

DT: January 3, 2022
TO: Cape Elizabeth Town Council
FR: Rachel Davis, Library Director
RE: New and revised policies

The library staff and the TML Committee have continued to draft and revise library policies to ensure that current library operations meet the needs of the community, and that the policies reflect current realities.

Attached is an updated Collection Development Policy which includes language that positions the library to respond to community members' concerns, while underscoring the public library's foundational commitment to intellectual freedom. The heightened level of feelings on display around the nation with regard to library collections underscores the need for a thoughtful and measured mechanism for reviewing concerns that might arise from our own community. Language in our revised policy has been carefully considered to address the kinds of challenges to materials that are taking place in communities around the country in recent months (see a sampling of recent articles linked to below.) We feel it is vital for our community to be prepared for any such challenges that might arise locally.

- [Efforts to ban books are on the rise. Philly YA authors say 'silent censorship' is also getting worse](#)
- [Oklahoma lawmaker introduces book-banning bill with \\$10,000-a-day penalty](#)
- [Freedom to Read: Austin Public Library says it stands against book banning and censorship](#)
- [Utah library leaders fighting back against book banning push](#)

In addition to the revised Collection Development Policy, we would also like to request consideration and approval of two new policies, which are also rooted in the current climate and recent events. Our new Programming Policy articulates many of the same foundational values as the Collection Development policy, making it clear that the library's programming efforts, like its collections, are responsive to community needs and interests, while maintaining high standards with regard to equal access, freedom of expression, and ethics.

The Petition and Passive Engagement Policy was drafted by the TML Committee in 2019, but was never brought to the Town Council for approval. This policy clarifies the library's neutrality as a public institution and the availability of the library grounds as a location for petitioning, but also provides reasonable guidelines for these activities on the library grounds so as not to impede access to the library by its users.

Thank you for taking the time to review and consider approval for the attached library policies.