

**THE FERGUSON LIBRARY**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**October 28, 2025**

**Present:**

**Board Members:** R. Mercede (Chair); M. Mays Green (Vice Chair); A. George (Treasurer); S. O'Shea (Secretary); S. Frederick; A. Livingston; T. Lucero; L. Meyer; L. Miller

**Citizen Advisors:** A. Better-Wirz; A. Bingaman; E. Bromley; B. Brucker; S. Conley; S. Fitzgerald; W. Hill; A. LiVolsi; M. Moore; J. Orlikoff; S. Perry; A. Riehl; R. Shaw; A. Zucker

**Staff:** A. Knapp; J. Fulcher Anderson; L. Avellar; N. Bochicchio; C. Hubbard; S. LaPerla; D. Lyles; A. Marrocolla; K. Mueller; E. McKay

Board Chair RJ Mercede called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm.

**Minutes**

Mr. Mercede presented the minutes for September 16, 2025, a motion was made, moved and passed to accept these minutes.

**Treasurer's Report**

The treasurer's report showed positive results with wages and benefits due to a number of vacancies. Union negotiations are still ongoing with no settlement of salary increases. Passport revenue is down compared to last year and we are predicting a tight year. Baker & Taylor (B&T) book distributors will close at the end of 2025. B&T had processed a number of incoming library books, which the library may now need to handle with staff that was not budgeted.

**CEO Reports**

The September CEO report centered on the Communication Department's new metrics for tracking media results in marketing and discerning patterns in website usage. Alec Biron, recently hired as the Marketing & Communication Coordinator, spoke about his work with Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, and said engagement has increased dramatically across all platforms. He noted that humorous stories generate more likes and timing is everything in social media when highlighting current events.

**Executive Committee**

On October 27, 2025 the Executive Committee met and reviewed the board agenda for the October 28, 2025 meeting.

**Building Committee**

The Building Committee met on October 7, 2025 and reviewed the proposed capital projects budget. The committee also reviewed preliminary architectural designs for the Harry Bennett Branch children's room.

**Pension Committee**

The Pension Committee meeting was held on October 14, 2025. The committee reviewed defined benefits with the library's financial advisors, as well as a summary of the financial markets at the end of Q3, noting that the plan performance report is as of the end of Q2.

**Foundation Board**

The Ferguson Library Foundation Board held its annual meeting September 18, 2025, where they elected new officers and board members who were presented at the library Board of Trustees September 16, 2025 meeting. The Foundation Board approved their FY 2023-2026 budget and approved the transfer of funds to the Ferguson Library for two special projects: \$100,000 for the Main Library's first floor children's area, and \$37,000 to hire My Architecture Workshop to conduct community conversations for the strategic plan.

Members of the Foundation Board, along with other library board members, are invited to attend an interactive workshop November 12, 2025. This workshop is designed to help non-profit leaders develop a capital campaign and will be presented by Kevin Wallace of Campaign Counsel.

**Friends of Ferguson**

Friends President Anne Bingaman discussed Friends sponsored events, recently the Andrew Morton program on October 23 and upcoming David Baldacci program on November 11. The Friends, in partnership with the library, will host a reception prior to the October 29 screening of *The Librarians* at the Avon Theatre, followed by a panel discussion featuring Alice Knapp.

**Old Business****HVAC Update**

HVAC bids are expected next week, and we plan to move forward with this project.

**Board Retreat**

Mr. Mercede reminded the board of the retreat on November 1, 2025, being held at the Lafayette pop-up branch.

**All Day Staff Professional Development Day**

Connie Hubbard, Chief Human Resources Officer & Labor Relations, spoke about the second Staff Professional Development Day to be held November 7, 2025 at the First Presbyterian Church. The library will be closed that day in order for all staff to attend. This year's theme is Better Together.

## **New Business**

### **2026 – 2032 Capital Budget Request**

The capital budget request for 2025-2032 was presented. Long term projects are: Main Library HVAC (\$750,000); Bennett Branch HVAC Replacement (\$2,000,000); Main Library Elevator Upgrade (\$500,000); East Side Branch pre-construction/design (\$300,000). Short term project: Technology Replacement/Expansion (\$150,000). A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the capital budget request.

### **Library Policies**

The following four policies were presented at today's meeting: Collection Development Policy; Display Policy; Library Program Policy; and Request for Reconsideration Policy.

The following motion was made and seconded to accept the Collection Development Policy. The motion passed.

## **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide the selection of library materials and inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. The Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements, issued by the American Library Association underpin this policy. This policy is available on the library's website.

### **OUR MISSION**

Provide free and equal access to information, ideas, books and technology to educate, engage, and enrich the Stamford community.

### **OUR VISION**

The Ferguson Library helps individuals and organizations achieve success in an effort to build a strong, vibrant and inclusive community.

### **OUR FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES**

- Intellectual Freedom
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Underlying the Ferguson Library's mission and vision is our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as the belief that intellectual freedom is the cornerstone of our democracy. Our values are reflected in how we serve the community and how we work together.

### **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP**

In December 2022, the Ferguson Library became a book sanctuary library in response to the rising number of book challenges and bans. As a book sanctuary we provide opportunities to expand access to banned and challenged books as well as support and protection for the freedom to read.

In January 2023, the city of Stamford designated Stamford a book sanctuary city.

## **ABOUT THE LIBRARY AND ITS COMMUNITY**

Since it first opened its doors at the end of the 19th century, the Ferguson Library has been the heart of the Stamford community, a place of learning and education, a gathering place where people could meet and exchange ideas. As Stamford grew and changed, the library grew along with it. In 1911, the Ferguson Library became a free public library, embracing the concept that knowledge should be available to all, regardless of ability to pay.

The Main Library (DiMattia Building) is open seven days a week. It is located in the heart of downtown Stamford in a historic building. The collections in this facility are extensive and serve as the backbone of the whole system. A New Materials Room off the lobby offers a light-filled space to browse or read. Our Youth Services Department is housed on both the first floor and lower levels, with large collections and technology stations for children and teens. The Main Library's second floor is our dedicated research floor and includes the Technology Center as well as research guides and other special collections.

The Harry Bennett Branch, across from Turn of River Middle School, is our busiest branch and has a large collection of popular titles in many formats for children, teens and adults. The branch offers programming for all ages, including a popular monthly book discussion series.

The Weed Memorial & Hollander Branch, located in a renovated 19th century farmhouse, is the hub of the Springdale neighborhood, within walking distance for many residents. In addition to its collection of books and other materials for children and adults, Weed sponsors many popular programs, such as preschool storytimes and adult book discussions. Its cozy fireplace room is a popular spot on winter days.

The South End Branch is located in the Lathon Wider Community Center in Stamford's South End, a fast-growing, changing neighborhood. The branch serves a diverse community, which includes many recent immigrants, and has an eclectic, culturally diverse collection. South End offers many educational and recreational programs, including Homework Cafe, music and cultural programs and a long-running adult book discussion that focuses on African and African American authors.

The library's newest branch in the PAL Center, focuses on youth collections and brings library service to Stamford's West Side for the first time. While the Ferguson Library doesn't have branches in all of the neighborhoods, it will work with community partners to establish pop-up libraries.

The Bookmobile has regularly scheduled stops at childcare centers, senior housing, parks, and other neighborhood locations. Its collection includes both adult and children's materials.

## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION**

The Ferguson Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents. Materials are evaluated for inclusion in the collection using a variety of methods, including reviews from established journals, recommendations from professional organizations, circulation data, and staff's professional judgment. This policy acknowledges that librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides residents with access to the widest array of library and other educational materials.

The library will adhere to the following:

- a) 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**, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. This prohibits discriminatory practices in places of public accommodations.
- b) Library materials are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents.
- c) Library materials shall represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTING LIBRARY MATERIALS**

The Library Board of Trustees delegates the oversight and management of the collection, within the guidelines of this policy, to the CEO and staff that are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials. Responsibility for the selection, maintenance, replacement, and weeding of materials rests with the designated professional staff under the overall direction of the CEO.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The library is committed to maintaining a diverse collection that reflects the needs of the community. To ensure this, librarians will review library and educational materials using professionally accepted standards. These standards include evaluating:

- a. material relevance
- b. physical condition
- c. availability of duplicate copies
- d. the presence of age-appropriate or grade-level content
- e. continued community demand

The library affirms that these practices support its mission to provide free and accessible information for all residents.

## **FORMATS**

The library refrains from purchasing unusual formats designed for the home market, including write-in workbooks, multi-part or spiral binding publications with pull-out pages, and miniature gift books.

## **DIGITAL MATERIALS**

The library's digital media collections provide access through a variety of commonly used android and IOS devices, and through a variety of downloadable formats such as ePub, Kindle, PDF, and MP3 audio file or music file. The library also subscribes to movie streaming services that allow users to stream feature films, TV shows, and documentary and educational content. Materials available through these digital collections are not always curated by the library but may be curated by a third-party vendor.

## **DATABASES/DIGITAL COLLECTIONS/ELECTRONIC RESOURCES COLLECTION**

The library collects electronic resources according to the general selection criteria. In addition, criteria specific to electronic formats are applied. Methods of evaluation include comparisons to similar products, demonstrations, literature reviews, and peer consultation.

## **NON-PRINT MATERIALS**

Physical non-print materials remain popular with the library's users. To fill the demand, the library continues to purchase films in DVD and Blu-ray format, audiobooks on compact disc and Playaway format, and music on compact disc. Older formats like VHS, audiocassette, reel-to-reel tape, and LP recording are not owned or collected by the library.

## **ADULT COLLECTIONS**

Titles are typically selected from professional review journals, but other criteria include the reputation of the author and publisher, book award winners, local interest, and appropriateness to the library's users. The goal is to create a comprehensive collection that mirrors the diverse interests of the Stamford community with respect to cultural background, educational level, taste, and reading ability. Books are purchased in hardcover as well as in trade and mass market paperback. Titles in large print format are also acquired to meet the needs of lower-vision users.

## **FICTION**

The library purchases a wide variety of contemporary fiction works including bestsellers, literary fiction, mysteries, science fiction, fantasy, short story collections, and adult graphic novels. Library staff are aware of community demand for popular reading and select titles based on those criteria, acquiring multiple copies as needed. In addition, the library offers a large number of literary classics which are in demand by students as well as general adult readers.

## **NON-FICTION**

The library maintains an in-depth collection of non-fiction works, currently reflecting the subject areas expressed through the Dewey Decimal classification scheme. This form of classification is under consideration for future modification and/or alteration for increased equity, accessibility and discoverability. We select materials appropriate for a general public library audience, as opposed to scholarly or esoteric works. Some of the more popular subject areas include biography, health, childcare, cooking, business and technology, travel, history, true crime, home improvement, politics and world affairs, and test preparation. There may be some material in the collection that may be considered offensive. No library material shall be removed because of its origin, background or viewpoints express in such material or due to the background or viewpoints of the creator.

## **CHALLENGED BOOKS**

The Ferguson Library is a book sanctuary city and works to expand access to banned and challenged books. The book sanctuary designation affirms the Ferguson Library's commitment to collecting and protecting endangered books, making them accessible to the public, hosting book talks, events, and conversations about diverse characters and stories, and educating others on the history of book banning and burning. As a book sanctuary, the library maintains a collection of challenged books, which is continuously updated. The library also keeps abreast of recently challenged books, which are reviewed by staff before deciding on whether they will be added to the collection.

## **WORLD LANGUAGES**

Our World languages collection supports recent immigrants, international students, and the general public. Materials published in languages other than English are purchased by The Ferguson Library in response to local demographics, demonstrated need, and popular demand. Consideration is given to materials (books,

periodicals, film, and music) in various languages that reflect the ethnic diversity of the community. The most popular languages include Spanish, Russian, Haitian Creole, French, Polish, and Chinese.

Ferguson Library staff monitor current demographic data and try to develop collections of additional languages (such as Arabic and Hindi) for newer, growing populations. In order to determine how to best meet the informational and recreational needs of the community, the library will use various assessment tools including census data, surveys, customer registration data, customer requests, and data from other community groups. The library is committed to a flexible, evolving, and ongoing assessment process. Languages may be added or dropped from the collection as community needs dictate.

The World Languages collection contains bestselling original language authors, as well as translated works by famous classic and contemporary authors. Additionally, the general public uses the wider World Language collections for lifelong learning, travel and recreation purposes, and more recently to gain a greater understanding of the cultures of our recent immigrant and refugee communities. The collections also provide materials for customers fluent in more than one language wishing to retain that fluency.

Language learning materials, dictionaries, and literary and cultural resources are collected to support the educational and informational needs of our users. Professional librarians with foreign language expertise are assigned to the management of the collections. The library relies on professional review sources for each subject area and format within the collection.

For each language collection, we have also selected ESL (English as a Second Language) materials to accommodate customer needs. Priority is generally given to American publications and material with an audio-visual component and covers a range of areas, including dictionaries and items dealing with grammar, punctuation, spelling, writing composition, and numeracy.

## **LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY**

The task of the librarian charged with this collection is to identify, acquire, and preserve research materials related to local, state, and regional history and genealogy. The Stamford Room, located on the second floor of the Main Library, houses work on Stamford and Connecticut history in addition to municipal documents, historical maps and atlases, old city directories, genealogical manuscripts, and biographies of prominent people of Stamford and Connecticut.

The library has two large collections of early Stamford photographs, donated by Charles Kurz and Carl Lobozza. Mounted and labeled photographs are available for public viewing with special permission. Indexed photocopies of the photos are located at the second floor Information Desk. These photographs are now available through the Ferguson Library Digital Archive. Also available for view is the extensive collection of materials published by Stamford's Overbrook Press from 1934 to 1969.

The Library also owns a collection of microfilm with US Census records, vital, church and cemetery records, city directories (1879 to 1966), and school yearbooks for limited years.

## **GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS - FEDERAL/STATE/CITY- MUNICIPAL/JUDICIAL**

### **FEDERAL DEPOSIT LIBRARY PROGRAM**

Approximately 10% of the materials we receive from the Government Printing Office are in physical formats. The other 90% are online. All federal documents, including physical materials and relevant electronic content such as e-books and websites, appear in the public catalog and can be located through a simple search. The Ferguson Library's government documents librarian is responsible for the selection of all materials through lists provided by the GPO.

## **CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY**

State documents are filed and displayed by agency/topic. They get removed once a year or replaced if there is similar information that is more up-to date. We get a Connecticut Practice Book, the Connecticut Statutes, the Connecticut State Manual and Register. These books are catalogued and filed in Ready Reference on the 2nd floor. Documents are kept for five years or until updated. Books of a greater importance are kept 10 years and filed in the Stamford Room.

## **CITY OF STAMFORD DOCUMENTS**

A collection that includes both print and digital formats. Digital documents and archives are found on the library's local resources page. Print documents can be found in various sections of the 2nd floor. Charter, real estate, agency communications, budgets are the types of documents collected.

## **LIBRARY WEBSITE**

E-resources that do not require subscriptions and licensing agreements may be added to the collection provided they support the educational and information needs of our users.

Library staff may recommend external website links, including government, non-profit and commercial websites, which feature reliable sources and provide valuable content. Non-library parties may suggest or request links, but inclusion and placement of all external links will be carefully evaluated and selected by staff on the basis of the following criteria:

Any requests from the public or other organizations for third-party or reciprocal links will be evaluated by staff using the criteria above.

Websites that advertise a service or product, promote hate speech, or a particular religious or political agenda will not be considered.

## **DIGITAL ARCHIVES**

The library scans and digitizes a variety of hardcopy documents and makes them available electronically through our webpage. These documents may include images such as photographs and drawings; maps; books and booklets; manuscripts; broadsides; letters; and printed ephemera. The documents come from the library's own collections and are selected for inclusion based on community interest. Popular topics include Stamford and Connecticut history, Stamford urban renewal and regional planning materials, and genealogy of local families. Suitability for digitization is evaluated in terms of image quality and physical condition.

Oral history interviews, recorded by library staff in the form of audio or video files, may also be included in the Digital Archives.

The library provides electronic versions of materials from its collections for personal use by the public. We do not give legal advice as to whether any particular use would infringe upon the intellectual property rights of the person or organization that created the original documents.

## **MAKERSPACE AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY**

In an effort to reduce digital inequity, the library makerspace and technology center circulates maker equipment that customers might find useful, and which can be used for trial and experimentation. The library currently lends out Raspberry Pis, Arduino kits, ukuleles, household tool kits and a sewing machine. More items will be added based on funding, trends and community need.



## **YOUTH SERVICES**

The Youth Services Department offers developmentally appropriate materials that meet the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children and young adults ages birth through 18. The same criteria listed for selection of adult resources apply to materials for youth. The content, style, format, and appeal to children and teens are taken into consideration. Resources (which include print books, e-books, audiobooks, DVDs, and music) are selected to serve children of all reading, listening and viewing levels. It also serves parents, teachers and other adults working with and interested in children and their literature. The collection is responsive to local school assignments, providing resources which supplement the curriculum and summer reading lists. A selection of resources in languages other than English is also included. To ensure that all parts of the collection are appropriate and well-chosen, youth services librarians consult professional review sources before purchase but also take recommendations of library users into consideration.

Some materials in the Youth Services Collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children of every age. Use of library resources by children is the responsibility of their parents or guardians. Selections shall not be inhibited by the possibility that resources may come into the hands of children.

Major factors that influence the selection of materials for youth (which include print books, e-books, audiobooks, DVDs, and music) are:

- Content
- Authority
- Literacy merit, artistic quality, originality, and creativity
- Accuracy, objectivity, clarity, logic, and effectiveness of material
- Relevance to the needs of the community
- Current interest in subject matter
- Local interest in subject or author
- Popular demand
- Limits of space and funds

## **GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

The Ferguson Library welcomes gifts of books and other materials for the collection and applies the same selection criteria that governs purchases. Gift materials are accepted with the understanding that those that meet the library's selection criteria may be retained and those that do not will be gifted to the Friends of the Ferguson Library for their Used Bookshop.

## **CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS**

Because our collections reflect a diverse community with many different beliefs and viewpoints, it does happen that a user will find some material controversial. In response, we direct them to the Collection Development Policy to further their understanding of how we select materials for the library. If they still have concerns, they may submit a request for reconsideration of the material they find objectionable.

## **REQUESTS FOR MATERIAL RECONSIDERATION**

Stamford residents may request the library to reconsider material by completing the [linked form](#). The Ferguson Library limits consideration of request to reconsider material to individual residents of Stamford.

Staff will review the request in relation to the library's Reconsideration Policy and will present their recommendation to the Library CEO, who will review the request and reply to the user within sixty days of receipt of the request.

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The following motion was made and seconded to accept the Display Policy. The motion passed.

## **DISPLAY POLICY**

### **OUR MISSION**

Provide free and equal access to information, ideas, books and technology to educate, engage, and enrich the Stamford community.

### **OUR VISION**

The Ferguson Library helps individuals and organizations achieve success in an effort to build a strong, vibrant, and inclusive community.

### **OUR FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES**

Underlying the Ferguson Library's mission and vision is our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as the belief that intellectual freedom is the cornerstone of our democracy. Our values are reflected in how we serve the community and how we work together.

The Ferguson Library, December 2022, became a book sanctuary library in response to the rising number of book challenges and bans. A book sanctuary provides opportunities to expand access to banned and challenged books as well as provides support and protection for the freedom to read.

In January 2023, the city of Stamford designated Stamford a book sanctuary city.

### **PURPOSE**

The Ferguson Library Display Policy provides a basis for public display of library materials and collections curated by library staff as well as special exhibits. This policy informs the residents of Stamford about the principles and criteria upon which these decisions are made.

### **PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA**

The Ferguson Library curates and assembles displays for the Stamford community that enhance and complement our digital and physical collections. Library displays will be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents and will represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. Our displays provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents.

### **THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA IS USED FOR THE SELECTION, CURATION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF DISPLAYS**

- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Accuracy, authority, effectiveness, and timeliness of presentation

- Inclusion of diverse points of view
- Meets one of the goals in the library's strategic framework
- Educational or historical significance
- Relation to library collections, resources, other exhibits and programs
- Ability to partner with other community organizations
- Cost
- Availability of display space

In addition, the library draws upon other community resources in developing displays and exhibits, and may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits.

- a. Library displays shall represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints and cannot limit or restrict displays due to the content or viewpoints they express, or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of their creators.
- b. Library displays are provided for the general interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents.
- c. Library displays shall provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of users.
- d. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop displays.
- f. Library displays shall not be removed or relocated solely due to the content or viewpoints they express, or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of their creators. Displays are a resource for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents
- g. Library displays shall be removed or excluded based on professionally accepted standards as outlined in the library's Collection Development Policy, promoted by professional organizations like the Connecticut Library Association and the American Library Association. These standards prioritize intellectual freedom, equity, inclusivity, and access.
- h. All library displays are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.
- i. The Ferguson Library distinguishes between library displays that are created or curated by librarians and those created by members of the public or community. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop displays. Those created by members of the public or community are considered community-led and do not necessarily represent the views of the library. Community-led displays must still comply with the library's policies and procedures.
- j. Requests for reconsideration of a display are limited to individual residents of Stamford. Stamford residents may request the library to reconsider a display by completing the linked form. (<https://www.fergusonlibrary.org/form/request-for-reconsideration-of-l>) Staff will review the request in relation to the library's Reconsideration Policy and will present their recommendation to

the Library CEO, who will review the request and reply to the user within sixty days of receipt of the request.

## **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP**

Library-initiated displays and exhibits should not exclude topics, books, media, and other resources solely because they may be considered controversial. The library's commitment to intellectual freedom extends to displays, which we see as a resource for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas to promote free expression. The Board of Trustees has adopted the American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, the Library Bill of Rights and all relevant interpretations. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the library CEO. Ultimate responsibility for any display rests with the CEO or their designee.

Except for the three areas listed below, spaces in the library are not available for displays except for those curated or assembled by library staff.

### **DUDLEY N. WILLIAMS AUDITORIUM**

This area is made available to the Stamford Art Association, which selects and maintains exhibits.

### **FRIENDS OF THE FERGUSON LIBRARY BOOK SHOP**

The Friends are responsible for displays, decorations and signage within its two book shop locations.

### **COFFEE SHOP**

The tenant of the coffee shop has authority over displays, decorations and signage within the shop.

### **BULLETIN BOARDS**

Bulletin boards at the branches can be used to announce upcoming programs and events organized by nonprofit organizations serving the Stamford community with the prior approval of the branch manager.

- Event dates must fall within 90 days of posting.
- New postings should not cover existing postings.
- Items larger than 8½ x 11 inches may be removed first when the board is crowded.
- Commercial notices for services, items for sale and businesses, etc., are not permitted and will be removed.

### **BANNERS**

Any banner to be displayed between the columns outside the library requires the prior approval of the Director of Development & Communication, who is responsible for scheduling banners. These banners vary in content, design and objective, which include promoting library programs; celebrating heritage months; publicizing community events; and recognizing our donors and nonprofit partners. The decision to hang a banner in front of the library is made in consideration of the criteria outlined above and ultimately rests with the library CEO.

### **APPENDICES**

Connecticut State Statutes Chapter 814c, Human Rights and Opportunities, Sec. 46a-63 [Discriminatory public accommodation practices](#)

[The Library Bill of Rights](#)

[The Freedom to Read Statement](#)

The following motion was made and seconded to accept the Library Program Policy. The motion passed.

## **LIBRARY PROGRAM POLICY**

### **OUR MISSION**

Provide free and equal access to information, ideas, books and technology to educate, engage, and enrich the Stamford community.

### **OUR VISION**

The Ferguson Library helps individuals and organizations achieve success in an effort to build a strong, vibrant, and inclusive community.

### **PURPOSE**

The Ferguson Library provides a diverse offering of programs, workshops and classes for the Stamford community that enhance and complement our digital and physical collections.

### **DEFINITION OF A PROGRAM**

A Library program is a free event, virtual or in-person, planned by the library staff for the benefit of those members of the public who attend. Programs may involve outside presenters, facilitators or performers and may be presented in cooperation with other partners.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Library Board of Trustees delegates development, presentation and oversight of programs to the CEO and staff. Librarians are accountable for planning, scheduling and implementation of programs. The final responsibility for the library program is held by the CEO, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by librarians throughout the library that are professionally trained to curate and develop programs. Attendees are responsible for complying with the Library's Code of Conduct.

The Ferguson Library distinguishes between programs that are created or curated by librarians and those created by members of the public or community. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop programs. Those offered by members of the public or community are considered community-led, are not endorsed or cosponsored by the library and do not necessarily represent the views of the library. Community-led programs must still comply with the library's policies and procedures.

### **PROGRAM SELECTION**

Factors that determine programming include but are not limited to:

- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Accuracy, authority, effectiveness, and timeliness of presentation
- Presenter background/qualifications in content area
- Inclusion of diverse points of view
- Meets one of the goals in the library's strategic framework

- Education or historical significance
- Relation to library collections, resources, exhibits and programs
- Ability to partner with other community organizations
- Budget
- Availability of program space

## **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, COORDINATION AND SUPERVISION**

The Ferguson Library offers programs which are timely or have educational value. Programs provide opportunities for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. Programs are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents. They represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of residents. In cases where an individual or organization might find them controversial, they can submit a request for consideration.

The Ferguson library programs are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

## **PROGRAM ACCESS**

All Ferguson Library programs are free and open to the public, unless they are fundraising events. Advance registration may be required, which can be made online, in-person, or over the phone. Attendance may also be limited to age and grade level. For these programs, a child's parent, legal guardian or caregiver is solely responsible for determining the suitability of any program offered for their child. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a Library program should contact the library two weeks prior to the program (we will try to accommodate a shorter timeframe).

## **VIRTUAL PROGRAMS**

The library offers virtual programs and adheres to the same guidelines as in person programs.

## **PROGRAM MATERIALS**

Library program materials may be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The Ferguson Library may make use of several tools to evaluate programs, including but not limited to the Public Library Association's Outcome Measurement Resources, output measures, surveys, and feedback forms.

## **RESIDENT RECONSIDERATION REQUESTS**

Stamford residents may request the library to reconsider a planned program by completing the attached form (<https://www.fergusonlibrary.org/form/request-for-reconsideration-of-l>). The library limits consideration of requests to reconsider programs to individual residents of Stamford. The library Staff will review the request in relation to the library's mission and program criteria and will present their recommendation to the Library CEO, who will review the request and reply to the user within sixty days of receipt of the request.

## APPENDICES

Connecticut State Statutes Chapter 814c, Human Rights and Opportunities, Sec. 46a-63 [Discriminatory public accommodation practices](#)

[The Library Bill of Rights](#)

[The Freedom to Read Statement](#)

[The Freedom to View Statement](#)

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The following motion was made and seconded to accept the Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy. The motion passed.

## **LIBRARY MATERIAL REVIEW AND RECONSIDERATION POLICY**

### **OUR MISSION**

Provide free and equal access to information, ideas, books and technology to educate, engage, and enrich the Stamford community.

### **OUR VISION**

The Ferguson Library helps individuals and organizations achieve success in an effort to build a strong, vibrant, and inclusive community.

### **OUR FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES**

Intellectual Freedom

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Underlying the Ferguson Library's mission and vision is our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as the belief that intellectual freedom is the cornerstone of our democracy. Our values are reflected in how we serve the community and how we work together.

The Ferguson Library, December 2022, became a book sanctuary library in response to the rising number of book challenges and bans. A book sanctuary provides opportunities to expand access to banned and challenged books as well as provides support and protection for the freedom to read.

### **REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION**

A request for reconsideration and removal of items in the collection, materials, displays or program is limited to individuals residing in Stamford, and submit a **Request for Reconsideration form**, which is available at any library location and on the library's website. This form will also be used to request the removal of a display or a cancellation of a program.

No library material, display or program shall be removed, or will a program be cancelled, because of the 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.

Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policies.

The library prohibits the removal, exclusion or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive.

The materials review and reconsideration process for any library material, display or program shall never favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.

The individual completing a reconsideration form must include specific information about which portion or portions of such material they object to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. The Request for Reconsideration form must include the individual's full legal name, address and telephone number. The CEO reserves the right to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged library material.

Reconsideration requests are not confidential patron records under section 11-25 of the general statutes.

Any library material being challenged will remain available in the library according to its catalog record and be available for a resident to reserve, check out or access until a final decision is made by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The library has established a process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display or program. Library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Library materials shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policies.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

The library CEO, along with appropriate staff, will evaluate the request for reconsideration and will read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged material against the collection development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request. The library CEO shall provide a copy of the library's decision and report to the individual who submitted the form.

The final authority regarding the removal or retention of library materials ultimately resides with the Library Board of Trustees. Any appeal of the decision of the library CEO should be directed in writing to the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library Board of Trustees, after evaluating the challenged material under the collection development and maintenance policy, shall:

(A) consult with (i) the CEO, (ii) the State Librarian, or the State Librarian's designee, (iii) a representative of the cooperating library service unit, as defined in section 11-9e of the general statutes, (iv) the president of the Connecticut Library Association, or the president's designee, and (v) the president of the Association of Connecticut Library Boards, or the president's designee,

(B) deliberate on such request for reconsideration,

(C) provide a written statement of the reasons for the reconsideration or refusal to reconsider the library material, and

(D) provide any final decision that is contrary to the decision of the library CEO.



Once a decision has been made by the library director or the board of trustees or other governing board on the reconsideration of any library material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for reconsideration for a period of three years. The Library CEO shall summarize the previous decision in response to any new request for reconsideration during that three-year period.

Any library employee who, in good faith, implements the policies and procedures described in the section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323 Ferguson Library abides by the following statutory requirements.

### **December Board Meeting & Holiday Dinner**

The December 9 board meeting will be held at the Harry Bennett Branch, followed by a holiday dinner.

### **Other**

Ms. Knapp mentioned that we are trying to make use of BoardEffect/Diligent in our board announcements and board material access. Doing this will help with complying with Freedom of Information if ever requested.

Mr. Mercede motioned for the meeting to end at 5:22 pm. A motion was made, moved and approved to adjourn the meeting.

Stephanie O'Shea  
Secretary