

## Policy # 5000

### Flathead County Library System Collection Development and Management Policy

The Collection Development Policy contains the policies relative to the selection, retention, and withdrawal of FCLS library materials.

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is:

- To document collection management policies and procedures;
- To guide FCLS staff in the selection of library materials;
- To inform the public of the philosophy of collection development and the policies involved; and
- To establish a framework for continuous collection evaluation and improvement.

#### **1. Collection Objective**

The Flathead County Library System's collection is developed based upon knowledge of the community, the composition and use of the existing collection, and input from customers, staff, and the FCLS Board of Trustees.

FCLS's primary service commitment is to the people within its service area, including people of every age, education, background, personal philosophy, religious belief, occupation, economic level, ethnic origin and human condition. The collection contains information on a variety of subjects and views, and is organized to provide unrestricted and easy access to customers within the limitations of space and budget.

The Flathead County Library System strives to make the most efficient use of financial resources, to work closely with other area libraries, and to utilize the most appropriate formats to meet the library needs of the people of our community. To that end, the Flathead County Library System is a founding member in the Montana State Library Partner Resource Sharing Group, which allows seamless lending and borrowing between the Flathead County Library System and member libraries across Montana.

All FCLS library materials are intended for public use and, with the exception of selected special or reference collections, all materials are available for unrestricted circulation.

#### **2. Relationship of the Policy to the Strategic Plan**

The Flathead County Library System's Collection Development Policy relates to the Service Responses of the FCLS Strategic Plan for Success, 2010-2013. A service response is what FCLS does for, or offers to the public in an effort to meet a set of well-defined community needs.

**Selected Service Responses:**

- **VISIT A COMFORTABLE SPACE: Physical and Virtual Spaces**  
Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support social networking.
- **CREATE YOUNG READERS: Early Literacy**  
Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- **STIMULATE IMAGINATION: Viewing and Listening for Pleasure**  
Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.
- **SATISFY CURIOSITY: Lifelong Learning**  
Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.
- **CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD: Public Internet Access**  
Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

**Population and demographics: US Census Bureau 2010 Census**

<b>Flathead County</b>	<b>90,928</b>
Columbia Falls city	4,688
Kalispell city	19,927
Whitefish city	6,357
Balance of Flathead County	59,956

- Spanning over 5,000 square miles, Flathead County encompasses some of America’s most beautiful lands. Over half of Glacier National Park, the waters of Flathead Lake and other lakes, much of the Bob Marshall Wilderness area, vast tracts of national, state, and private forests, and numerous valley farms and orchards all form a spectacular landscape. Flathead County’s abundant forest lands, mountain vistas, and recreational opportunities have always been at the center of its economic activity. Until recently, most of this activity has been in the form of direct uses—forest products, tourism, recreation and agriculture. Recently, Flathead’s natural resources are spurring economic development via indirect uses—as a quality of life amenity that draws people, businesses, and investment to the county.

- As the population of the Flathead has grown and aged, income composition has changed. Income from non-labor sources like investment income and transfer payments is growing more rapidly than income from the workplace.
- Currently, the unemployment rate is at an all-time high at 13.2%. By 2025 Montana is projected to be the fifth oldest state in the country with almost 25 percent of the population 65 years and older.

*( Larry Swanson, Center for the Rocky Mountain West)*

FCLS identifies its primary users as families, retired community members, students, preschoolers, community and public organizations, and the general reader.

### **3. Collection Responsibility**

The Board of Trustees vests responsibility for selection of library materials in the Library Director under guidelines established by the Board. Members of the staff who are qualified by reason of education and/or experience serve on the Collection Management Team and are assigned to assist with the selection of materials.

### **4. General Collection Description and chronological coverage**

The FCLS collection contains approximately 160,000 items in a variety of formats. Actively collected are books, DVDs, music CDs, books on CD, magazines, zines, downloadable ebooks and audiobooks, and local newspapers. The collection is directed toward the general public and an effort is made to have the most current information available. FCLS has a special collection of materials that focus on local history. Older general material is held only if it has a special interest to our customers or if it has historical local significance.

### **5. Collection Philosophy**

FCLS endorses the following American Library Association statements:

- [Library Bill of Rights](#) See Appendix A
- [Freedom to Read](#) See Appendix B
- [Freedom to View](#) See Appendix C

FCLS upholds the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Materials available present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy.

See the appendices to this document, adopted by the FCLS Board of Trustees, which includes the statements above and interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights for access to library materials by minors and access to electronic information, services, and networks as well as other Library Bill of Rights interpretations.

### **6. Selection Criteria**

The criteria for selection, acquisition, gifts, customer requests, duplication, replacement, automatic shipments, and withdrawal (weeding) are the same for all materials and formats. FCLS selection gives high priority to those materials most wanted by customers in all formats for all ages.

Criteria (an item need not meet all criteria to be selected):

- Customer demand and interest
- Critical reviews
- Presentation and readability
- Reflection of all sides of an issue
- Author's reputation and significance as a writer
- Reputation and standing of the publisher
- Local or national significance
- Availability of the material or information elsewhere
- Quality of the physical format
- Reasonable cost

The collection management team relies on a number of professional tools for assistance in making selections. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Booklist
- Library Journal
- Publisher's Weekly
- VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocate)
- School Library Journal
- Video Librarian
- Audio File
- Publisher and distributor catalogs

Self Published Materials:

In most cases, the library will not purchase or accept as gifts self-published materials that are not reviewed in established review journals.

## **7. Withdrawal of Materials**

Professional staff shall review the collection on an ongoing basis with the goal of maintaining the quality and vitality of FCLS resources. This process of collection management incorporates continuous collection evaluation through the use of circulation reports, analysis of collection use, and other information. Worn, damaged, and dated materials shall be removed from the collection on a regular basis. Materials may also be withdrawn if they are not used or are superseded by a new edition or a more authoritative work on the same subject. Other criteria that may be applied include the changing demands of users, replacement of materials with other formats, space, and collection balance. Withdrawn materials will be disposed of in the manner deemed most appropriate for that item. Methods of disposal may include sale at a FCLS branch, sale by affiliated FCLS support groups, distribution to other libraries or community service organizations, or recycling.

## **8. Format of materials**

FCLS collects materials in print, large print and other formats. Other formats such as DVDs, CDs, online databases, and downloadable materials offer a dimension and timeliness to the subject areas they represent which a print collection alone is unable to provide. Criteria are the same for selection of all formats.

## **9. Special Collections**

The Flathead County Library System Special Collections seek to collect, preserve, and make available for research primary and secondary archival materials relating to Flathead County. The Flathead County Library System's Special Collections are a repository for materials primarily concerned with Flathead County, Montana. Less extensively collected are materials related to northwest Montana and to the State of Montana as a whole. Materials with no connection to these geographic regions may occasionally be included for their protection or preservation. The FCLS Special Collections contain a variety of formats, including books, maps, audio-visual materials, microfilm, and ephemera.

Since materials in the Special Collections are intended to provide an ever-available source of information on Flathead County, they are not to be checked out. Customers may use items from the Special Collection in any of the Flathead County Library System branches. When a patron requests that an item from the Flathead Special Collection be sent to a FCLS branch, the item will be transported there by the library courier and will remain available at the branch for a limited number of days. Items judged to be irreplaceable or too fragile to transport may be used only at the Main Library of the FCLS.

The FCLS Special Collections are managed by qualified library staff members. The Collections are assessed periodically, and materials may be removed or placed in the circulating collection as appropriate. The Special Collections usually retains no more than one copy of any particular work. Repositories elsewhere may be considered for rare materials that are outside of the scope of FCLS's collections.

## **10. Donations of Library Materials**

The Flathead County Library System Board of Trustees welcomes gifts, grants, donation, devises, or bequests of property, real or personal. The FCLS also welcomes memorials and other tributes. A memorial is created when money is donated to add books or other materials to the collection in memory or honor of an individual or group. The Board requires that all such gifts, grants, donations, devises, or bequests be accepted on its behalf by the Library Director in keeping with guidelines established by the Board.

The FCLS Board of Trustees welcomes the generosity and thoughtfulness of the community in supplementing the FCLS collection through donations and memorials. These materials are accepted with the understanding that they will be handled or distributed through balancing the best interests of the library system with the intent of the donor. While all donations are appreciated, some might not be appropriate for FCLS. Donors of such gifts may be referred to a more appropriate recipient.

Donors of funds for the purchase of library materials are encouraged to provide some guidance in the selection of a suitable item or items by specifying an appropriate broad subject area. While taking under advisement the donor request, FCLS reserves the right to the final decisions regarding all materials. Library materials purchased with donated funds may be designated by a bookplate or other appropriate identification.

Donated and memorial materials are subject to the same standards as the rest of the FCLS collection. The criteria for selection and withdrawal of library materials apply to all items in the FCLS collections, regardless of their source of origin. Once a gift is accepted by FCLS, it becomes the property of FCLS, to be used or disposed of in accordance with the policies established by the Board of Trustees. All FCLS materials are shared by the entire FCLS and will be made available to all borrowers, including participants in the Montana Shared Catalog Partners Resource Sharing Group.

Monetary gifts, grants, donations, and bequests shall be placed in FCLS Gift and Memorial fund to be expended. If a monetary gift, donation, or bequest is substantial, and if the intended purpose allows such transfer, the FCLS Board of Trustees may consider transferring it to the Flathead County Library Foundation for investment and management in keeping with the intent of the donor.

Upon request, FCLS will provide the donor a receipt, but will not appraise the value of donated materials. Donated materials that do not meet collection criteria are usually made available to the Friends of the FCLS, and may be sold at book sales that support the Library.

FCLS will not return unsolicited materials, nor will FCLS be responsible for payment of costs incurred when unsolicited materials are sent. Unsolicited materials will be added to the collection or disposed of according to FCLS policy.

#### **11. Holds ratio**

Customers may reserve or place holds on materials at any FCLS branch, from a FCLS computer, or via the Internet from a remote computer. FCLS maintains a 4:1 hold ratio for books (if the FCLS owns one copy of a book and there are five FCLS holds placed on it, a second copy should be purchased to meet the demand); 5:1 ratio for audio recordings and a 5:1 ratio for DVDs. In some instances, copies from other Partner Libraries are included in calculating the holds ratio.

#### **13. Complaints and Censorship**

FCLS believes in freedom of information for all, and does not practice censorship. The selection of library materials is based on the patron's right to read and similarly, the freedom from censorship by others. Attempting to meet the needs and interests of a diverse population requires a wide range of materials. Inevitably, there will be something in a balanced collection that may be unacceptable or disturbing to someone.

FCLS holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to personally reject books and other materials of which he or she does not approve, he or she may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Responsibility for materials selected and read by children and adolescents rests with their parent or legal guardians. Selection decisions are not influenced by the

possibility that materials may be accessible to minors. Materials are not labeled to show approval or disapproval or to indicate certain philosophies. No items are sequestered except to protect them from damage or theft.

Criticism and comment on material selected for inclusion in or exclusion from the FCLS collection is an essential right of community members and a valuable part of the FCLS's selection process. This process provides an opportunity for staff members to reexamine choices and reasoning.

The FCLS Board of Trustees acknowledges that occasional objections to resources will be made despite the care taken and the procedures followed in their selection. The FCLS Board and library staff members are prepared to defend the principles of freedom to read and freedom of access to information. Objection to particular language or point of view of material cannot be used as justification for the exclusion of materials.

If a verbal complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant will be asked to fill out and return a written and signed **Citizen Comment on Library Materials** Form. This form may be obtained from any FCLS branch. In the absence of a fully completed form there is no formal complaint and no action will be taken. After the library director has received a fully completed written complaint, she/he shall establish a review committee to investigate the complaint. The committee's recommendation is then presented to the FCLS Board of Trustees for a final decision.

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Jane Lopp, Chair  
Flathead County Library System Board of Trustees

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