restrict the freedom of others.

The Library does, however, recognize the right of residents to question library programs and services. After speaking with the age-appropriate Librarian or Director about their concerns, patrons may then file a reconsideration request (see Appendix C "Reconsideration of Library Programs" form).

Reconsideration of Library Program Procedure

- Patrons wishing to express their opinion on the suitability of a library program or service shall be referred to the appropriate age-level librarian.
- If the patron is not satisfied, the staff member will provide the patron with instructions on how to register a formal complaint and notify the Library Director.
- To register a formal complaint, the patron must be an employee of the Fairport Public Library or a resident of the Fairport Central School District. They must complete (in its entirety) and submit a Library Program Reconsideration form (**Appendix C**).
- For each program reconsideration, a separate form must be submitted.
- Upon receipt of this form, the Library Director shall notify the Library Board and lead a committee of two library staff members to review all aspects of the challenged program. The Committee shall
    - consider the specific objections to the program voiced by the resident,
    - weigh the values and faults of the program as a whole,
    - consider how it aligns with the Library's mission and the long-range plan,
    - refer to the Library's Program Development Policy,

  - where/when appropriate, solicit advice or opinion from other library directors/staff, the Monroe County Library System, the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom and/or the New York State Intellectual Freedom Committee,
  - and issue a written response within forty-five (45) days of receiving the form, indicating the committee's decision, which will indicate the action to be taken and reasons for or against the reconsideration request.
- The Director will include the action taken in their monthly report to the Board of Trustees.
- If the patron is not satisfied with the committee's decision, a written appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees who shall create an Appeal Committee to review all aspects of the challenged program. The Committee shall
  - consider the specific objections to the program voiced by the resident,
  - weigh the values and faults of the program as a whole,
  - consider how it aligns with the Library's mission and the long-range plan,
  - refer to the Library's Program Development Policy,
  - where/when appropriate, solicit advice or opinion from the Library Director, the Library staff, other library directors, the Monroe County Library System, the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom, and/or the New York State Intellectual Freedom Committee,
  - and issue a written recommendation to the full Board of Trustees indicating the committee's conclusion, which will indicate the action to be recommended and reasons for or against the request.
  - The Board of Trustees shall approve or reject the Committee's recommendation and issue a written response within ninety (90) days of receiving the form, indicating the Board's decision, which will indicate the action to be taken and reasons for or against the request.
  - The Board of Trustees decision shall be final.
- A program or service will only be evaluated for reconsideration once in a five-year period.
- Until such review takes place and a decision is made, no cancellation or restriction of the questioned program or service shall take place.

Adopted: November 10, 2020
Reviewed:
Revised: July 9, 2024;

Appendix A — First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Passed by Congress September 25, 1789. Ratified December 15, 1791.

Appendix B — Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. 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 the origin, age, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix C — Library Program Reconsideration Form

A patron with a concern regarding a library-sponsored program **must complete this form in full—one title per form**. It will be forwarded to the Library Director, who will respond to the request in writing within 45 days of receipt of the form. If the patron is not satisfied with the Director's decision, they may appeal to the Library Board of Trustees. The patron must be a resident of the Fairport Central School District.

Title of Program: _____

Date/Time of Program: _____ **Intended Audience:** _____

Your Name: _____**Library Card:** 29077_____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____**E-mail:** _____

Do you represent: **Yourself** ☐

An organization ☐ **Name:** _____

What concerns do you have about this Program? Please be specific. _____

_____

_____

_____

Are there specific aspects or features of the program to which you object? _____

_____

_____

_____

Are there any additional comments you would like to make? _____

_____

Signature _____**Date** _____

STAFF USE ONLY: This form was received by: _____Date/Time: _____

Action taken: _____