Howard Whittemore Memorial Library

Programming Policy

Purpose: The Howard Whittemore Memorial Library, in keeping with its mission to enrich the community by connecting people to the world of ideas, information and imagination, develops and presents programs that provide education and entertainment. These programs serve as a resource for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. Library programming is intended to provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents. This programming is an essential component of library services that promotes and complements the Library's other services and collections. Our programs are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents and aim to represent a wide range of diverse viewpoints and perspectives. This policy provides guidelines for the development, management and oversight of the programs presented by the Library.

Definition of a Program: A Library program is defined as a free event, virtual or in-person, planned by the Library staff for the benefit of those members of the public who opt to participate. It may involve outside presenters, facilitators or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other entities. Use of the public meeting room by an outside organization or individual to hold a public event is not a Library program.

Roles and Responsibilities: The Library Board delegates development, presentation and oversight of programs to the Library Director and staff.

Program Development, Coordination and Supervision: Designated Library staff are responsible for the development, coordination and supervision of library programs. Library programs may originate from Library staff who are professionally-trained to curate and develop displays and programs, partnering institutions, or members of the public. In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute endorsement of program content or of the views expressed by presenters or participants. Programs cannot be used for solicitation or partisan purposes, whether commercial, political, religious or otherwise.

Program Selection: Library staff use the following criteria when making decisions about program topics, speakers and accompanying materials:

- Community needs and interests
- Popular appeal
- Historical, cultural, informational or educational significance
- Relation to library collections, resources, exhibits and programs
- Background and qualifications of presenter in content area
- Budget
- Availability of program space
- Connection to community partners and agencies

Program Access: All Library programs are open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis. Advance registration may be required. Attendance may be limited by age or grade level. For programs targeted to a specific audience and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come, first-serve basis, limited to those individuals as the library deems appropriate. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a library program should contact the Library two weeks prior to the program. Program attendees are responsible for complying with the Library's Patron Behavior Policy.

Virtual Programs: Some Library programs may be offered using a virtual meeting platform that registered patrons may use to access the virtual program from their own internet-enabled devices. This may include some programs that are simultaneously run at the physical library, as well as virtually. Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded, and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed at the start of the program. Live virtual programs require advance registration.

Program Materials: The sale of books or other media by authors or performers is permitted as part of a Library-approved program, if approved by the director. Presenters are responsible for completing their own sales; Library staff are not to be made to assist in this regard.

Program Evaluation: To measure patron satisfaction and to guide future program planning, Library staff will gather information about program results and attendance. This information, in the form of patron counts, surveys, and other metrics, may be used for in-house evaluations, statistical reports, grants and state reports.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship: The Library will strive to create Library-initiated programs that appeal to a wide range of ages, interests, and information needs, and that

include diverse opinions and viewpoints. Library programs will not exclude topics, books, media, and other resources solely because they may be considered controversial. The Library recognizes that some materials may be offensive to an individual but maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. The selection of Library materials is predicated on the individual's right of access to information and freedom from censorship. The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements. No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs be cancelled, because of origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program. 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.

Reconsideration: The Library welcomes expressions of opinion concerning materials, programs or displays, however all requests for reconsideration of materials, programs and displays are limited to the individual residents of Naugatuck. Library users may request reconsideration of a planned program by completing our Request for Reconsideration form. The Library Director will review the request in relation to the Library's mission and program criteria, and will make a determination within 60 days of receipt of request. This determination can be appealed, in writing, to the Library Board of Trustees. Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the general statutes. All materials, programs and displays being challenged are required to remain available in the Library until a final decision is made by the Library Director.