

Stratford Public Library

Stratford, NH

Collection Development Policy

I. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide the staff of the library and the public with an understanding of the basic principles of collection development and to provide the specifics necessary for making collection development decisions that meet the needs and interests of the community and allow the library to fulfill its objectives.

II. Library Mission Statement

The mission of Stratford Public Library is to provide materials to meet the informational and recreational needs of the community it serves, to offer programs that entertain and inform, and to support the educational, civic, and cultural activities of the community.

III. Community Analysis/User Groups

Stratford is a small town located in Coos County, New Hampshire. The US Census of 2010 states that the town has a total area of 80 square miles, of which 79.5 square miles is land and 0.5 square miles is water. The town is bordered on the west by the Connecticut River and the town of Bloomfield, Vermont. The town of Columbia, NH borders Stratford to the north and the town of Northumberland, NH borders it to the south. Stratford is bordered to the east by the unincorporated township of Odell, NH. Two villages are located within the town of Stratford, North Stratford at the north end and Stratford Hollow at the south end. U.S. Highway 3 passes through the center of town, as did a branch of the Grand Trunk Railway many years ago. The library is located in the former Grand Trunk Railroad train depot building. The railroad tracks passing in front of the building are still regularly used by the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad to transport freight. The New Hampshire capital of Concord is 126 miles to the south. Burlington, VT is to the southwest and also 126 miles away. Concord and Burlington are the closest cities having a population of over 50,000. Manchester, NH is located 143 miles to the

south and is the closest city with a population over 100,000. Montreal, Canada is 136 miles to the northwest and is the closest city that has a population over 1,000,000. It is approximately 42 miles from Stratford to the nearest interstate highway.

The Stratford Public Library also serves the residents of the bordering town of Bloomfield, Vermont (population 221 according to the 2010 US census) per an annual agreement in which the town of Bloomfield pays a fee to the library. This fee is current set at \$200.00. Residents that do not reside in Stratford, NH or Bloomfield, VT are required to pay a small fee in order to use the library and its services. Currently, this is set at \$10.00/year or \$12.00/year if paid in installments.

According to the 2010 US census the population of Stratford is 746. The population has been declining for over 50 years as has the population for Coos County as a whole since the 1980s. Stratford's population in 1960 was 1,029. The largest decline of 21% points occurred between 2000 and 2010.

The town's racial composition as reported by the 2010 census is

- 95.7% White
- 1.3% Hispanic
- 0.5% American Indian
- 0.9% Asian
- 1.1% Black
- 1.7% Two or more races (The six percentages add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.)

93.7% of the adult population speak only English. Of the remaining 6.3%, 0.4% speak Spanish and 5.9% speak another language, which is not specifically identified in the census data, but common knowledge of the area would suggest that this language is most likely French. As of the 2010 US Census,

- 41 residents are under the age of 5
- 38 are between 5 and 9
- 45 are between 10 and 14
- 38 are between 15 and 19
- 41 are between 20 and 24

- 26 are between 24 and 29
- 34 are between 30 and 34
- 37 are between 35 and 39
- 56 are between 40 and 44
- 55 are between 45 and 49
- 56 are between 50 and 54
- 72 are between 55 and 59
- 68 are between 60 and 64
- 51 are between 65 and 69
- 40 are between 70 and 74
- 15 are between 75 and 79
- 18 are between 80 and 84
- 15 are over 85.

Also according to 2010 census data, there are 345 households, of which 256 are owner occupied and 89 are renter occupied. 79 households include children. Single mothers head 23 of those households. Single fathers head 11 of those households. Additionally, there are another 8 households with children in which the children are not the biological children of any adult in the household (foster children, children in the custody of family other than a parent). Stratford's median household income is \$28,929. The median family income is \$32,813. The per capita income is \$16,621. This compares to a per capita income of \$24,378 for Coos County and \$33,101 for the State of New Hampshire. Coos County ranks last in per capita income out of all ten New Hampshire counties. Using data from the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, a listing of the per capita income of all 240 towns in New Hampshire, ranks Stratford at 238. The overall percentage of Stratford's population living below the poverty level is 24.9% compared 15.1% reported nationally for 2010. The percentage of Stratford's children living below the federal poverty level is 39.9%. According to 2014 data from the NH Department of Employment Security (NHES), Stratford has the highest unemployment rate of any town in Coos County. Also according to NHES, 66.1% of Stratford residents over age 25 have a high school diploma or equivalent and 10.7% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

There is one public elementary school (K-8) located in Stratford. High school students enrolled in public school attend Groveton High School in Northumberland. The nearest institute of higher education, White Mountains Community College, is located 40 miles away. The total population age 3 and over enrolled in school as of 2014 is 149, of which

- 0 are in preschool
- 14 are in kindergarten
- 72 are in elementary grades 1-8
- 40 are in high school grades 9-12
- 23 are in college.

IV. Collection Development Responsibility

The Board of Library Trustees holds the ultimate legal responsibility for the library's collection. They authorize the director to manage the collection development procedures and the funds budgeted for that purpose in compliance with the collection development policy. The director may designate other staff members to implement collection development activities, as s/he deems appropriate.

V. Collection Overview

As of September 2016, the Stratford Public Library's physical collection consists of approximately 6,000 volumes of books, 30 audiobooks on CD, 225 videos on DVD and 30 miscellaneous items such as puzzles, board games and toys.

- The Adult collection consists of Fiction, Nonfiction, Large Print, Biography, Video DVDs, audiobooks on CD, local and regional fiction and nonfiction, and local government documents and publications. The objective of this collection is to provide material that reflects the diverse educational, informational, and recreational needs of the adult community.
- The Children's collection consists of Board Books, Picture Books, Easy Readers, Chapter Books, Juvenile Fiction and Nonfiction, Biography, Videos on DVD, audiobooks on CD, Toys, Puzzles, and Board Games. The Children's collection focuses on the age group of zero through twelve. Emphasis is on material that develops reading ability, informs children about the world, stimulates the imagination and provides

entertainment. Additionally, the Children's Nonfiction collection contains material to support the homework needs of students in grades one through twelve.

- The library maintains a Young Adult collection, which acts as a bridge to the Adult collection. These Fiction and Nonfiction materials address the interests and issues particular to teenagers. The Young Adult collection includes Books, Audiobooks on CD, and Video DVDs.

The library is aware that users have diverse learning styles and preferred methods for receiving information.

Therefore, the collection provides information through various formats including Print, Non-print, and Digital.

As patron demand for different formats change, and if material in those formats is available and reasonable priced, the library may expand or change the format categories included in the collection to meet that demand.

VI. Cooperative Collections

The Stratford Public Library is one of approximately 300 libraries belonging to the New Hampshire Automated Information System (NHAIS). This greatly expands the number of materials accessible to users as the NHAIS database/online catalog contains over 2 million titles available for interlibrary loan (ILL). The library cannot expect to fill every patron request from its own holdings. However, ILL is not a substitute for adequate local collection development. If a title is requested more than two times within a six-month period, Stratford Public Library attempts to purchase a copy. It is not the intention of the library to rely on ILL to fulfill regular patron demands. The purpose of cooperative lending and borrowing is to meet occasional demands for material outside the scope of an individual library's collection. A van service funded by the New Hampshire State Library regularly delivers and picks up ILL requests between member libraries. The New Hampshire State Library also provides Stratford Public Library's access to NHewLINK, a collection of full-text and bibliographic databases with various focuses, including newspapers, magazines, professional journals, general reference, health, education, readers' advisory, business, and genealogy. Most of them can be accessed by a patron's own Internet connection on a home computer as well as by the computers within the library. Additionally, the Stratford Public Library belongs to the New Hampshire Downloadable Book Consortium. The library's membership in this organization provides thousands of additional audiobooks, ebooks, and popular magazine titles to its users

of all ages in a downloadable digital format that can be accessed from an Internet connection on a library or a home computer.

VII. Gifts

Donations of materials must be preapproved by the director. The director evaluates the items presented in accordance with the criteria used for purchased materials. Factors such as duplication, lack of community interest, processing cost and lack of space may prevent the acceptance of some donations. All approved donations are accepted with the understanding that the library does not agree to separate or special treatment of the items received. They are shelved, displayed and used in the same manner as other similar items already belonging to the library. Furthermore, at any time, donated items may be sold, given away, or discarded with the Board of Trustees approval. A monthly report will be kept which includes a brief description of these transactions. The library does not appraise donated material for tax purposes but does, upon request, provide the donor with a written receipt, indicating the number and generalized description of the items received.

Donations of money are welcome and are considered tax deductible charitable donations. Bequests are also encouraged. It is preferred that these gifts carry no restrictions, but donors may specify areas of interest or favored formats. The library does make every effort to comply with those wishes if they are consistent with the collection development policy.

VIII. Selection Process

All prospective acquisitions, in all formats, whether purchased or donated, are evaluated according to one or more of following criteria,

- level of funding available
- relevance to library mission
- relevance to user needs and demands
- authority and accuracy
- author and/or publisher reputation
- popularity and appeal
- date of publication
- importance as a record of the times

- relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- quality of content
- price and availability
- amount of shelf or other storage space available
- relevance to the area's history

The staff's experience and knowledge of the library's existing collection and of the community's needs and interests are important factors in making selection decisions. Many other tools such as professional review journals, reader advisory books, popular print and broadcast media, online bookstores and interest groups, publishers' catalogs and patron recommendations and/or expertise, are available to aid librarians in collection development decisions. The Stratford Public Library staff consults a variety of these sources. The lack of reviews or the presence of unfavorable reviews is not adequate reason for excluding a title that is in demand. Likewise, a title's appearance on a best-seller list is not adequate reason for its purchase. The goal of the Stratford Public Library is to make the most objective judgments possible regarding collection development decisions.

IX. Collection Maintenance/Preservation/Evaluation

The library staff conducts evaluation and maintenance of the collection continuously in order to keep it in good condition, current, reliable, useful, well used and relevant to the needs and interest of the area it serves. As much as time and money allow, efforts to prevent the deterioration of the collection are conducted. This includes dusting, proper shelving, temperature and humidity control and overall protection from the elements. A formal disaster plan is in development and once approved, it will be reviewed annually and updated when deemed necessary. Returned materials are inspected for damage and, if necessary, mended when possible. Patrons are charged for materials they fail to return or return damaged beyond repair. Items that no longer meet the criteria for inclusion in the collection are systematically withdrawn. This includes material that is dated, no longer accurate or reliable, in poor condition, seldom used, or does not otherwise comply with the criteria for inclusion in the collection. These materials take up precious space that could be used for new items or older items that are still meeting the collection development criteria. The withdrawn materials may be sold in the

library's book sales or offered to other nonprofit institutions that have a use for them. Material with no other value is regularly discarded. Occasionally, replacement copies of worn out or lost items are purchased if they still meet selection criteria. Certain areas of the collection require more thorough and frequent evaluation than others. Evaluation of the collection is an ongoing process, but special attention is paid to topics that become dated rapidly such as Medicine and Technology.

X. Intellectual Freedom

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution declares that the expression of ideas cannot be restricted by the government just because society may find the ideas offensive or disagree with them. The library supports this right of the individual to have access to information even when it may be unpopular and/or unorthodox. It is the responsibility of the library to provide for the open and free distribution of a broad variety of opinions, beliefs and views in relation to a wide array of important, complex and potentially controversial subjects. The effective functioning of a democratic society depends on this pledge to intellectual freedom. The library also upholds the expectations of the American Library Association (ALA) as set forth in its Library Bill of Rights and its Freedom to Read Statement. Interested patrons may obtain copies of these documents and/or more information regarding these documents from the library staff.

XI. Controversial Material

The library acknowledges that some material is controversial and may offend some patrons. However, this possibility is not used as a basis to make selection or deselection decisions. The inclusion of any item in the collection does not signify that the ideas presented within the item's content are endorsed by the library or by the town, nor does the library promote one set of ideas or beliefs over another set. The library does not mark or otherwise identify any item to indicate that it may possibly contain controversial ideas. Rating guides or advisory codes are not used to make selection decisions, although the library does not remove such information if it is integrated into an item's packaging. Materials are not restricted based on age or any other criteria that maybe considered discriminatory, nor are items sequestered except to protect them from theft or damage. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for the reading and viewing habits of their own children. We

encourage parents and legal guardians to establish guidelines for their children to follow regarding the use of library material. At no time is library staff to act *in loco parentis*.

XII. Complaints

Patrons with objections about an item's inclusion in the collection must submit a completed "Statement of Concern about Library Material" to the director. These forms are available at the circulation desk upon request. The director investigates each complaint and makes a decision for or against withdrawing the item from the collection within 14 days of receiving the completed form. All decisions are based on the item's compliance with the collection development policy's selection criteria. The director responds to the complaint in writing. All decisions are final. The Board of Library Trustees is informed of these objections and the director's decisions within the same time frame.

XIII. Copyright Issues

Copyright and fair use laws often undergo changes. Nevertheless, the library must make every attempt to keep current with any changes and adhere to copyright and fair use laws and licensing agreements and contracts. The library posts warning signs above all copy machines and computers informing users to abide by the rules or chance being liable for copyright infringement.

XIV. Policy Revisions

This policy can and will be revised as times and circumstances require. A review is conducted no less than every ten years, but may occur at shorter intervals if deemed necessary by the Board of Library Trustees.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees
August 12, 2016