RESOURCES SELECTION POLICY

The mission of the Bozeman Public Library is to provide the community with free, open, and equal access to general information on a broad array of topics; resources to promote personal growth and lifelong learning; popular materials to meet cultural and recreational needs; and the training needed to find, evaluate, and use information effectively. The service responses which support this mission are: 1) General information; 2) Lifelong learning; 3) Current topics and titles; and 4) Information literacy. These service responses will be considered in the development of the collection and will receive priority in the allocation of funds and resources which include staff, collection and information resources, facilities, and technology.

Resources are selected, using both general and specific criteria, to meet standards of factual accuracy, significance, and responsibility of the opinion expressed. (see Appendix L) Each type of resource must be considered in terms of its own excellence and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. Some resources may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value to humanity; others are selected to satisfy the informational, recreational, or educational interests of the community. Each title will be judged as a whole, and isolated passages in themselves not used as criteria. Resources selected should provide, as far as possible, information on all sides of a controversial issue, which are written in a reasonable fashion and are the result of careful study. A resource on a controversial issue which is written in a violent, sensational, or inflammatory manner ordinarily will not be selected.

Resources will be selected based on positive reviews in professionally recognized journals or actual examination and evaluation of resources. Standard bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities, and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas may also be used. Resources will also be selected based on patron recommendations, popular demand, subject area needs, scope and focus of the collection, local interest, and cooperative collection agreements if the titles meet selection criteria. Items that must be updated every year may be placed on a standing order list to ensure timely delivery. Multiple copies of popular books (e.g. bestsellers, resume guides) may be purchased to meet patron demand. Gifts of resources are reviewed by the professional selection staff and may be added to the collection if they meet selection criteria.

The Library attempts to provide information in a variety of formats (print, non-print, audiovisual, and electronic) when available and practical. Access to full-text online databases and to resources available through the Internet are available at public computers in the Library and by remote use through the Library’s home page. Professional staff may review and recommend Internet sites and may select sites to include as links on the Library’s home page. The Library has an Internet Access Policy approved by the Library Board of Trustees. (see p. 37)

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library resources are delegated to the Library Director and, under his or her direction, to the professional staff who are qualified for this activity.
The Library Director determines how the Library’s materials budget is allocated among the major collection subdivisions (e.g. adult and juvenile non-fiction, fiction, reference, audiovisual and electronic resources). Average cost per item as determined by purchasing history and reports in library and publishing journals will also be considered in allocating funds.

The Library Board of Trustees provides guidelines through the setting, interpreting and review of policy. The Library supports intellectual freedom and has adopted the following attached statements as policy: the Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations (see Appendix F); the American Library Association’s Freedom to Read Statement (see Appendix I); and the American Library Association’s Freedom to View Statement (see Appendix J). The choice of library resources by users is an individual matter. While any user is free to reject resources for personal use, that user cannot restrict the freedom of others to read or access information in the Library. A request for reconsideration of a resource shall be made in writing and will be referred to the Library Director for appropriate action. (see Appendix K)