KETCHIKAN PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD
QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 6pm, City Hall Council Chambers

Members p/a Members p/a
June Dahl (Chair) Sharli Arntzen (Assembly representative)
Jack Finnegan (Council representative) Deborah Simon (Borough resident)
Nina Hopp (Friends representative) Vacancy (At-Large)
Sharon Montgomery (At-Large) Vacancy - High school representative
Kate Govaars (At-Large)

Staff p/a p/a
Pat Tully (Director)

1) CALL TO ORDER – ESTABLISH A QUORUM
2) INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS
3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4) LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: We are on Tlingit land and we would like to acknowledge and give honor and respect to the traditional landowners, the Tlingit elders, and past, present and future generations. We honor the relationships that exist between Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples.
5) APPROVAL OF AGENDA
6) APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 11, 2023 MINUTES
7) PUBLIC HEARING ON AGENDA ITEM 12a: There are currently two requests to move a book from the Teen collection to the Adult collection: Flamer, by Mike Curato; and Red Hood, by Elana Arnold. After going through the reconsideration process, the person who submitted the requests has asked the Board to conduct this public hearing.
   a) CORRESPONDENCE
   b) PUBLIC COMMENT (3-MINUTE LIMIT PER SPEAKER)
8) CORRESPONDENCE
9) PUBLIC COMMENT – 3 MINUTE LIMIT PER SPEAKER
10) REPORTS:
   a) FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY NINA HOPPS
   b) CITY COUNCIL JACK FINNEGAN
   c) BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SHARLI ARNTZEN
   d) LIBRARIAN PAT TULLY
11) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
   a) PROPOSED NEW RESOURCE PLACEMENT SECTION IN THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION
      DEVELOPMENT POLICY

12) **NEW BUSINESS:**
   a) BOARD DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF REQUESTS TO MOVE TWO BOOKS FROM THE
      TEEN TO THE ADULT COLLECTION: FLAMER, BY MIKE CURATO; AND RED HOOD, BY ELANA
      ARNOLD.
   
   b) CITY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
   
   c) DISCUSSION OF BEGINNING BOARD MEETINGS WITH A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
   
   d) DISCUSSION OF STAFF MEMO REGARDING THE LOCATION OF THE TEEN NONFICTION
      COLLECTION, AND THE PROPORTION OF FICTION TO NONFICTION BOOKS IN THE TEEN ROOM
   
   e) DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL/TRAINING MEETING TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE
      QUARTERLY MEETING IN APRIL, TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:
      i) PROCESS FOR CALLING A SPECIAL MEETING
      ii) OPEN MEETINGS ACT – BOARD MOTIONS AND VOTING VIA EMAIL
      iii) AUTHORITY AND CAPACITY OF BOROUGH ASSEMBLY AND CITY COUNCIL BOARD
           REPRESENTATIVES

13) **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

14) **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

15) **ADJOURNMENT**
1. CALL TO ORDER – ESTABLISH A QUORUM – Called to order at 6pm.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: We are on Tlingit land and we would like to acknowledge and give honor and respect to the traditional landowners, the Tlingit elders, and past, present and future generations. We honor the relationships that exist between Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples. We acknowledge that we arrived here by listening to the peoples, elders and lessons from the past; these stories carry us as we weave a healthier world for future generations.
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Several suggestions for changes in the agenda were proposed: Moving the Approval of Agenda to Item 4; adding an item to New Business to discuss Item 9.5: Library Report In Response to Board Member Questions Re the American Library Association and Reconsideration Process; Changing the wording of Old Business item 10.1 to read: Consideration of Suggested (in place of Actionable) Motions to Amend the Library’s Collection Development Policy, Submitted to the Library Director by the September 12 Deadline; change heading from ‘Old Business’ to ‘Unfinished Business’.
   Grant EchoHawk moved to approve the agenda as amended, and Jack Finnegan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. MOTION TO RECORD BOARD MEETINGS AND MAKE THEM AVAILABLE ON THE CITY’S WEBSITE: Jack Finnegan moved to record Library Advisory Board meetings and make them available on the City’s website and YouTube; Grant EchoHawk seconded. Discussion: Nina Hopps noted that the Board’s teen representative (now vacant) is a minor.
   Deborah Simon amended the motion to require parental consent to being recorded for the teen representative on the Board; Jack Finnegan seconded. Finnegan suggested that parental permission to be recorded be a condition of being a member of the Library Advisory Board. The amendment passed unanimously.
   The main motion passed: Finnegan, Hopps, Montgomery, EchoHawk, Simon in favor; Govaars opposed.
6. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS: Welcome to Shari Montgomery and Kate Govaars, the Board’s two new at-large members.
7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 12, 2023: Montgomery moved to approve the minutes; Finnegan seconded.
Discussion: Simon proposed the following amendments: (center of page 3):
Change ‘Ms. Simon indicated that she would request clarification from the City Manager on whether or not the
Board must adhere to the City Council decisions …’ to: “Mrs. Simon indicated that she would request clarification
from the City Manager on whether or not the Board would be in violation of the Open Meetings Act by circulating
proposed motions in advance of the meeting.”; in the next bullet point, change ‘actionable motions’ to ‘suggested
motions’; (page 4, near the top) change “The motion failed.” to “The motion failed to be seconded.”; under Future
Agenda Items, change ‘actionable motions’ to ‘suggested motions’.
The Board voted unanimously to approve the July 12 notes as amended.

SEPTEMBER 29 BOARD TRAINING NOTES INCLUDED; NO QUORUM: Montgomery moved to approve the notes;

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:
- Deborah Simon: Spoke as herself and not as a member of the Advisory Board. The Library’s policies and procedures
  need objectivity and clarity in order to protect the Library from claims of bias. Librarians’ professional expertise
  and experience are not sufficient.
- Eric Simon: The Library Advisory Board and City employees work for the people via the City Council, and, since the
  Borough provides 40% of the Library’s budget, Library staff work for everyone in the Borough, whether or not
  they voted in the last election. Currently dissenting voices on the Board are shut down. Current library policy
documents are subjective, not objective. EchoHawk asked how dissenting voices have been shut down; Mr. Simon
  replied that the Board does not meet often enough and does not address all concerns.
- Tanya Hedlind: An example of shutting down discussion is that in Council and Library Advisory Board meetings,
  members of the audience, Council and Board said derogatory things about her opinions and no one stopped them.
  Ms. Hedlind also had several questions about the Library’s recent Banned Book Week posts.

CORRESPONDENCE:
- On October 8 Director Tully received an email from Maureen Eldridge, resigning from the Library Advisory Board.
  Ms. Eldridge was the Friends representative on the Board, and the Friends will discuss this at their next meeting on
  October 17.
- On October 6 Board member Simon emailed Director Tully with questions about how Library Facebook comments are
  moderated. KPU Telecomm’s Kim Simpson responded in an email that there are filters for City FB pages to hide
certain keywords and obscene illustrations; they also will occasionally ban trolls on fake accounts and remove
personal threats and irrelevant content. Being a municipal entity, the City must avoid infringing on free speech
rights.

9. REPORTS:
9.1 FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY: NINA HOPPS reported that the Friends held their October book sale at the Plaza this past
weekend and it was very successful, with $5,075 in sales and $1,113 in donations. The Friends Board will meet
next on Tuesday, October 17 and the public is welcome to attend. Mrs. Simon asked about having a shelf of books
at her business; Director Tully will let Outreach Librarian Rebecca Brown know that Mrs. Simon is interested in
establishing a Book Share.

9.2 CITY COUNCIL: JACK FINNEGAN reported that at tomorrow’s Council meeting Judy Zenge will be sworn in and Abby
Bradberry will conclude her term. Once the Advisory Board has completed its review of--and recommended changes to--the collection development policy, the revised policy will be brought before the City Council for final review and approval.

9.3 BOROUGH ASSEMBLY: GRANT ECHOHAWK reported that the Borough Assembly will be swearing in two new Assembly members at their next meeting.

9.4 LIBRARIAN: PAT TULLY summarized the latest director’s report (see attached). Mrs. Simon asked about the DirLead meeting that Director Tully attended last week. Tully will forward a report on the meeting to the Board.

9.5 LIBRARY REPORT IN RESPONSE TO DEBORAH SIMON QUESTIONS RE THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AND RECONSIDERATION PROCESS. (See attached memo.) On September 11, Mrs. Simon emailed Director Tully with two sets of questions for discussion at this meeting—one regarding the American Library Association and the other on the Request For Reconsideration policy. Since the resulting memo took some time to compile and compose, Mr. Echohawk asked City Manager Walsh how future such questions to staff should be handled. Manager Walsh replied that for all but simple questions of fact the Board, after a successful ‘four hands’ vote, should make the request to her as City Manager, since complex questions require significant staff time.

There followed a Board discussion of Director Tully’s memo in response to Mrs. Simon’s questions.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

10.1 CONSIDERATION OF SUGGESTED MOTIONS TO AMEND THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY.

MOTION: move to suggest changes to the library’s collection development policy. Simon moved; Montgomery seconded.

Amendment 1. Simon moved to amend the original motion to add the Library’s mission statement to the collection development policy. Finnegan seconded the motion. City Manager Walsh noted that a reference to the Library’s mission statement, which is on the Library’s home page, would be sufficient. EchoHawk makes a friendly amendment to add a reference to the Library’s mission statement to the collection development policy.

Call for the vote: amendment passed unanimously.

Amendment 2. Amend the original motion to direct Library staff to research current demographic data to include in the collection development policy. Simon moved; the motion failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 3. Amend the original motion to direct Library staff to research geographic data to include in the collection development policy. Simon moved; the motion failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 4. Amend the original motion to add a section ‘Audience’ to the collection development policy. Simon moved; motion failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 5. Amend the original motion to replace the term ‘librarian’ with ‘Library Director’ throughout the collection development policy. Simon moved; motion failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 6. Amend the original motion to change the second sentence of the document, “This policy will be reviewed and revised, if necessary, on an annual basis by the Library Director and the Library Advisory Board to ensure that both understand, approve and support the policy.” so that it reads: “This policy will be reviewed annually and revised if necessary by the Library Director and the Library Advisory Board to ensure that both understand and support the policy.” Simon moved; motion failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 7. EchoHawk moved to amend the original motion to change the first paragraph to “The Library Director, on the advice of the Library Advisory Board, will set policy and guidelines governing material selection. This policy will be reviewed by the Library Director and the Library Advisory Board on an annual basis during the meeting held in October to ensure that both understand and support the policy. The Library Advisory Board and the library staff recognize the responsibility to provide materials representing diverse points of view. The
Ketchikan Public Library subscribes to and support the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement.” Montgomery seconded the motion.

Simon moved to amend the amendment to add to the last sentence, “While being led by its mission statement …” The motion to amend failed for lack of a second.

Simon moved to amend the amendment to add to the end of the last sentence, “… to the extent that these best serve the needs of the community.” The motion to amend failed for lack of a second.

EchoHawk proposed to withdraw his amendment; Montgomery agreed to do so.

Amendment 8. Govaars proposed to amend the original motion, to make the following changes to the original second sentence of the first paragraph, so that it reads: “This policy will be reviewed annually and revised if necessary by the Library Director and the Library Advisory Board to ensure that both understand and support the policy.” EchoHawk seconds. Call for the vote on Amendment 8: Finnegan, Hopps, Montgomery, EchoHawk, Govaars voted in favor; Simon voted against.

Amendment 9. Simon moved to amend the original motion to replace the first paragraph of Selection Criteria, “Each title is selected on its own merit and the needs of the audience for whom it is intended. Selection is made primarily on the basis of book reviews and other professional tools.” with “We base much of our selection on a wide variety of review sources because we believe that reviews provide the best way to evaluate the quality of an item. However, we broaden the collection by seeking out additional titles in areas that are not well covered by review media and by responding to requests from patrons and staff.” Finnegan seconded the motion.

Call for the vote: Finnegan, Montgomery, EchoHawk, Simon, Govaars in favor. Motion carried.

Amendment 10. Simon moved to amend the original motion to delete the following sentence from the end of the second paragraph of the Selection Criteria section: “No single standard exists which can be applied in all acquisitions decisions.” Motion failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 11. Simon moved to amend the original motion to change the following sentence in the Selection Criteria section from: “Some materials must be judged primarily on their artistic merit, some on their scholarship, some on their value as human documents; others are needed to satisfy recreational and entertainment needs.” to read: “Some materials may be judged primarily on their artistic merit, some on their scholarship, some on their value as human documents; others may be added to satisfy recreational and entertainment needs.” Finnegan seconded.

Board voted unanimously to approve the change.

Amendment 12. Simon moved to amend the original motion, to add the following section to Selection Criteria: “Parents should be aware that children have access to all materials in the Library. Library staff do not monitor or censor the reading selections of children. It is the responsibility of the parent to monitor their child’s access to materials while in the Library.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own children. The Library relies on parents to be involved with their child’s use of the Library and to guide their child’s selection of library materials in keeping with their family values. Parents and legal guardians know what is best for their own families. Parental involvement is highly encouraged in the selection of all library content for minors of any age.” Montgomery seconded the motion. Hopps suggested that this be more widely advertised on Library account applications and school district libraries.

Govaars offered a friendly amendment; EchoHawk and Montgomery agreed, to change the wording to: “Parents and legal guardians should be aware that children have access to all materials in the Library. Library staff do not monitor or censor the reading selections of children. It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to monitor their child’s access to materials while in the Library.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own
children. The Library relies on parents or legal guardians to be involved with their child’s use of the Library and to guide their child’s selection of library materials.”

Call for the vote: Finnegan, Montgomery, EchoHawk, Simon and Govaars in favor of the amended amendment; Hopps opposed. Motion passes.

Amendment 13. Simon moved to amend the original motion to add a paragraph to a new section of the collection development policy, Resource Placement, detailing the sexual and other content that, if present in a book or other item, would prevent it from being added to the children or teen sections of the Library. The amendment failed for lack of a second.

Amendment 14. Montgomery moved to amend the original motion to add a paragraph to a new section of the collection development policy, Resource Placement, similar to that proposed in Motion 12 of the agenda: “Material containing pictorial depictions of nudity involving lewd exhibition of genitals, nudity involving genitals in an aroused state, sexual conduct (including masturbation, vaginal sex, oral sex, anal sex, oral-anal sex, the use of sex toys, ejaculation, or sadomasochistic abuse) will not be shelved in the Juvenile/Youth, Middle School, or High School sections. Written material containing explicit descriptions of sexual conduct (including masturbation, vaginal sex, oral sex, anal sex, oral-anal sex, the use of sex toys, ejaculation, or sadomasochistic abuse) will not be shelved in the Juvenile/Youth, Middle School, or High School sections.” Montgomery proposed referencing the Miller Test in selecting the placement of materials:

The Miller Test was developed in the 1973 case Miller v. California. It has three parts:

- Whether the average person would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest,
- Whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct or excretory functions,
- Whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

After discussion, the suggestion was made to ask the City Manager to direct Library staff to develop wording for a Resource Placement section of the collection development policy, outlining how decisions are made to place materials in a collection.

As a result, Montgomery amended her amendment to include a section in the collection development policy, Resource Placement Policy, with the wording to be developed by library staff and reviewed by the Board at a future meeting. Simon seconded the amendment. Govaars suggested a friendly amendment to delete the word ‘Policy’ from the section; Montgomery and Simon agreed. Call for the vote: the amendment passed unanimously.

Amendment 15: EchoHawk moved to amend the original motion to add a preamble to the collection development policy: “The Ketchikan Public Library, as an extension of the City of Ketchikan and a public entity charged with serving the people of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, regards the 1st Amendment of the United States of America to be sacrosanct. Library staff, the Ketchikan City Council, City of Ketchikan staff, and the Mayor of the City of Ketchikan are agents of the state and, as such, are solemnly tasked with upholding the 1st Amendment of the United States of America while erring on the side of the individual liberties of the citizens they serve if ever a conflict arises from the materials provided at the Ketchikan Public Library. It is with this truth in mind that the Ketchikan Public Library works diligently to ensure that all members of the community have access to a broad spectrum of materials that are carefully vetted and selected using established and proven sources, resources and guidelines. The Ketchikan Public Library will make every reasonable effort to select materials that fall within acceptable standards of public consumption while also being mindful of the harmful effects of censorship within a community and the Nation.

Knowledge and freedom to acquire knowledge, in its many forms, is foundational to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Ketchikan Public Library Collection Development Policy is built on this pillar.” Finnegan seconded the motion. Montgomery offered a friendly amendment to add ‘to’ and to capitalize ‘nation’. [Indicated in red above.] EchoHawk and Finnegan agreed. Call for the vote: Finnegan, Hopps, Montgomery, EchoHawk, Govaars in favor;
Simon opposed. Motion to amend passes.

CALL FOR A VOTE ON THE MOTION to suggest changes in the library collection development policy, as amended: Finnegan, Hopps, Montgomery, EchoHawk, Govaars in favor; Simon opposed. Motion passes.

- Montgomery moved to request that the City Manager direct Library staff to develop a Resource Placement section of the collection development policy, for review at the January 2024 meeting: Govaars seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Simon moved to request that the City Manager direct Library staff to develop language defining the General Criteria in the collection development policy, in reference to the Library mission statement. Motion failed for lack of a second.
- Simon moved to request that the City Manager direct Library staff to develop language defining the General Criteria in the collection development policy, in objective terms. Motion failed for lack of a second.
- Simon moved to request that the City Manager direct Library staff to develop language defining the General Criteria in the collection development policy. Motion failed for lack of a second.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

11.1 DISCUSSION OF MEMO RESPONDING TO MRS. SIMON’S QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AND REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION. Mrs. Simon asked questions of Director Tully regarding the relationship between the American Library Association and the Ketchikan Public Library. Simon moved to formally review the relationship between the Library and the American Library Association; the motion failed for lack of a second.

11.2 WISH LIST OF ITEMS / SERVICES / PROGRAMS THE LIBRARY MIGHT CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING IN 2024. (SEE ATTACHED LIST). Hopps asked for an update on the bean bag chair request; Director Tully will follow up on this. Hopps also suggested a change to the Libby app (Alaska Digital Library) so that patrons can request that titles be added. Director Tully will pass this on to Overdrive, which provides the Libby app.

11.3 BRIEF PRESENTATION ON THE 2022 PUBLIC SURVEY (PAT TULLY): Finnegan suggested that the request for a recording booth/media station would be helpful for those who are developing their own podcasts, which is becoming increasingly popular.

12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Hopps: No comments
- Govaars: Pleasure to be on the Board.
- Finnegan: Thanks to Board members Simon and EchoHawk, who submitted motions prior to the meeting. Thanks to Library staff who attended, and to the City Manager.
- EchoHawk: Thanks to the new Board members for being willing to serve, and to the healthy way that differing viewpoints were discussed in this meeting.
- Montgomery: Seconds all the comments of the Board members.
- Simon: The discussion was appreciated, but several motions could not be discussed because there were no seconds. Simon is concerned that requests for reconsideration are so rare, and finds it worrisome that the selection of materials is left to librarians.
- Tully: Thanks to all.
- Dahl: Thank you all.
13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS
   • Discussion of social media policy (City Manager Walsh indicated that the policy is city-wide, since many City
departments have social media accounts.)
   • Review of the proposed Resource Placement section drawn up by Library staff.
   Director Tully will ask for proposed agenda items a few weeks ahead of the January 10, 2024 Advisory Board meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT AT 9:50PM
Ketchikan Public Library - Collection Development Policy

Preamble: The Ketchikan Public Library, as an extension of the City of Ketchikan and a public entity charged with serving the people of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, regards the 1st Amendment of the United States of America to be sacrosanct. Library staff, the Ketchikan City Council, City of Ketchikan staff, and the Mayor of the City of Ketchikan are agents of the state and, as such, are solemnly tasked with upholding the 1st Amendment of the United States of America while erring on the side of the individual liberties of the citizens they serve if ever a conflict arises from the materials provided at the Ketchikan Public Library. It is with this truth in mind that the Ketchikan Public Library works diligently to ensure that all members of the community have access to a broad spectrum of materials that are carefully vetted and selected using established and proven sources, resources and guidelines. The Ketchikan Public Library will make every reasonable effort to select materials that fall within acceptable standards of public consumption while also being mindful of the harmful effects of censorship within a community and the Nation.

Knowledge and freedom to acquire knowledge, in its many forms, is foundational to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Ketchikan Public Library Collection Development Policy is built on this pillar.

Introduction: The Library Director, with the advice of the Library Advisory Board, will set policy and guidelines governing materials selection. This policy will be reviewed annually and revised if necessary and revised, if necessary, on an annual basis by the Library Director and the Library Advisory Board to ensure that both understand, approve, and support the policy. The Library Advisory Board and the library staff recognize the responsibility to provide materials representing diverse points of view, as reflected in its mission statement, which can be found on the library’s website: https://www.ketchikanpubliclibrary.org/. The Ketchikan Public Library subscribes to and supports the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association Freedom to Read statement.

The Library’s collection is composed of fiction and nonfiction titles that reflect the unique character of this community. It provides educational, recreational, cultural, and research information in a wide variety of formats that include books, magazines, newspapers, maps and pamphlets, as well as non-print material such as DVDs, compact discs, realia, and electronic and online resources. The Adult Division collection concentrates on the needs of the adult lifelong learner by providing popular and high interest fiction and nonfiction materials. A core collection of recommended materials in both reference and general works is augmented by a strong regional collection and well-developed marine, travel, health, crafts/hobbies, cultural, and “how-to” sections. The Children’s Division maintains a strong juvenile fiction and nonfiction collection, which equally represents youth 0-13 years of age and their caregivers. The Teen Room contains young adult fiction and non-fiction, books, DVDs, and CDs. The Ketchikan Public Library does not collect for curriculum support. The Public Library can be an additional source of information and assistance but the school libraries are primarily responsible for curriculum support.

Selection Criteria
Ketchikan Public Library - Collection Development Policy

Each title is selected on its own merit and the needs of the audience for whom it is intended. Selection is made primarily on the basis of book reviews and other professional tools. We base much of our selection on a wide variety of review sources because we believe that reviews provide the best way to evaluate the quality of an item. However, we broaden the collection by seeking out additional titles in areas that are not well covered by review media and by responding to requests from patrons and staff. Major selection tools for the Ketchikan Public Library include Booklist, Library Journal, School Library Journal, and Kirkus. Works that have won major awards such as the Caldecott, Man Booker, and Academy Awards are also considered for selection. Patron requests are given strong consideration. Publishers or dealer's catalogs and "bestseller" lists are also are used for selection. No single standard exists which can be applied in all acquisition decisions. Some materials must may be judged primarily on their artistic merit, some on their scholarship, some on their value as human documents; others are needed may be added to satisfy recreational and entertainment needs. General criteria considered in evaluation and reevaluation of materials for the Ketchikan Public Library include:

- Funds and space
- Popular interest and usefulness
- Authority, effectiveness and currency
- Attention of reviewers, critics, and public
- Reputation and/or significance of author
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Availability of similar material in other library collections
- Overall balance in subject and point of view

Recommendations from library users are encouraged and will be purchased if they meet the above criteria.

Most items in the Alaska Digital Library collection are selected by a committee of the Alaska Library Network. Patron suggestions are considered by the committee in making their selections.

Resource Placement (wording to be developed by Library staff for review by the Board at its January 2024 meeting.)

Parents and legal guardians should be aware that children have access to all materials in the Library. Library staff do not monitor or censor the reading selections of children. It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to monitor their child's access to materials while in the Library.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own children. The Library relies on parents or legal guardians to be involved with their child's use of the Library and to guide their child’s selection of Library materials.

Cooperative Collection Development
The Ketchikan Public Library is part of the First City Libraries system. This means it shares computer equipment, a common database, and a circulation system, with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School...
Ketchikan Public Library - Collection Development Policy

district. The computer system is fully integrated so each library can tell exactly what titles other libraries own, thereby avoiding needless duplication and facilitating cooperative collection development. Materials owned by member libraries are, in most cases, freely shared with all patrons.

The Ketchikan branch of the Alaska Court System Library maintains a collection of federal and state law and associated materials while the Public Library maintains a collection of materials on Alaska State Law. The Library also collects materials of general interest related to law and the courts, as well as, do-it-yourself business and personal law.

The Ketchikan Public Library also participates in an interlibrary loan program. The library is an active member of the OCLC Network, which provides access to the bibliographic holdings of libraries nationwide.

Weeding & Inventory
Using selection criteria and circulation statistics, librarians select items to withdraw from the collection in an ongoing process. This ensures that the Library's collections are relevant and meet the community's changing needs. A complete inventory of the collection is done yearly.

Selection Responsibility
The Library Director has the final responsibility for maintenance and development of the collection. The Adult Services Librarian is the acquisitions librarian for the adult fiction and nonfiction. Approximately ⅓ nonfiction and ⅓ fiction titles are selected for adult interests. The Children's Librarian is the acquisitions librarian for the children's and young adult (teen) fiction and non-fiction collections. Approximately 1/2 fiction and 1/2 nonfiction titles are selected for children and young adults. The large print collection is the responsibility of the Outreach Librarian and is primarily popular fiction. Each librarian chooses newly-published, older and replacement titles in their selection area, with input by other staff members as needed.

Collection Maintenance
Materials are reviewed regularly and systematically by the appropriate librarians to assess overall quality and physical condition. Materials of current value but in poor physical condition will be evaluated for mending, rebinding, or replacement. Mending is only done in cases of minor damage or when there is no alternative.

Duplication
Duplicate titles are added to the collection only under careful consideration and sufficient demand. This situation is driven by budgetary and space constraints.

Conservation
The library supports conservation and preservation of all historic materials of regional interest. Many books in the Tongass Historical Museum collection have been entered into the First City Libraries union catalog. While the Tongass Historical Museum's collection does not circulate, it is available for the public to use in-house. Occasionally, an item from the library collection will be donated to the Museum.
Ketchikan Public Library - Collection Development Policy

Gifts
Selected donations will be evaluated for inclusion in the collection in the same manner as new materials. Items not selected for inclusion in the collection will be disposed of or given to the Friends of the Ketchikan Public Library to be sold at their book sale. The library cannot legally appraise gifts for tax purposes.

Collection formats
- Reference: Items selected are works in a variety of high interest subject areas, or which are included in standard reference bibliographies for small libraries. This collection is reviewed annually for currency and effectiveness. These items do not circulate so that they will always be available for patron use.
- Alaskana: Items of state and local interest are placed in the non-circulating Alaskana collection so that they will always be available for patron use and research. Extra copies may be placed into general circulation, depending on value and ease of replacement.
- Magazines: Subscriptions are heavily used in the library and all but current copies circulate. Back issues are generally held for one year for monthly periodicals and 3 months for weekly periodicals. The Library's subscription list is reviewed annually and titles are added or dropped according to use.
- Newspapers: Subscriptions to regional and state newspapers provide patrons with current information. All newspapers are kept for at least two weeks. The Ketchikan Daily News is kept in hard copy until microfilmed. Microfilm copies of Ketchikan papers are retained for research.
- Pamphlet files: State and local historical items are kept for Alaskan and general interest information. Small items which present shelving problems, or clippings are included as well as information not available in other formats.
- Maps: The Library topographic maps of Southeast Alaska and some local navigational charts are collected.
- Video and audio: Informational, educational, and literary DVDs, CDs and other video and audio materials are collected to provide alternate access to information. Price is a serious consideration in the purchase of videos and audiobooks. Outstanding popular culture and award winning films are included. Critically acclaimed foreign films, independent films and PBS productions are heavily collected. DVDs and various audio formats are currently being purchased for the collection.
- Online: The Library is a member of the Alaska Digital Library and through it provides access to a large collection of downloadable electronic and audio books. The Library also provides access to the State’s SLED databases, and subscribes to a small number of electronic databases.
- Realia: The library collects a variety of items that are not text-based. These items are chosen for their durability, local interest, ease of circulation and storage, and contribution to the library's mission to supply materials for educational and recreational purposes. This collection includes such things as board games, craft tools, AV equipment, puppets and GPS locator beacons.
Goal 1: The Library is Ketchikan’s Town Square:
- The Library continues to host two weekly yoga programs: Chair Yoga led by Hilary Koch; and Mindfulness Yoga led by Charley Murray-Young. The Free Style Book Club, led by June Dahl, meets twice a month.
- Chess Club was on hiatus for the month of December, and will resume in January.
- Charley Murray-Young conducts a S.T.E.A.M. class for homeschooling families twice a month at the Library.

Goal 2: The Library Serves the Ketchikan Community:
- Rebecca Brown of Outreach Services provides materials and other services to residents of the Pioneer Home, New Horizons Long-Term Care, Seaview Terrace and Rendezvous Senior Day Services, and holds twice monthly read-aloud programs at First City Homeless Services—this in addition to her deliveries to homebound residents and maintenance of Book Shares throughout the island.
- Ann Marie Meiresonne records and posts online weekly Song and Rhyme Time.
- Guest Storytimes featured Soup Storytime with Wolf Point Produce, and Frozen Storytime with the Kayhi Drama Kings. Children's Library staff held two Saturday Storytimes for Thanksgiving and Christmas, in addition to regular Friday morning Storytimes.
- Each month the Teen Advisory Group distributes to teens one tasting bag and one craft bag. The Children's Library distributed a Thanksgiving maker kit in November, and a Winter Wonder Bag in December.
- Children's programs included a Tween-only Pizza Challenge; a Dinosaur LEGO Build (with creations displayed at the Museum during the December 1 Art Walk); Princess Craft Day; Tween-Only Shrinking Ornaments Craft; Solstice Lantern Craft; and Celebration Time on December 29.
- Adult Services staff led two adult craft programs: Diamond Painting with Gayle Brooks and Hand-Sewn Books with Shawna Carter.
- The Teen Advisory Group held twice-monthly meetings and organized a Karaoke Christmas Party on Dec. 15.

Goal 3: The Library Engages With the Community:
- In November the Library created Indigenous Reads displays throughout the Library, encouraging patrons to read a displayed book, review it, and submit the review for a chance at a prize at the end of the month.
- The Library hosted several Advance Care Directives sessions in November and December, led by members of Courageous Conversations.
- Children's Library staff staffed a craft table at the Tongass Historical Museum during the December 1 Art Walk.
- This year's Kindness Challenge yielded over 200 homemade holiday cards and ornaments for residents of the Pioneer Home and New Horizons Long Term Care. Lisa Pearson distributed these in mid-December.
- The Library helped publicize and judge the Ketchikan Police Department's Christmas Card contest, with over 100 entries from local children.
- Fire Chief Rick Hines served as the conductor for the Polar Express event, a collaboration between the Library and RYC, on December 9. IBEW Local 1547 supplies free books for the 200 children who attended the event.
- The Children's Winter Reading Program began on December 18 and runs through Winter Break.
- The Library co-sponsored a Kayhi Heartful Hands craft program to create holiday cards for Ketchikan's elders.

Goal 4: The Library is a Growing, Vibrant Organization:
- The City of Ketchikan instituted an annual longevity bonus for full-time City employees who have been an employee for 15 or more years. Kelly Johnson, Lisa Pearson and Shawna Carter received their bonuses at the City Holiday Party in December.
- The Library's holiday hours this year are 10am-2pm on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve; and closed on Christmas and New Year’s Day.
Resource Placement (Staff wording in red; Board recommendations from Oct. 11 meeting in black.)

After deciding to order a new item, the selector makes a preliminary determination of the collection in which to place it, based on the information in the review sources:

- The audience for which it is written or created
- Reading level
- Reviewer recommendations
- Placement of other items in the series (for items in series)

When the Library receives the item, the selector makes a final decision about the collection in which it will be placed. If the selector thinks that the most appropriate place for the item is in a collection overseen by another selector, they will review the item with that selector and come to a consensus as to its placement.

Parents and legal guardians should be aware that children have access to all materials in the Library. Library staff do not monitor or censor the reading selections of children. It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to monitor their child’s access to materials while in the Library.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own children. The Library relies on parents or legal guardians to be involved with their child’s use of the Library and to guide their child’s selection of Library materials.

Privacy laws of the State of Alaska (Sec. 40.25.140) prohibit public libraries from revealing details of a patron’s account—including those of minor children—to another individual. However, a child may request that a permission note be added to their library account to allow parental access.
Preamble: The Ketchikan Public Library, as an extension of the City of Ketchikan and a public entity charged with serving the people of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, regards the 1st Amendment of the United States of America to be sacrosanct. Library staff, the Ketchikan City Council, City of Ketchikan staff, and the Mayor of the City of Ketchikan are agents of the state and, as such, are solemnly tasked with upholding the 1st Amendment of the United States of America while erring on the side of the individual liberties of the citizens they serve if ever a conflict arises from the materials provided at the Ketchikan Public Library. It is with this truth in mind that the Ketchikan Public Library works diligently to ensure that all members of the community have access to a broad spectrum of materials that are carefully vetted and selected using established and proven sources, resources and guidelines. The Ketchikan Public Library will make every reasonable effort to select materials that fall within acceptable standards of public consumption while also being mindful of the harmful effects of censorship within a community and the Nation.

Knowledge and freedom to acquire knowledge, in its many forms, is foundational to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Ketchikan Public Library Collection Development Policy is built on this pillar.

The Library Director, with the advice of the Library Advisory Board, will set policy and guidelines governing materials selection. This policy will be reviewed annually and revised if necessary by the Library Director and the Library Advisory Board to ensure that both understand and support the policy. The Library Advisory Board and the library staff recognize the responsibility to provide materials representing diverse points of view, as reflected in its mission statement, which can be found on the Library’s website: https://www.ketchikanpubliclibrary.org/. The Ketchikan Public Library subscribes to and supports the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association Freedom to Read statement.

The Library’s collection is composed of fiction and nonfiction titles that reflect the unique character of this community. It provides educational, recreational, cultural, and research information in a wide variety of formats that include books, magazines, newspapers, maps and pamphlets, as well as non-print material such as DVDs, compact discs, realia, and electronic and online resources. The Adult Division collection concentrates on the needs of the adult lifelong learner by providing popular and high interest fiction and nonfiction materials. A core collection of recommended materials in both reference and general works is augmented by a strong regional collection and well-developed marine, travel, health, crafts/hobbies, cultural, and “how-to” sections. The Children’s Division maintains a strong juvenile fiction and nonfiction collection, which equally represents youth 0-13 years of age and their caregivers. The Teen Room contains young adult fiction and non-fiction, books, DVDs, and CDs. The Ketchikan Public Library does not collect for curriculum support. The Public Library can be an additional source of information and assistance but the school libraries are primarily responsible for curriculum support.
Selection Criteria

We base much of our selection on a wide variety of review sources because we believe that reviews provide the best way to evaluate the quality of an item. However, we broaden the collection by seeking out additional titles in areas that are not well covered by review media and by responding to requests from patrons and staff. Major selection tools for the Ketchikan Public Library include Booklist, Library Journal, School Library Journal, and Kirkus. Works that have won major awards such as the Caldecott, Man Booker, and Academy Awards are also considered for selection. Patron requests are given strong consideration. Publishers or dealer’s catalogs and “bestseller” lists are also used for selection. No single standard exists which can be applied in all acquisition decisions. Some materials may be judged primarily on their artistic merit, some on their scholarship, some on their value as human documents; others may be added to satisfy recreational and entertainment needs. General criteria considered in evaluation and reevaluation of materials for the Ketchikan Public Library include:

- Funds and space
- Popular interest and usefulness
- Authority, effectiveness and currency
- Attention of reviewers, critics, and public
- Reputation and/or significance of author
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Availability of similar material in other library collections
- Overall balance in subject and point of view

Recommendations from library users are encouraged and will be purchased if they meet the above criteria.

Most items in the Alaska Digital Library collection are selected by a committee of the Alaska Library Network. Patron suggestions are considered by the committee in making their selections.

Resource Placement

(Draft wording in red to be discussed at January 10, 2024 Library Advisory Board meeting]

After deciding to order a new item, the selector makes a preliminary determination of the collection in which to place it, based on the information in the review sources:

- The audience for which it is written or created
- Reading level
- Reviewer recommendations
- Placement of other items in the series (for items in series)

When the Library receives the item, the selector makes a final decision about the collection in which it will be placed. If the selector thinks that the most appropriate place for the item is in a collection oversee
by another selector, they will review the item with that selector and come to a consensus as to its placement.

Parents and legal guardians should be aware that children have access to all materials in the Library. Library staff do not monitor or censor the reading selections of children. It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to monitor their child’s access to materials while in the Library.

Parents or legal guardians have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their own children. The Library relies on parents or legal guardians to be involved with their child’s use of the Library and to guide their child’s selection of Library materials.

Privacy laws of the State of Alaska (Sec. 40.25.140) prohibit public libraries from revealing details of a patron’s account—including those of minor children—to another individual. However, a child may request that a permission note be added to their library account to allow parental access.

Cooperative Collection Development
The Ketchikan Public Library is part of the First City Libraries system. This means it shares computer equipment, a common database, and a circulation system, with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School district. The computer system is fully integrated so each library can tell exactly what titles other libraries own, thereby avoiding needless duplication and facilitating cooperative collection development. Materials owned by member libraries are, in most cases, freely shared with all patrons.

The Ketchikan branch of the Alaska Court System Library maintains a collection of federal and state law and associated materials while the Public Library maintains a collection of materials on Alaska State Law. The Library also collects materials of general interest related to law and the courts, as well as, do-it-yourself business and personal law.

The Ketchikan Public Library also participates in an interlibrary loan program. The library is an active member of the OCLC Network, which provides access to the bibliographic holdings of libraries nationwide.

Weeding & Inventory
Using selection criteria and circulation statistics, librarians select items to withdraw from the collection in an ongoing process. This ensures that the Library’s collections are relevant and meet the community’s changing needs. A complete inventory of the collection is done yearly.

Selection Responsibility
The Library Director has the final responsibility for maintenance and development of the collection. The Adult Services Librarian is the acquisitions librarian for the adult fiction and nonfiction. Approximately ½ nonfiction and ½ fiction titles are selected for adult interests. The Children’s Librarian is the acquisitions librarian for the children’s and young adult (teen) fiction and non-fiction collections. Approximately 1/2 fiction and 1/2 nonfiction titles are selected for children and young adults. The large print collection is the
responsibility of the Outreach Librarian and is primarily popular fiction. Each librarian chooses newly-published, older and replacement titles in their selection area, with input by other staff members as needed.

Collection Maintenance
Materials are reviewed regularly and systematically by the appropriate librarians to assess overall quality and physical condition. Materials of current value but in poor physical condition will be evaluated for mending, rebinding, or replacement. Mending is only done in cases of minor damage or when there is no alternative.

Duplication
Duplicate titles are added to the collection only under careful consideration and sufficient demand. This situation is driven by budgetary and space constraints.

Conservation
The library supports conservation and preservation of all historic materials of regional interest. Many books in the Tongass Historical Museum collection have been entered into the First City Libraries union catalog. While the Tongass Historical Museum’s collection does not circulate, it is available for the public to use in-house. Occasionally, an item from the library collection will be donated to the Museum.

Gifts
Selected donations will be evaluated for inclusion in the collection in the same manner as new materials. Items not selected for inclusion in the collection will be disposed of or given to the Friends of the Ketchikan Public Library to be sold at their book sale. The library cannot legally appraise gifts for tax purposes.

Collection formats
- Reference: Items selected are works in a variety of high interest subject areas, or which are included in standard reference bibliographies for small libraries. This collection is reviewed annually for currency and effectiveness. These items do not circulate so that they will always be available for patron use.
- Alaskana: Items of state and local interest are placed in the non-circulating Alaskana collection so that they will always be available for patron use and research. Extra copies may be placed into general circulation, depending on value and ease of replacement.
- Magazines: Subscriptions are heavily used in the library and all but current copies circulate. Back issues are generally held for one year for monthly periodicals and 3 months for weekly periodicals. The Library’s subscription list is reviewed annually and titles are added or dropped according to use.
- Newspapers: Subscriptions to regional and state newspapers provide patrons with current information. All newspapers are kept for at least two weeks. The Ketchikan Daily News is kept in hard copy until microfilmed. Microfilm copies of Ketchikan papers are retained for research.
- Pamphlet files: State and local historical items are kept for Alaskan and general interest information. Small items which present shelving problems, or clippings are included as well as information not available in other formats.
• Maps: The Library topographic maps of Southeast Alaska and some local navigational charts are collected.

• Video and audio: Informational, educational, and literary DVDs, CDs and other video and audio materials are collected to provide alternate access to information. Price is a serious consideration in the purchase of videos and audiobooks. Outstanding popular culture and award winning films are included. Critically acclaimed foreign films, independent films and PBS productions are heavily collected. DVDs and various audio formats are currently being purchased for the collection.

• Online: The Library is a member of the Alaska Digital Library and through it provides access to a large collection of downloadable electronic and audio books. The Library also provides access to the State’s SLED databases, and subscribes to a small number of electronic databases.

• Realia: The library collects a variety of items that are not text-based. These items are chosen for their durability, local interest, ease of circulation and storage, and contribution to the library’s mission to supply materials for educational and recreational purposes. This collection includes such things as board games, craft tools, AV equipment, puppets and GPS locator beacons.
MEMORANDUM

To: Library Advisory Board
From: Pat Tully, Library Director
Date: December 26, 2023
Re: Response to Board agenda items regarding placement of challenged books

Staff explanation of the reasons the two challenged books were placed in the teen section and the criteria by which the Board should evaluate those decisions. (The two books in question are Flamer, by Mike Curato; and Red Hood, by Elana Arnold.

Amie Toepfer, Head of Youth Services and selector for children’s and teen collections: Book placement is not an exact science--it is nuanced. As I have explained in my letters in response to each request for reconsideration, books are purchased primarily on reviews from accredited sources and age recommendations provided by the publishers. With this being said, I recently purchased a book that had good reviews and was on several recommended purchase lists, but upon receiving it and reviewing it, I determined it would be more suited to the adult collection. After talking it over with Head of Adult Services Lisa Pearson, we placed the book in the Adult Fiction collection. This is just one example of the nuances of book placement.

Pat Tully, Library Director: The Library’s Collection Development policy provides detailed guidelines for the selection and placement of books and other materials in the Ketchikan Public Library. The proposed new Resource Placement section of the policy will further explain the factors used to determine the collection in which to place a new item. As the policy states, “No single standard exists which can be applied in all acquisition decisions,” and this applies to the placement of new items as well.
Agenda item 12a

You received a submission for Request for reconsideration policy and form

patt@firstcitylibraries.org <noreply@123formbuilder.com> Thu, Sep 28, 2023 at 3:19 PM
Reply-To: noreply@123formbuilder.com
To: patt@firstcitylibraries.org

Form Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Flamer</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Choose one format:</td>
<td>Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please describe if you chose Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Mike Curato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>Henry Holt and Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your First / Last name</td>
<td>Deborah Simon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Address

Your Phone number
Best time to call
Your Email address
Indicate one I represent myself
If you are filing this request on behalf of another, please enter their name:

To what in the material do you object?

Vulgarity, racial slurs, and bullying that are unnecessarily gratuitous going far beyond the need to characterize middle school humor, define cultural practices, and set up a story’s conflict

Attacks on cultural institutions and those who believe in them

Promotion of depression, hopelessness, and suicide as coping mechanisms when one’s inner strength is insufficient for resolving interpersonal conflicts

p.14 - “…I wouldn’t be going to school with most of the other pricks I’ve been in class with since kindergarten…”

P.14 - “Hey, Navarro, suck any good dicks lately?”

p.18 - “And I love summer camp, mostly because I get a break from my parents yelling at each other.”

p.20 - “Get your ass over here and help me get dinner started.”

p.21 - “Cause you’re the only who doesn’t burn it to hell.”

p.22 - “I thought you like a big sausage in your mouth.”

p.22 - “Jesus, I’m just kidding…”
Form Summary

p. 22-23 - sexual innuendo in boys’ behavior

p.24 - “…at least I’m not at home. Life there is complicated. My dad is in a perpetual bad mood. We all ti-toe around hoping not to set him off. He gets mad about…everything.”

p.25 - Image of father verbally abusing wife & children

p.26 - Picture of father threatening to physically abuse child, mother stepping in between father and child, and father punching a whole in the wall right next to the child’s face.

p.26 - “He put his fist through the wall instead. I try to keep my distance so that I don’t get into trouble. I don’t think he likes me very much. I’m not sure I like him very much either.”

p.27- father verbally abusing mother
p.28-29 - mother depressed and seeking comfort from middle school son

p.31 - “I try to keep them [middle school boy’s young twin brother & sister] busy when Mom and Dad are fighting. Hopefully the summer hasn’t sucked too much for them while I’ve been away.”

p.35 - “faggot!”

p.40 - “We’re canoeing out to Frying Pan Island, which supposedly looks like a frying pan, but we’re all certain it looks like a cock and balls.”

p.45 - “Aww, shit.”

p.72 - boys undressing

p.74 - “And what if someone thinks my penis is small?”

p.77 - “I don’t want you homos lookin’ at my ass.”

p.78 - “Speaking of, time for…Hair Ass Contest.”

p.81 - “I’m getting a…boner!?!?”

p.86 - “I wonder if priests jerk off.”

p.86 - “Dammit! So unholy…

p.89 - “I bet nobody would, because that would be a dick move, to say something shitty about a dead person…”

p.96 - gratuitous picture of boy showering

p.102 - racial slurs

p.105 - racial slur

p.106 - “Hey, Fatass, pack any fudge lately?”

p.107 - body shaming

p.115 - “Screw dieting!”

p.118 - “She have a nice ass?”

p.118 - “How’s her rack? Is she stacked?”

P. 120 - “I am fucking in love with her.”

p.120 - “That’s not love, that called a boner!”
Form Summary

p.120 - "My dick gets so hard thinking about her sometimes that I think it’s gonna rip right through my jeans."

p.122 - racial slurs

p.122 - "What the fuck? Fuck off."

p.122 - "…you ignorant asshat!"

p.122 - "Have fun suckin’ each other’s dicks, ladies."

p.122 - "Fuck you, pencil dick!"

p.123 - "Why don’t you just call him a faggot back?"

p.124 - "No, if he’s bothering you, deck him."

p.125 - "Maybe if you wouldn’t cry like a little bitch all the time, then people wouldn’t say that shit to you. If you keep reacting like that, people are going to think you really are a faggot."

p.128 - "Don’t worry about what that asshole said."

p.130-131 - boys masturbating into a bottle threatening those not participating will drink it

p.132-133 - boy finding and repeatedly viewing father’s pornographic videos and masturbating to them

p.134 - "No you didn’t, you little shit."

p.135 - boy masturbating

p.148 - "I did your mom last night!"

p.148 - adult in charge of boys verbally abuses and curses at boy

p.148 - "I don’t think that’s true, because my mom did your mom last night, and your mom asked my mom to tell me to tell you to sit down and shut the hell up."

p.149 - "faggot"

p.150 - "What are you laughing at, queer?"

p.151 - adult in charge of boys commends one for verbally abusing another

p.174 - body shaming

p.174 - boys verbally abusing one another

p.182 - boy being attacked

p.185 - "I’m screwed either way."

p.186 - "Jesus Christ! Alright, forget it. I’m just tryin’ to be a friend, and you’re turning’ into a fuckin’ drama queen on me. Fuckin’ unbelievable."

p.197 - racial slurs

p.205-206 - boys verbally abusing one another while physically attacking and injuring each other. — "Alright, That’s enough. I’m tired of all this rabbity bullshit. Take out that fucking ponytail!" "Fuck off. “Hold still, goddammit!” “Get the fuck offa me!” “Motherfucker” “You fucking faggot.” “You’re the faggot!!!! You’re the fudge-packin fairy cocksucking queer pansy faggot!!!!!

p.209 - "I am going to fuck you…"

p.214 - "Holy fuck."
Form Summary

p. 215 - “What the hell did you do?”

p. 215 - “I just lost a tooth, asshole!”

p. 215 - “You’re a real asshole, Mark, you know that?”

p. 215 - “That kid is gonna have his ass handed to him next year if he keeps that shit up.”

p. 219 - “This is bullshit.”

p. 226 - “That was fucking boss, dude!”

p. 237 - “Seriously, I always thought that joining the football team meant that you had to pass some kind of prick test.”

p. 239 - “Shit, my flashlight’s not working.”

p. 263-267 - boys discuss that a scoutmaster, the same who was verbally abusing boys and commending them for doing it to others, was fired for being a homosexual, theorizing that he was a pedophile and had abused some of the boys.

p.263 - “I heard that Ted got fired for being a fag!”

p. 263 - “I bet he was peeking in the showers and shit.”

p. 264 - “Move it, faggot.”

p. 271 - “Jesus, leave me alone, with you?”

p. 272 - “Jesus, Navarro. You burnt the dinner.”

p. 280-309 - boy is extremely depressed, plans, writes a goodbye note, and attempts suicide with pictures of him baring his wrist, opening a knife, and holding it up to his wrist.

Afterward - author admits that many of the events in the book were based on his personal experiences, making the negativity all the ore real to readers, including the suicidal scene, since the author admits that he attempted suicide himself.

Resources - author admits that some of those he knew did commit suicide

Did you read, listen to or watch the entire work? yes

What do you think might be the result of reading this work?

Exposure to gratuitous sexual innuendo, vulgar language, and bullying that validates and normalizes these behaviors. A pessimistic and fatalistic view of life as a young person. Belittling and suspicion of religious ideals, religious institutions, and youth organizations. An expectation of mistreatment at the hands of adults and peers. Exposure to bullying based on religious practice, race, sexual orientation, and body shape. Suggestions of suicide. Suicide can only be avoided by an inner courage which both the main character and the author had trouble developing, and some of those known to the author did not develop it at all, resorting, instead to suicide. Not all readers will be able to develop this inner confidence. Some may feel a failure all the more and attempt suicide because of their exposure to it in this book combined with their failure to find the strength needed to avoid it.

The theme of this book can best be described as: One should expect verbal and physical abuse at the hands of parents, trusted adults, and peers based on one’s religious practice, race, sexual orientation, and body shape. This should be countered by hurling equal amounts of verbal and physical abuse at the abuser. It will, however, all end in hopelessness, despair, and suicide. Some may be able to develop sufficient inner strength to continue living, but some will not and will succumb to suicide.

This book is inappropriate for children for the very reason the author gives in writing it. If the author was emotionally damaged by experiencing these incidents, why would anyone want other minors to experience the same treatment on the book’s pages?
Most reviews do not mention the racial slurs, verbal and physical abuse, gratuitous sexual innuendo, and vulgar language, preferring to quote the less egregious incidents and epithets such as “jerk.” Those that make limited references discount the behavior as “boys being boys.” The main character’s suicide attempt is praised for excellent artwork and incorrectly labeled as mere suicidal ideation.

Literary critics, as a whole, soften the obviously egregious language and incidents, preferring to highlight LGBTQ material in an intentional misrepresentation of this book. Were this the intended message of the book, it could be communicated without such gratuitous vulgarity and violence.

What would you like the Library to do about this

Relocate to the adult section of the library
October 10th, 2023

Mrs. Simon,

Thank you for your recent inquiry regarding the graphic novel *Flamer* by Mike Curato. I am responding to you in my capacity as Head of Youth Services of the Ketchikan Public Library. All requests for the reconsideration of youth library materials are addressed through this process. I have read your comments, read the material in question in its entirety, and have considered your concerns.

Each title purchased for the library is selected on its own merit and the needs of the audience for whom it is intended. Selection is made primarily on the basis of book reviews and other professional tools and knowledge. The library’s collection is composed of materials that reflect the unique and diverse needs of this wonderful community. This book was selected based on needs and interests of the Teen Advisory Group and the other teens in our community.

*Flamer* has received several starred reviews from multiple professional review sites and received a Lambda Literary Award in 2021 in the young adult category. Here are some of the reviews:

“Curato has created a beautiful story of a teen who must decide if he will force himself into the mold of what he thinks a "normal" boy is, or if he can allow himself to live life on his own terms. An essential book that shows readers that they are never alone in their struggles.” — *SLJ Express Reviews*, starred review

“...emotionally powerful, proudly and extravagantly spiritual (and as Catholic as any Graham Greene epiphany). He comes through it to have one perfect day at camp to sustain him going forward. If you will forgive the editorial intrusion, I wish I had had this book fifty years ago.” — *Horn Book Guide Reviews*, starred review

“But the true star of this book is the writing, which describes a boy who could live in any decade on his journey of self-discovery. This is a story that will be read and reread, and for some, it will be the defining book of their adolescence. Buy it. Read it. Share it.” — *Kirkus Reviews*

“This book will save lives.” — *Jarrett J. Krosoczka*, author of National Book Award Finalist for Hey, Kiddo

“‘Flamer’ Offers Real Hope — Not Just Rainbows — To Queer Kids...Aiden does not emerge from the flames unscathed, but he does emerge stronger and accepting of himself.” — *NRP*

*Flamer* is a semi-autobiographical story drawn from author and artist, Mike Curato’s own experiences growing up as Filipino American boy with body issues, who’s also a Boy Scout, is Catholic, and is coming to terms with the fact that he is gay. It is set in the summer of 1995 and centers on a Boy Scout Camp trip. The reader follows the main character, Aiden, to what is supposed to be his safe place away from the bullying he faced at middle school, but turns out to be not quite that. Each panel documents events from camp, from bonding over fireside gatherings and learning important skills, to the micro- and macroaggressions that follow an adolescent boy of color who presents more feminine and is coming to terms with their sexuality.

To address your concerns about the book “belittling” and casting “suspicion of religious ideals, religious institutions”: I found even though I know very little about Catholicism, Curato’s depictions of Aiden’s appreciation for his religion came through. Examples of this could be found in Aiden having a favorite Saint that he relates to, to being an Alter Boy, to the struggles he has with his sexuality because of what he believes his religion says about LGBTQIA+ people. I do not believe
the intent of the author was to belittle any religious belief, instead the author was sharing his own experiences and feelings.

To address your concerns about language in the book: The author writes in current teenage vernacular. While some readers will find this off putting this is considered an accurate representation of what many teenagers hear, speak, and face within their lives.

To address your concern about this book being “inappropriate for children”: The library does not act in place of the parents and does not restrict access to library material for minors. With that being said this book was written for teenagers, ages 15-18 years old, which is why this book is placed in the Young Adult section of the library. Parents are encouraged to come to the library with their teen to select material that they feel is appropriate for their family. If you are struggling to find items suitable to your family’s needs and/or interests, myself or another librarian would be happy to help guide you to some gentler reads that might be more suited to your needs.

To address your concern about the author’s handling of suicide: Suicide, sadly, is something that many teenagers deal with in one way or another. Aiden’s experience with these emotions aren’t unique. The author follows up the story with information about where teens can get help if they are dealing with similar feelings.

Overall, I found this to be a story of hope. While I acknowledge that this book will not be for every teen, it is an important voice and story in the Young Adult cannon.

After considering your request, I have concluded that Flamer meets the requirements of the Collection Development Policy and should be retained by the Ketchikan Public Library.

If you are not satisfied with this decision, you may file a written appeal to Library Director Patricia Tully. Ms. Tully will respond in writing within ten (10) days. If that response is unacceptable, you may file a written appeal to the Library Advisory Board to request further consideration at a public hearing. You can contact Ms. Tully at Patt@firstcitylibraries.org.

Thank you for your interest in the collections at the Ketchikan Public Library. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Amie Toepfer

Amie Toepfer
Head of Children's Services
She/Her/Hers
Ketchikan Public Library
1110 Copper Ridge Ln, Ketchikan AK 99901
907-228-2306
amiet@firstcitylibraries.org
October 10, 2023

Pat,

Please find attached a copy of Amie Toepfer’s response to my Request for Reconsideration of the graphic novel *Flamer* by Mike Curato currently shelved in the Teen collection of the Ketchikan Public Library.

I would like to thank Ms. Toepfer’s for her care in responding to my request. I would also like to appeal her decision to retain the book in the Teen collection instead of shelving it in the Adult collection. In addition to the issues I raised in my original Request for Reconsideration, many of which Ms. Toepfer chose not to address, the following is in response to her letter:

• Reviews - These reviews do not mention the racial slurs, verbal and physical abuse, gratuitous sexual innuendo, vulgar language, and most other issues brought up in my Request. If you have any reviews that do this, I would be most anxious to read them. That notwithstanding, I based my Request on a first-hand reading of the material rather than on another’s review of it.

• Religious ideals and institutions - I respect Ms. Toepfer’s personal opinion on the book’s depiction of Catholicism, and I would hope that the library can respect mine as a trained and experienced English teacher. Aiden’s personal conflict is embodied in the book’s depictions of Catholicism. This is not characterized as something he appreciates but something that constrains him, setting up the book’s classic person vs self conflict.

• Language - “Everyone does it” is a common response to behaviors. John Steinbeck’s works, for example, have often been criticized for their vernacular. This book, however, as I stated, uses vulgarity, racial slurs, and bullying that are unnecessarily gratuitous going far beyond the need to characterize middle school humor, define cultural practices, and set up a story’s conflict.

• Inappropriate for children - You will note that my comment was taken out of context and incomplete in Ms. Toepfer’s assessment. Regardless what reviewers, publishers, and/or author may note about a resource, those with training and experience in library science may need to complete an independent and individual evaluation. This evaluation is not about acting in place of parents but about fulfilling a responsibility to one’s patrons.

• Suicide - There are many things that teenagers deal with in one way or another. It is unnecessary and quite possibly dangerous to shine a spotlight on those by showing graphic depictions of how to do them and provide stories of those who succumbed to their effects, as this book does with suicide. The fact that there are resources provided does not cancel the negative impact the book’s graphics and words inflict.

I appreciate your consideration of this appeal.

Sincerely,

Deborah Simon, M.Ed.
To Deborah Simon,

Thank you for your detailed letter appealing the decision of our Head of Youth Services, Amie Toepfer, to retain the book *Flamer*, by Mike Curato, in the Library’s Teen Graphic Novel collection. I have read the book in its entirety, and what follows is my response to your appeal and decision regarding its placement in the Library:

- **Reviews:** I appreciate that your evaluation of the book is based on reading it in its entirety and not on the opinions and reviews of others. Ms. Toepfer’s response to your request for reconsideration is also based on reading the book in its entirety, as is my response to your appeal. The initial selection of this book for our Teen collection, as is the case with the vast majority of items selected for the Library’s collections, is, of necessity, based on reviews written by reviewers who have read the book itself. The content that you object to, including the racial slurs, depictions of verbal and physical abuse, sexual innuendo, language, and other issues, are realistic descriptions of what many young teenagers experience and must work through as they grow up. Because the book is a realistic depiction of these experiences, young people will identify with Aiden, the book’s protagonist, and be inspired by his ultimate decision to accept himself.

- **Religious ideals and institutions:** As someone who was raised in the Catholic faith, I appreciated the protagonist’s commitment to his faith while coming to realize that there might be ways of maintaining that faith that do not require him to deny his authentic self.

- **Language:** The brutal language, actions and attitudes of the characters are not gratuitous or unnecessary to the story. It is precisely this casual racism, sexism, brutality and indifference that set up the protagonist’s climactic crisis, which he ultimately resolves with hope and optimism.

- **Inappropriate for children:** I agree that librarians have a responsibility to serve one’s patrons—all of them. Librarians must provide materials that are useful, meaningful and entertaining to everyone in our diverse communities. This includes materials that some may consider offensive, vulgar or damaging, but that others will find useful, instructive or inspiring. The Library must rely on the parents or legal guardians to decide what materials are appropriate for their minor children, while maintaining collections that contain a wide variety of materials to serve everyone in the community.

If a selector has any question about a new book or other item, they conduct a detailed review to determine the most appropriate collection in which to place it, talking with other staff to do so.
• Suicide: The book’s protagonist does consider suicide, only to decide against ending his life through his own inner strength and with the help of his friends and others. For young teenagers who may be in despair and see no way out of their difficulties, Flamer offers hope and reasons to find joy both within and outside of oneself.

After considering the points in your letter, I have decided to retain the book, Flamer, in the Library’s Teen Graphic Novel collection. “This book will save lives,” Jarrett Krosoczka wrote of it, and after reading Flamer I wholeheartedly agree. Because of the sensitive nature of the topic, teens who are most in need of the book’s message of hope and affirmation will hesitate to ask for help finding it. The appropriate place for the book, therefore, is in the Teen collection where teens can most easily find it without staff assistance.

You may appeal this decision by sending a written request to the chair of the Library Advisory Board, June Dahl, to ask that the Board hold a public hearing on the matter at its next quarterly meeting. You may send the letter to her in care of the Library:

June Dahl, Chair, Library Advisory Committee  
c/o Ketchikan Public Library  
1110 Copper Ridge Lane  
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Thank you for the care and time you have taken in this matter.

Sincerely,

Patricia Tully  
Director, Ketchikan Public Library  
patt@firstcitylibraries.org; 907-228-2311
October 20, 2023

June Dahl, Chair
Library Advisory Board
c/o Ketchikan Public Library
11110 Copper Ridge Lane
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Re: Public Hearing
Request for Reconsideration
Flamer, Mike Curato

Dear Ms. Dahl:

On September 28, 2023, I submitted the attached Request for Reconsideration to move the book, *Flamer*, by Mike Curato from the Teen Collection to the Adult Collection. On October 10, 2023, that request was denied by Amie Toepfer, Head of Children's Services as indicated in her attached letter. On October 10, 2023, I submitted the attached appeal to Pat Tully, Library Director, for her consideration. On October 19, 2023, Ms. Tully denied that appeal in her attached letter.

Following is my response to Ms. Tully's denial letter:

**Reviews**
In regards to the claim that the content to which I objected represents "realistic depictions of what many young teenagers experience and must work through as they grow up," I would request the basis for this judgment. Since the placement of this book within the library is entirely based on Ms. Toepfer's and Ms. Tully's judgment, and since their defense of that judgment includes this statement, I assume they have training in child development and experience in one-on-one, daily interaction with "many young teenagers" that would form the basis for this stated conclusion. I have both training and experience as a teacher and a parent, and I do not concur with this statement, as I stated in my request and appeal.

**Religious ideals and institutions**
While Catholicism is a religion, it is not the only one poorly treated by this book. The tenants of Christianity itself are also depicted. And, again, I must ask for the training and experience upon which Ms. Toepfer and Ms. Tully base their conclusions. Beyond their own experiences, do they have training in theology, hermeneutics, or Christian education? I have both training and experience, and I do not concur with their conclusions, as stated in my request and appeal.
Inappropriate for children
In this situation, as I stated in my request and appeal, only some of the library’s patrons are being served by shelving this book in the Teen Section—those whom Ms. Toepfer and Ms. Tully believe will benefit from the content. What about those teens who won’t benefit? What about those teens who do not want to read this type of content? Why must they suffer?

I find it difficult to believe that teens are unable to use a library catalog to find books, especially since my own children have been doing that since they were quite young and I taught all of my students to do so as well.

If the detailed review conducted to determine placement of a resource entails talking “with other staff,” I must question how detailed it is. Other staff may or may not have any more experience and training in child development, hermeneutics, theology, or other subjects pertinent to the resource than the one seeking input regarding their decision.

Suicide
Again, I must ask for Ms. Toepfer’s and Ms. Tully’s training and experience with mental health determination and counseling that serves as a foundation for their statements. These are sweeping conclusions that should only be made by a trained mental health professional.

Please know that I do not doubt Ms. Toepfer’s and Ms. Tully’s training and experience within the field of Library Science. The statements made in their denials, however, are not about Library Science but venture into areas that are specific to other fields. If the library is to base its resource placement on experience and expertise, it is irresponsible not to seek the type of experience and expertise the content to which the resource pertains.

Per Ms. Tully’s denial letter, I am submitting this information to you and requesting that the Library Advisory Board schedule a public hearing on the issue. It seems incomprehensible that this issue need wait yet another three months because Library Advisory Board members do not wish to be inconvenienced. Please confirm that whether or not the board will call a special meeting for this public hearing.

Sincerely,

Deborah Simon, M.Ed.

Attachments:
September 28, 2023 Request for Reconsideration, Deborah Simon
October 10, 2023 Denial of Request for Reconsideration, Amie Toepfer, Head of Children’s Services
October 10, 2023 Appeal to Denial of Request for Reconsideration, Deborah Simon
October 19, 2023 Denial of Appeal to Denial of Request for Reconsideration, Pat Tully, Library Director
You received a submission for Request for reconsideration policy and form

patt@firstcitylibraries.org <noreply@123formbuilder.com> Fri, Nov 10, 2023 at 7:30 PM
Reply-To: noreply@123formbuilder.com
To: patt@firstcitylibraries.org

Form Summary

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<tr>
<td>Your First / Last name</td>
<td>Deborah Simon</td>
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Your Address

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Best time to call

Your Email address

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I represent myself

If you are filing this request on behalf of another, please enter their name:

To what in the material do you object?

As an adult, I find this book disturbing. The fact that it is being presented to children is outrageous. There is no redeeming value in this story that promotes criminal behavior and vigilante justice dealt out by minors. Even the characters in the book recognize felonies committed against minors, yet the book describing these situations is somehow exempt.

- Excessive, explicit sexual descriptions, all of which take place between minors
- Excessive, explicit descriptions of murder and death
- Excessive vulgar language
- Excessive, explicit descriptions of menstruation
- Descriptions of criminal behavior
- Descriptions of minors committing illegal acts
- Descriptions of minors unwilling to tell adults of criminal acts committed by others against them
- Encouragement of vigilantism
- Incongruous and gratuitous political ideology and racism

p.6 - Drunk high school students

p.8 - “Whatever, fuck Maggie.” “Jesus, Tucker, you can’t even dance when you’re sober.” “Fuck you,
These are remarkable—his kisses, tracing a path down your neck, his hands pulling low the sweetheart neckline of your dress, his nose brushing your right nipple, and then, a moment later, his lips capturing it, his tongue circling, circling, his teeth skimming and biting, not hard, just enough to make your hands tighten into fists and clutch the blanket, enough to make your legs begin to quiver.

And then he pushes up the tulle and satin of your skirt, rustling like wrapping paper coming undone, and his hands reach and find the lace panties you bought just especially for this occasion, and slowly, so slowly, he pulls them down your thighs, and you lift your hips to help him slide them free. Your feet are already bare, high heels abandoned in the front seat, so there is nothing to stop your panties from coming all the way off.

"Oh, how much you want this. Whereas before, at the dance, you had been there for James, at his side as he enjoyed himself, now—here—you are your body. How much you want him to put his mouth on you, there, right there, at the crux of you.

Your combined breaths have fogged the windows of the wagon, the air is damp. Your head rolls with desire, frustration, as he moves his kisses from your right thigh to your left, as his fingers run up and down your legs, all the way down to your toes but never up all the way to your aching center.

Outside, on the other side of the cold, steamed-over glass, is the forest. Inside, there is just you and him, your James, the boy you love, the boy who loves you.

"Do you shiver from desire? Do you shiver because it is cold? Do you shiver from a anticipation, for the moment when—at last, at last—his mouth finds his way to the center of you?

"At last, at last, he’s found his way there, a hand on each of your thighs, his head buried between them, and he’s not teasing you, not now, not anymore, he’s earnest in his desire to bring you desire, and yes, you think, as his tongue and lips press into you, as his fingers pull you apart, as you come undone beneath his hands, it is important to be earnest if this is what earnestness brings.

"Yes, the smell of him, the sight of him, the feel of him, all of it familiar, but not this—the hot firm pressure of his tongue against your center, the insistence of his hands on your thighs, the building wonder of you pleasure rising, oh, that is not familiar, that is new, brand-new.

"You gush—that is the word, the only word—you gush as the pleasure becomes too much to survive, and it bursts like a shaken-up can of soda, it tickles and it burns and it ripples from your center outward, in pulses of sensation so intense you are pinned by them, and your left hand curls into a fist and your right hand flails, hitting the damp cold glass and streaking away the steam, and your eyes open as the pleasure ebbs, and dust then the clouds outside part, revealing the full white moon, unblinking, staring down at you from a black velvet sky.

"James laughs, his gentle, happy laugh, and he looks up from where he’s crouched between your thighs, and he smiles, and you see his face in the moonbeam that pours through the strip of window you’ve wiped clean, and at first you don’t know what you’re seeing, you don’t know what to make of the redness on his chin.

"It’s blood.

"It is your blood.

"But why would you bleed? It’s pleasure you felt, not pain, but the pleasure is gone and in its place is dread, and disgust, and shame, and though James does not yet know that your blood is on his face, he sees your expression change, he sees you brow wrinkle and you mouth purse. His own brow furrows in response.

"‘Bisou,’ he says, ‘you okay?’"

"You smell it, though you cannot see it. Over there, up and ahead and to the left—something has died. Not today, but not that long ago. It is beginning to rot. That is what you smell, flesh breaking apart beneath fur, maggots that plump up the carcass, doing their work."

"you don’t know why mothers leave/you don’t even know that they do leave/but they do"

"Jesus, I’m just kidding…"

"There is the pelt of your public hair. You keep it trimmed close and neat around the edges, but you like the way it looks and have bucked the fashion magazines that advise you to shear it completely. There is the nub of your clitoris, and again you push away the memory of what James did last night with his
tongue. With your right hand, you pull apart the lips of your vagina, and with your left, you angle the tampon toward its opening. You are slick with blood, and so the tampon slips in easily. You push until you’re knuckle-deep in your own body, the first time you’ve touched yourself like this—though you have rubbed your clitoris and touched the outside, you’ve never put your fingers inside. Somehow feeling like it was not right, like it would be trespassing.”

p.32 - “You are not going to tell your grandmother about the feel of James’s mouth between your legs. You are not going to tell her about your orgasm in his old blue wagon, or about the moonbeam that illuminated his face just as he looked up to see your pleasure on your face and showing you your blood on his.”

p.38 - “Then—shit. It occurs to you that you should have packed some tampons into your bag. That was stupid, not to do that.”

p.42- “You’d overhead Lorraine gossiping with Darcy about Maggie—how the things she was into were too weird even for Tucker, that she was a nympho, that she begged Tucker to have a three-way with her and some guy from her job, which is why Tucker finally broke up with her.”

p.48 - “He’d followed you like a puppy until the end of the semester, when he suddenly decided you were a bitch and moved on to adoring some other girl.”

p.51 - “He was drunk off his ass…”

p.52 -
“You turned a corner toward your locker and there they were—Maggie and Tucker, her pushed up against the row of lockers, him pinning her there, his mouth on her throat and one hand disappeared up under her skirt. Maggie squirmed like maybe she wanted him to stop, or maybe she was just embarrassed to be found there by you like that, so undone.

“But Tucker didn’t pull away; he kept his hand where it was, up under Maggie’s skirt, buried between her thighs, as you walked past them, as you turned the dial of your padlock, as you extracted your book, as you relocked your locker, as you passed them again on your way back up the hallway.

“He kept his hand where it was, but his eyes followed you. You had felt them on. Your face, your neck, your back.”

p.57 - “No shit,’ he says, and now he’s looking at you, really looking—assessing your hair, your face, the push of your breasts against your jacket, the way you stand.” [he is an adult male police officer and you is a teenage girl]

p.58 - Reference to teenage boy who died having been drunk and having taken bath salts as an explanation of why he had been crazy and aggressive.

p.58 - “…about Tucker running at you, naked, about him lunging for you, about how you stabbed him in the eye, but how even that didn’t stop him, how he turned and attacked you again. How he hit the tree. How his neck snapped.”

p.61 - Graphic description of teenage girl on the toilet removing tampon

p.94-
“She [teenage girl] smiles, but not happily. ‘Of course, they’re all calling now, but they can go fuck themselves.’
You wonder if she’s saying you should go fuck yourself, because you’ve never made an effort to get to know Maggie before this…”

p.104-107
“He is hard, you see the shape of him through the thick denim of his jeans. You reach out, you put your hand there. You squeeze and look up into James’s eyes. They shine down at you, and you read them well—desire, pleasure, love.
“Hand still wrapped around his erection, you lean up to kiss him. This time, when James’s lips touch yours, there is urgency there, yours and his, together. His hands are on your shoulders, then your back, then lower, on your butt, and all of this feels so good, so exciting and wonderfully good.
“You don’t stop kissing as you walk together back into the bedroom, you pushing forward, him stepping back, and then you are at the edge of your bed, and James sits. His face is at your stomach, and, slowly, gently he pushes up your sweater and the T-shirt underneath to reveal the skin of your midsection. He kisses you there, and you feel warmth spreading downward.
Form Summary

“You pull off your sweater and shirt, toss them to the side. Outside, the rain pounds down, clouds darken the sky, and a rumble of thunder sounds as urgent as your own hot desire.

“The rest of your clothes come off, and James’s. You are together in your bed, and he is naked before you in a way you have never seen this clearly—his dark, flat chest, the tight black curls of his pubic hair surrounding his erection. It’s wet-tipped and urgent, and you stroke it with your fingers. James makes a sound, a moan, and he falls back against your pillows, giving his body up to you to explore.

You take your time. If James wishes you’d do something more, or faster, he doesn’t say. Instead he strokes your arms, gently, as you run your hands across and over him.

“He doesn’t ask you to, but you want to, and you reach into James’s discarded pants and find his wallet, find the condom he’s tucked inside. He grins then, and he watches as you tear it open.

“You’ve never used one of these before, but you’ve been told how, and anyway, it’s not hard to figure out; you roll it down James’s penis, all the way to the base of hair. James adjusts it, making sure it’s rolled completely down and pinching the tip a little, stretching it. He’s still lying on his back on the bed, and you kneel over him, letting your hair hide your face as you reach between your bodies, find his penis, and guide it toward the entrance of your vagina.

“It feels thick there, sort of scary, and there is a moment when you wonder how on earth it will fit inside, but James doesn’t rush you, and you lower yourself onto him, his hands gentle on your hips, not trying to tell you what to do. His eyes are closed, his head is back, and you look at him through the soft curtain of your hair as you sink all the way down as you feel a tear deep inside you, painful but not terrible, as you feel yourself full of him, of James.

“And then you move, careful and slow, your hands on his chest, his on your hips, your thighs, and it’s not long before his face tightens up, he makes a low groan, and he shivers beneath you.

“You stay there, above him, for a moment longer, and inside you, you feel his penis beginning to soften. James opens his eyes. He smiles. You smile, too.

“Then he grasps the base of the condom while you move off him, and then you sort of look away, a little embarrassed, while he pulls off the condom, knots it.

“He gets up and goes to your bathroom. You hear him pulling off a piece of toilet paper, and then you see him tuck the wrapped-up condom into your trash can. You hear him running the water in the sink. You get under the covers, and when he comes back into the room, still naked, that’s where he finds you. He’s got a damp damp washcloth, which he hands to you, and it feels so good when you press it between your legs.

“He climbs in next to you, pulls the covers over your shoulders, pulls you close. You lie there together, listening to the rain, watching the occasional flash of lightning through the windows. The sky has gone nearly completely dark since you and James came into the bedroom; days are getting shorter and shorter, and between the cloudy sky and thewaning moon, the day is nearly done.

“But James is not; he kisses you again, on the mouth, and then he readjusts the blankets and begins to move his mouth down your body, across your breasts, down your stomach. You clench your legs together, remembering last time, but James looks up at you and says, ‘Relax, Bisou, I’m not worried.’ And so you let your legs fall apart, you let James kiss you there, and it is wonderful.”

p.114-115 - “the first time/he kissed me/he bunched up my hair/pulled back my head, the first time/he hit me/it made sense/it answered a question, the first time/I kissed you/ still warm, wet, and salty from the womb, I made a promise/he made a promise, it wouldn’t happen again, I used to think/mothers left girls/because they deserved to be left, but maybe mothers leave/kicking/and screaming/and bleeding/trying to do anything/but leave”

p.116-118 - description of young girl hiding while mother is killed in the next room; young girl returns to find her mother dead in a pool of blood

p.120-121 -

“So, Tucker told me when we started having sex that it would be totally okay to not use condoms because my mom got me on Norplant way before I was even ready to have sex, just in case, and Tucker said he was a virgin, too, so there was nothing to worry about. But then after we started having sex, I found like, these…sores…you know, down there? And it burned so bad when I had to pee, it was almost unbearable. And my mom took me to the doctor, and she told me—’ Maggie breaks off for a moment, sits up, runs her fingers through her hair. ’She told me it was herpes. Okay? There. Herpes.’

“You reach over and take her hand.

“She gives you a weak smile. ’When I told Tucker, he was like, ’Who else have you been fucking?’ And that was just so awful. I hadn’t even slept with anyone but him. And then he said that he couldn’t have given it to me, because he’d never had any of the symptoms I’d been describing. He said once he had, like, a rash, you know, on his dick, but that was it. And then I was all, ’But I thought you’d said you were a virgin, and so why are you saying that the reason you couldn’t have given me herpes is because you’ve never had any sores, not because you’ve never had any sex before?’ And then he grinned and said, like, that girls like it better when they think that boys are virgins, so he’d liked to me. He’d lied to me! And then I looked it up online and I found out that some people—guys, especially—they barely have any symptoms
when they first get herpes, and sometimes it’s just like a rash, just like Tucker hand described. But when I
told him that, he totally denied ever even having a rash and called me a liar and a skank and he told me if I
told anyone that he’d given me an STI or whatever, that he’d make sure the whole school thought I was the
liar, not him. And then he started hooking up with Darcy, you know, that sophomore…And that’s why I was
in his car that night, after the dance. Trying to make him promise to tell Darcy himself about his STI, or at
least to get him to promise to wear condoms if they ended up doing it, so she wouldn’t end up with herpes,
too.”

p.122 -
‘Plus, someone put something gross into my backpack, and I just didn’t feel like being there.’
‘Something gross? What was it?’
‘Maggie’s mouth forms a tight line, and she shakes her head, and you think she isn’t going to answer. But
then she blurts, ’It was a condom. And it was…you know. Used. Tied up at the end and full of…’ Her voice
trails off.
‘‘That is fucking disgusting,’ you say.
‘Hearing it’s not nearly as bad as seeing it,’ she says. ’I just, like, reached into my backpack looking for a
pencil the other day and there it was. Squishy and fucking gross.’
‘Oh, God. What did you do with it?’
‘What did I do with it? I put it under my pillow for the jazz fairy. Jesus, Bisou, I threw it away, of course!’
‘No, I mean—did you tell anyone? Like your parents, or a teacher?’
She shakes her head, hard. ’There’s enough going on and besides, what was I going to say? And just
finding it there…in my bag, next to my fucking Hello Kitty pencil holder…it made me feel so gross…..’

p.130 -
Two more Wednesdays, two more wonderful afternoons with James. Each time the sex feels better than
the time before, more nature, though James is embarrassed about how he can only last a few minutes.
‘It just feels so good,’ he says, which makes you smile.
“That third Wednesday, you decide to try again, after the first time ends quickly. And this time is different—
you still don’t have an orgasm while he’s inside you, but it lasts longer, and you’re more able to focus on
trying things that feel good for you.”

p.136 - “James told you about some girl, a freshman there, who’d accused Phillip and his brother of doing
something to her while she was passed out. But then the charges were dropped for some reason, maybe
because it hadn’t been true, maybe because all of Phillip’s brother’s fraternity friends had sworn it wasn’t.”

p.137 -
‘There’s all kinds of weird shit out there,’ Philip says, one hand on the back of his neck, the other holding
his red cup. ’That’s why I stay away from it. Who the fuck knows what they cut it with?’
‘Mmm-hmm,’ Keisha says. ’Definitely safer to stick with alcohol…..’

p.139 - “You don’t smoke very often, and you don’t feel like it tonight, but the joint still smells good the way
pot can, earthy and stinky.”

p.141 -
“You press yourself more firmly into James, you pull his sweater away from his back and run your fingers
up and down his warm skin, you tangle your tongue with his and take his lower lip between your teeth. He
makes a sound only you can hear, a soft moan, and you feel all the ways his body responds to you.
The song ends, but you’re not done kissing him yet, and you don’t want to open your eyes, you don’t want
to see what’s around you, you want it to be Wednesday afternoon again.
“Damn, Keisha, what do I have to do to get you to dance like that?” It’s Phillip’s voice, but you ignore it,
squeeze James’s hips, and, on your own time, step back, just one step.
“You don’t have enough roofies and your dad doesn’t have enough lawyers to make that happen,’ Keisha
answers, so quick, so smart, so cuttingly mean.”

p.148-151 - graphic details of main character killing a teenage boy with a weapon hidden in the necklace
her grandmother gave her because “sometimes boys become wolves”

p.159-166 - main character’s grandmother gives first aid to teenage girl the boy had attacked and cleans
out the blood in the car used to transport her

p.177 -
“Maybe it was sharing a room with Laura that finally started my cycle. They say that can happen, don’t
they, that women who live together bleed together? Well, it happened, much to my shock. Honestly, I had
stopped expecting it to ever come and then, in November, just before Thanksgiving, there it was.
Form Summary

"Laura was so kind about it. I didn’t have any pads, naturally, and so I had to ask her for help. ‘You can have all the pads you want,’ she told me, ‘but if you want my advice, go straight to tampons.’ She told me that her mother had forbidden her to use tampons at home—they’ll take your virginity; her mother had told her—and Laura hadn’t had the heart to confess that that job had already been done by her junior high school boyfriend!"

p. 181-182 - graphic description of girl finding a wolf (boy) killing her young female friend

p.184 -
“A teacher from Laura’s high school said that Laura was one of the most talented students he’d worked with in his entire career, but, he said, there was ‘something about her.’ The kind of girl who was asking for trouble.

“And so, before the next full moon, that story had become Laura’s legacy—she was a girl who didn’t keep her knees closed, who played too fast, too hard. A morality tale for the rest of us. A warning.”

p.186-187 - description of the movie Carrie

p.187-189 - description of young man trying to rape a young girl who then kills him

p. 201-202 - description of young girl killing a man trying to rape a woman

p. 212 - woman gets an abortion so she can keep menstruating and killing

p. 213-214 -
“Garland’s eyes grew wide and round with fear. ‘Sybil,’ he said, ‘what have you done?’

“I thought he had understood me, that night. But I had been wrong. He thought that I had been telling him a story. Speaking in metaphors. Being poetic. But he had been wrong, too.

“When he understood, that day as I bled after my abortion, that I meant everything I had said—that there were actual wolves in the forest, and that they killed girls, and that one of them had tried to kill me, and that under their wolf skins they were really boys and men—then he took two steps away from the bed.

“You’re telling me you’ve killed six men,’ he said.

“Six wolves,’ I told him, ‘I’ve killed six wolves.’

“Six men,’ he said, ‘and now our child.’

“Semantically speaking, I had terminated my pregnancy, not killed our child. Our child was Clara, playing in the next room with her dolls.

“That was the day our marriage died. And when Garland backed out of our room and then drove away from our house, he took Clara with him.

“…My daughter was gone. My husband was gone. I was alone, in this house, in this cottage on the edge of the trees. All I had left were my poems, and my duty. And that necklace, dear one. My only inheritance.”

p.219 - graphic description of main character’s grandmother killing a man who had killed her daughter

p.221 - description of many physically abusing his daughter

p.250 -
“He confessed to serial killings before he was executed. There was another man—that’s Stumpp, he was German. He confessed to murder, rape, and cannibalism, all while under the spell of full moons. His daughter and his girlfriend were both executed along with him.’

“Were Stumpp’s daughter and girlfriend werewolves, too? Or murderers?”

“Nope. They were killed for “knowledge of his crimes” and for having sex with him.’

“His daughter had sex with him?’

“Not willingly. Maybe no one cared if it was rape or consensual. Either way, she was guilty.”

p.251-252 -
“I’m going to eviscerate him tomorrow. Fucking incel.’

“It occurs to you that Keisha may enjoy a fight as much as you do.

“An incel? You ask. ‘What’s that?’

“Oh, my friend, that’s a dark deep dive for sure,’ Keisha says, pulling up in front of your house. ‘Don’t google before bedtime unless you like nightmares.’

“Incel. You tuck the word away for later.”

p. 257-259 - article about sex written by a teenage character

p. 259-262 - discussion of girls menstrual cycles syncing with each other
Form Summary

p. 268-268 - teenage girl discusses her decision to drop out of high school

p. 270 -
"It’s a dick pic, sort of blurry, erect, pinkish and pale with a puff of brown pubes, and next to it—maybe for size comparison, maybe as a threat—is an unsheathed knife.
"’Who would send something like that?’ Maggie says. ‘What did I ever do to deserve this shit?’
"’You didn’t do anything,’ Keisha says firmly, and she refolds the image, ‘Maggie, this is a crime. Guys can’t just give pictures like this to people. At the very least it’s harassment. Plus, you’re a minor. That makes giving you this picture a felony, I think, even without the creepy knife. We should show this to someone. Like, the police.’

"Maggie shakes her head, wipes her eyes. ’If I tell the police, then my parents will find out, and I don’t want them worrying about me. Anyway,’ she says, ’I feel better just telling you guys.’"

p. 276 - "When you are together, in stolen moments between classes, on weekend mornings when you accompany him on rainy jogs—he’s training for basketball, and you are training now, too—your desire for him is insistent, demanding. You wonder, one Saturday afternoon, your chin rubbed red from his weekend stubble, your hula swollen with desire, if this is because you have seen death, and you have wrought it."

p.279-280 - description of teen friends and main character’s grandmother being a coven

p. 282-283 -
"You have gone online to research ’incel,’ and Keisha wasn’t wrong about it being the stuff of nightmares. Page after page of entitled, whiny diatribes written by men—mostly young, mostly white—who call themselves ’involuntary celibates,’ ’incels’ for short. Basically, guys who can’t get laid and are really, really angry about it. Guys who feel entitled to sex. Young men who feel cheated and wronged by their sexless lives and the girls who aren’t interested in them, and who won’t shut up about it."

p. 148 -
"’It was in my mailbox,’ Maggie says, ‘Hand-delivered, I guess.’ …

"With something like dread, you fold up the arms of the envelope’s brass clasp and pull open the flap. There’s a big, folded up piece of paper inside, and as you pull it out you see it’s riddled with rough little holes. Unfolded it’s a green-shaded woman dress in shorts and a tank, pointing a handgun, and marked all over with numbers: an ’8’ on her forehead; a ’7’ on each of her breasts; a ’10’ on her stomach; a ’6’ on each hip. Her lips are tilted up in a smile. He is shattered by bullet holes. Scrawled across the top is one word: MAGGIE.”

p. 296 - “I stand/On two strong legs/I kill/With two strong hands, I bleed/From one strong womb/I wish/With one red heart/That you could see me now.”

p. 307 -
“I never told but Tucker cornered me at a party once and showed me his dick.
“When I was a kid, my gymnastics coach kept touching my chest. I finally quite the team.
“When I was little, you write, my father murdered my mother.”

p. 308 - “’One of the seniors was talking in the locker room, and he kinda broke down, told us about this time he had sex with a girl at a party, a girl who was really drunk. Too drunk, probably.’”

p. 310 -
“He’s dressed in loose pajama bottoms, and his chest is warm when he pulls you against it, and quietly, quietly, almost silently, the two of you strip naked and slip together into his narrow single bed, him behind you, his arm beneath your head. You feel him shift to open his bedside table and you hear him rustle around, find a condom and tear it open, and his hand slips between you to unroll it before the two of you fit together, his breath in your hair, his blankets up to your chins, and you move together, together, together until you shiver with pleasure and his breath catches, his hips tighten, and he moans into your hair.

“’Shh,’ you whisper. ‘Shh.’

“He moves to take off the condom and then you lie there together in his bed. Your eyes close. His body fits against the back of yours. Chest on your back, hips pressed against your butt. Legs bent to nestle just exactly against yours.”

p. 335-336 - group of minors scheme about how to cross the US/Canadian border without their parents with them

p. 341-345 - main character kills her father in revenge for him killing her mother and injuring her
grandmother

Did you read, listen to or watch the entire work? Yes

Exposure to gratuitous sexual behavior, exposure to and glorification of minors engaged in illegal activity, belittlement of criminal behavior, encouragement to deal with illegal behavior and dangerously violent criminals as minors alone without involving adults or authorities, glorification of vigilantism and multiple instances of dark and dangerous motivations.

This book is about a line of women who go out as vigilantes to kill men because the women believe those men have or want to attack women. These women can only kill when they are menstruating, so they have to keep from getting pregnant or nursing (and must have abortions if they do get pregnant) so they can keep killing. The main character as a sixteen-year-old girl works through her few memories as a child and is told by her grandmother that her father killed her mother. Later, the girl protects her grandmother who has gone to kill the father and ends up killing the father herself. The only comprehensible thesis is that it is necessary to be judge, jury, and executioner when it comes to those you feel are guilty of crimes.

Reviews by critics used by libraries call it "dynamic," "fantastic," "enthralling," and "powerful." The fact that so many of the egregious sexual, criminal, and violent material is not mentioned emphasizes the highly subjective nature of critics' reviews. When there is mention of criminal behavior, it is characterized as "a book of blood, where menstruation empowers, predators bleed out, sisterhood is forged, and genetics bestow unasked for responsibilities."

What do you think might be the result of reading this work?

What would you like the Library to do about this

Relocate to the adult section of the library.
November 21st, 2023

Mrs. Simon,

Thank you for your recent inquiry regarding the novel Red Hood by Elana K. Arnold. I am responding to you in my capacity as Head of Youth Services of the Ketchikan Public Library. All requests for the reconsideration of youth library materials are addressed through this process. I have read your comments, read the material in question in its entirety multiple times, and have considered your concerns.

Each title purchased for the library is selected on its own merit and the needs of the audience for whom it is intended. Selection is made primarily on the basis of book reviews and other professional tools and knowledge. The library’s collection is composed of materials that reflect the unique and diverse needs of this wonderful community. This book was selected based on needs and interests of the Teen Advisory Group and the other teens in our community.

Red Hood has received several starred reviews from multiple professional review sites, was named one of the best audio books for teens in 2021, and was placed on the 2021 Amelia Bloomer Book List. Here are some of the reviews:

“As Bisou draws closer to the women in her life, she begins to grasp the toxic culture that permeates her modern world, a lethal society where many have silently sacrificed a part of themselves because of fear, shame, or doubt. With an author’s note at the start, be aware that a few scenes dive into intimate, often uncomfortable moments. VERDICT A fantastic novel in the #MeToo era, empowering women to share their stories by reaching out, speaking up, and demanding a change.” — SLJ Express Reviews

“Arnold (author of the Printz Honor-winning original fairy tale Damsel, rev. 11/18) here spins Little Red Riding Hood as a story of rape and rape culture as well as of female strength and vengeance. Second-person narration with evocative description makes for a captivatingly immediate reading experience... A disturbing but ultimately empowering, and thoroughly immersive, feminist fairy tale.” — Horn Book Guide Reviews

“Arnold (Damsel, 2018, etc.) uses an intriguing blend of magic realism, lyrical prose, and imagery that evokes intimate physical and emotional aspects of young womanhood. Bisou’s loving relationship with gentle, kind James contrasts with the frank exploration of male entitlement and the disturbing incel phenomenon. A timely and unabashedly feminist twist on a classic fairy tale.” — Kirkus Reviews

“Red Hood recognizes that teens can and do become the victims of violence just as easily as adults. In a culture where violent acts are reported on the news every night, stories to help teens confront and reckon with this reality are vital. Award winner Arnold (Damsel, What Girls Are Made Of) addresses her readership with gentle, kind knowledge and ease, even when writing about delicate subjects such as sexuality, consent or the victim-blaming that can occur after an assault. A graphic, visceral fantasy that doesn’t pull its punches and often reads like a thriller, Red Hood depicts young women growing into their anger and developing a will to fight...” — BookPage Reviews

Red Hood is a novel that address the violence perpetrated against young women, the victim shaming that often accompanies reported attacks, a culture that has raised young men to feel entitled to the female body, and the shame that comes with menstruation all through the lens of the Little Red Riding Hood fairytale. While this book is graphic and contains subjects that not everyone will feel comfortable reading it is a necessary tale that removes victimhood from the shoulders of the young women.
According to RAINN, females, ages 16-19, are 4 times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault. And according to the Center for Disease Control, over half of women have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetimes and more than 4 in 5 female rape survivors reported that they were first raped before age 25 and almost half were first raped as a minor (i.e., before age 18). These statistics are just a few examples that show how common this type of violence is in young women’s lives and the need for stories that address this topic.

To address your concerns about the book promoting “exposure to and glorification of minors engaged in illegal activity” and “belittlement of criminal behavior”: On this, I strongly disagree. This story isn’t about the need or promotion of vigilantism, instead I believe the author’s intent was to take the onus of the crime from the victim and place that burden on the perpetrator.

To address your concerns about language in the book: The author writes in current teenage vernacular. While some readers will find this off putting this is considered an accurate representation of what many teenagers hear, speak, and face within their lives.

To address your concern about this book being inappropriate for children: The library does not act in place of the parents and does not restrict access to library material for minors. With that being said this book was written for teenagers, ages 15-18 years old, which is why this book is placed in the Young Adult section of the library. Parents are encouraged to come to the library with their teen to select material that they feel is appropriate for their family. If you are struggling to find items suitable to your family's needs and/or interests, myself or another librarian would be happy to help guide you to some gentler reads that might be more suited to your needs.

To address your concern about the author’s handling of menstruation: This is something that roughly half the teen population will deal with in their lifetime. Historically, menstruation has been viewed a “dirty” and something to be ashamed of. I believe the author’s purpose in how she describes menstruation and the key element it plays in the story is to show that it is a natural and beautiful thing. Something that should be celebrated and not feared and suppressed.

To address your concern about the author’s handling of abortion: This only came up one time during the story. The character actively made a choice to terminate an early pregnancy using a professional resource. This, while a minor scene in the story, is an important message because it reminds young women that they have a right to choose what happens to their bodies, which is a key theme that is addressed throughout the book in many different forms. Abortion is a part of society and is not something to be ashamed of.

To address your concerns about the violence: This is a fairytale retelling for the 21st century. Fairytales by nature were brutal and often times violent stories used to teach lessons to young children. This book holds true to that spirit, but was written for the modern teen, which for some readers will be off putting. Again, if you and your family need help selecting materials suitable to your family a librarian would be happy to help guide you to some gentler reads.

To address your concerns about book reviews and book reviewers: It is impossible for a librarian to review all materials before they are purchased and added to the collection, so it is in good faith that we trust multiple professional review sites to help us determine what to purchase. This is the professional standard across the industry. With that being said, I do read many items purchased for the teen and children’s collections, especially any items that could be considered crossover material. This was the case for Red Hood. I critically read it in its entirety before cataloging it and making it available for checkout.
Overall, I found this to be a fierce feminist retelling of a classic fairytale that drives home the point that young men do not have the right to a young women’s body and that young women deserve not to be victims. While I acknowledge that this book will not be for every teen, it is an important voice and story in the Young Adult cannon.

I would also like to remind you that the Teen collection has been developed over many years for many different teens. Each teen, both past and present, has unique wants, needs, and challenges that they face. Having a collection that contains something for each of them not only creates a welcoming space, but also creates equality among the youth in our community. All teens have the right to walk into the teen room and find a book that meets their needs, interests, and wants. This does not mean that all books need to meet the needs of all teens, if your daughters need help finding materials to meet their needs I am happy to assist them, but I strongly oppose the relocation of teen library material to the adult collection.

After considering your request, I have concluded that Red Hood meets the requirements of the Collection Development Policy and should be retained by the Ketchikan Public Library in the Teen Room.

If you are not satisfied with this decision, you may file a written appeal to Library Director Patricia Tully. Ms. Tully will respond in writing within ten (10) days. If that response is unacceptable, you may file a written appeal to the Library Advisory Board to request further consideration at a public hearing. You can contact Ms. Tully at patt@firstcitylibraries.org.

Thank you for your interest in the collections at the Ketchikan Public Library. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Amie Toepfer
Head of Children's Services
She/Her/Hers
Ketchikan Public Library
1110 Copper Ridge Ln, Ketchikan AK 99901
907-228-2306
amiet@firstcitylibraries.org
November 21, 2023

Pat,

Please find attached a copy of Amie Toepfer’s response to my Request for Reconsideration of the novel *Red Hood* by Elana K. Arnold currently shelved in the Teen collection of the Ketchikan Public Library.

I would like to thank Ms. Toepfer’s for her care in responding to my request and for her time in reading the book in its entirety. I would also like to appeal her decision to retain the book in the Teen collection instead of shelving it in the Adult collection. In addition to the issues I raised in my original Request for Reconsideration, some of which Ms. Toepfer chose not to address, the following is in response to her letter:

• Reviews - The reviews do not mention sexual encounters between minors, vigilantism, minors unwilling to reach out to responsible adults when criminal acts are committed by others against them, incongruous and gratuitious political ideology, and racism. If you have any reviews that do this, I would be most anxious to read them. Just as no society is completely in agreement on an issue, I find it hard to believe that all reviews of this novel are positive. I would also be most interested to read negative reviews and am hopeful that negative reviews are taken into consideration along with the positive when selecting a resource. That said, when the reviews given by Ms. Toepfer do mention descriptions of sexual encounters, they characterization them as “intimate” and “uncomfortable” — a gross understatement. Such minimization is deceiving and normalizing. That notwithstanding, I based my Request on a first-hand reading of the material rather than on another’s review of it, and I’m happy to see that Ms. Toepfer did as well. I find it very disturbing that she found this to be a “retelling” of a classic fairytale just as she strongly disagrees with my conclusions. This, more than anything else, emphasizes just how important it is to rely on objective guidelines rather than subjective impressions. No one will agree on every choice and objective guidelines avoid unnecessary disagreement.

• Violence against Young Women - I am truly disturbed that Ms. Toepfer finds this book somehow corrects gender stereotypes. If the vigilante measures to which the teens in this book resort are “necessary” and justified, I must wonder why our Constitution guarantees such rights as due process. It is most alarming to think that the same students studying our American republic and founding documents are encouraged to read a novel that glorifies their antithesis. Also, broad-brushing all “young men” as feeling “entitled to the female body,” all young women as feeling “shame” from menstruation, and all violence as being carried on “the shoulders of young women” is the same oversimplification perpetrated by this novel.

• Sexual Violence - The statistics provided by Ms. Toepfer are a classic example of misdirection. I could name several “stories that address this topic” with which she may well strongly disagree. The issue I raise with my Request for Reconsideration is not that there is or is not a need for stories that address this topic but the method with which this topic is addressed.

• Need or Promotion of Vigilantism - You will note that the concerns to which Ms. Toepfer refers are in answer to the question, “To what do you object?” I never did or would claim that this book is “about the need or promotion of vigilantism.” As I’m sure you and anyone who has worked with young people on a regular basis is well aware, it is all too often those issues which are perceived to be tangential to the main message that children and teens take away as important. This is why it is essential to use great care in choosing every aspect of communication lest anything be taken incorrectly. Whether vigilantism is the author’s intent or not, it is portrayed in a glorified, ultimately satisfactory manner.

• Language - “Everyone does it” is a common response to behaviors and a common logical fallacy. It is insulting to a teenager’s intelligence to say that they must have vulgarity in a book to have it be considered an accurate representation of their lives.
• Inappropriate for children - I did not suggest that the library act in place of parents or restrict access to library material for minors. It is my understanding that, regardless of where a resource is located, patrons of all ages have unrestricted access to it. Regardless of what what reviewers, publishers, and/or a resource’s author may note, those with training and experience in library science may need to complete an independent and individual evaluation. This evaluation is not about acting in place of parents but about fulfilling a responsibility to one’s patrons, especially those with which one may disagree. Why does resource placement need to be a case of the needs of the few outweighing the many or the needs of these few that outweigh the needs of those few? Citizens look to leaders like librarians to find solutions to such conflicts.

• Menstruation - I am surprised that Ms. Toepfer does not mention the fact that this book views menstruation as a requirement for murder. The protagonist is unable to kill unless she is menstruating. In fact, this is the one and only reason given for her grandmother aborting her child. Menstruation is hardly presented as a celebration something natural and beautiful. It is better characterized as an albatross that must be borne.

• Abortion - As mentioned above, the sole reason for the character terminating her pregnancy is so that she can keep killing. The character suffers emotionally and physically because of this decision. There is nothing positive presented about this abortion, and it is hardly a reminder of a right to choose. It is presented as a necessary evil. The character is abandoned by her husband who also takes their child away.

• Violence - I find it simplistic and demeaning to suggest that the “modern teen” requires the violence in this story to learn a lesson.

I appreciate your consideration of this appeal.

Sincerely,

Deborah Simon, M.Ed.
November 30, 2023

To Deborah Simon,

Thank you for your detailed letter appealing the decision of our Head of Youth Services, Amie Toepfer, to retain the book *Red Hood*, by Elana Arnold, in the Library’s Teen Fiction collection. I have read the book in its entirety, and what follows is my response to your appeal and decision regarding its placement in the Library:

- **Reviews:** In your response to Ms. Toepfer’s references to the many positive reviews this book has received in standard review sources, you eloquently state your objections to the book and end by calling for “objective guidelines rather than subjective impressions.” In a diverse community such as Ketchikan, one set of guidelines cannot encompass the variety of perspectives held by all people in the community. Because of our mission to serve everyone in our community, the Ketchikan Public Library collects materials reflecting a wide range of perspectives.

- **Violence against Young Women:** This book, in which some men become actual wolves to prey on women, is fantasy. The violence depicted in the book is similarly fantastic but expresses the fears of many women and their sense of helplessness when faced with real-life threats.

- **Sexual Violence:** The way that this fantasy novel deals with sexual violence is not for all tastes, but it does express the feelings of many people—men as well as women—who have experienced such violence.

- **Need or Promotion of Vigilantism:** This novel is expressive of the feelings of many women who have experienced violence, and provides them with a way of processing those feelings and regaining their feeling of agency. This is similar to Westerns and thrillers which help the reader—often male—to process their feelings of frustration and anger with life’s challenges. These books are not a blueprint for action; rather they are an escape and a solace.

- **Language:** Your objection to language you consider vulgar in the book is not shared by everyone in the community. Many people, including many young people, speak as the characters in the book speak, and many readers would find other speech patterns unrealistic and off-putting.
• Inappropriate for Children: As librarians, we review any books that we believe may be more appropriate for a different collection than the one recommended by reviewers and the publisher. We do this with the understanding that we must serve the interests, abilities and needs of all people of a certain age group, and these vary widely. According to the ALA Library Code of Ethics, “We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.” We provide the widest range of materials to serve the needs of the greatest number of people of each age group.

As librarians, we may not restrict or discourage access to materials by putting them in an adult collection based on their content, without regard to the intended audience. All our patrons have a right to access materials that meet their needs and interests. There is no corresponding right not to see materials that one may find offensive.

• Menstruation: This book characterizes menstruation as conveying the power to combat those who seek to commit violent crimes against women. It is a double-edged sword, to be sure. As a fantasy novel, the menstrual cycle of the protagonists is an essential part of their superpower.

• Abortion: The protagonist makes the difficult decision to have an abortion so that she can continue to fight those who prey on women. This is a controversial position. Reasonable people may believe that abortion is always wrong, but other reasonable people may come to a different conclusion. The Library must represent a variety of views in its collections.

• Violence: As I have noted above, the fantasy violence depicted in the novel is not meant to serve as a blueprint for dealing with difficulties in real life. It is meant to be a way to process feelings of helplessness and despair in the face of actual threats and to find ways to overcome them.

After considering the points in your letter, I have decided to retain the book, Red Hood, in the Library’s Teen Fiction collection. You have ably expressed the point of view of some members of our community, but the Library must provide access to materials for all people in Ketchikan. The book was written for and will be of interest to many teens, and so the appropriate place for the book is in the Teen collection.
You may appeal this decision by sending a written request to the chair of the Library Advisory Board, June Dahl, to ask that the Board hold a public hearing on the matter at its next quarterly meeting. You may send the letter to her in care of the Library:

June Dahl, Chair, Library Advisory Committee  
c/o Ketchikan Public Library  
1110 Copper Ridge Lane  
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Thank you for the care and time you have taken in this matter.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Patricia Tully  
Director, Ketchikan Public Library  
patt@firstcitylibraries.org; 907-228-2311
November 30, 2023

June Dahl, Chair
Library Advisory Board
c/o Ketchikan Public Library
11110 Copper Ridge Lane
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Re: Public Hearing
    Request for Reconsideration
    Red Hood, Elana K. Arnold

Dear Ms. Dahl:

On November 12, 2023, I submitted the attached Request for Reconsideration to move the book, Red Hood, by Elana K. Arnold from the Teen Collection to the Adult Collection. On November 21, 2023, that request was denied by Amie Toepfer, Head of Children’s Services as indicated in her attached letter. That same day, I submitted the attached appeal to Pat Tully, Library Director, for her consideration. Today, November 30, 2023, Ms. Tully denied that appeal in her attached letter.

Following is my response to Ms. Tully’s denial letter:

Reviews
The purpose for objective standards is not to encompass or even address the community’s perspectives but to clearly spell out why a book is placed in a certain section. Neither Ms. Toepfer nor Ms. Tully have spoken to this point.

Fantasy Violence
I am at a loss to understand the difference between fantasy violence and real violence, especially when this book is placed in a section to specifically appeal to minors for whom the lines of fantasy and reality are often blurred. In fact, it seems that many of the points Ms. Tully makes forget this fact. This book is being given to neither men nor women. It is being given to children and teenagers.

Vigilantism
I find it outrageous to suggest that children and teenagers need vigilantism and the absence of the guarantee of law to “regain[] their feeling of agency.” Please remember, this book is being marketed towards and given to children and teenagers.
Inappropriate for Children:
“Serving the interests, abilities, and needs of all people of a certain age group,” as Ms. Tully states, does not involve forgetting one’s audience, and it does not involve serving the needs of the few by sacrificing the needs of another few. Those who see this book cannot unsee it. Why put it in a place where it could do harm when it can be found and accessed in a section of the library that is not frequented daily by children?

Per Ms. Tully’s denial letter, I am submitting this information to you and requesting that the Library Advisory Board schedule a public hearing on the issue at the January 2024 Library Advisory Board meeting.

Sincerely,
Deborah Simon, M.Ed.

Attachments:
November 12, 2023 Request for Reconsideration, Deborah Simon
November 21, 2023 Denial of Request for Reconsideration, Amie Toepfer, Head of Children’s Services
November 21, 2023 Appeal to Denial of Request for Reconsideration, Deborah Simon
November 30, 2023 Denial of Appeal to Denial of Request for Reconsideration, Pat Tully, Library Director
CITY OF KETCHIKAN AND KETCHIKAN PUBLIC UTILITIES

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

I. POLICY ISSUANCE

Currently the City of Ketchikan (City) and Ketchikan Public Utilities (KPU) have active social media accounts, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram sites.

II. PURPOSE

The goal of the City and KPU social media channels is to serve as an online information resource focused on City and KPU issues, projects, news and events, and is not intended as a public forum. The social media sites are administered by the respective departments or their designee, but the content on the sites is not entirely controlled by the City or KPU. The City or KPU does not endorse any link or advertisements on its social media sites placed by the site owners or their vendors or partners. The City or KPU reserves the right to remove any content from its social media sites at any time.

The Social Media Policy (“Policy”) provides guidelines for the establishment and use by City or KPU of social media sites as a means of conveying information to members of the public.

The intended purpose of City or KPU social media sites is to disseminate information from the City about the City’s mission, meetings, activities, and current issues, to members of the public.

The City or KPU has an overriding interest and expectation in protecting the information posted on its social media sites and the content that is attributed to the City, KPU and its officials.

III. DEFINITIONS

“Social media sites” – means content created by authorized individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, RSS, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, and Flicker.

“City or KPU social media sites” – means social media sites which the City or KPU establish and maintain, and over which it has control over all postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the social media site’s owners, vendors, or partners. City and KPU social media sites shall supplement, and not replace, the City or KPU required public notices and standard methods of communication.

“Posts” or “a posting” means information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication added by an authorized person to a City or KPU social media sites.

IV. GENERAL POLICY

1. The establishment of City or KPU social media sites requires approval by the City/General Manager or designee. Upon approval, City or KPU social media sites shall bear the name and/or official logo of the City or KPU.
2. All content on the City or KPU social media sites shall be reviewed, approved, and administered by the City or KPU designee.

3. City or KPU social media sites shall clearly state that such sites are maintained by the City or KPU and that the sites comply with the municipality’s social media policy.

4. The department or its designee shall monitor content on City or KPU social media sites to ensure adherence to both the City and KPU’s Social Media Policy and the interest and goals of the City and KPU.

5. The City or KPU shall use social media sites as consistently as possible and in conjunction with other established City communication tools.

6. City or KPU social media sites shall be managed consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act. Members of the City Council and of other governing bodies shall not, except in open public meetings respond to any published postings, or use the site or any form of electronic communication to respond to, blog or engage in serial meetings, or otherwise discuss, deliberate, or express opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body.

7. The City or KPU reserves the right to terminate any City or KPU social media site at any time without notice.

8. City or KPU social media sites shall comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.

9. The City's and KPU Social Media Policy shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.

10. All City and KPU social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.

11. City and KPU social media sites are subject to the Alaska Public Records Act. Any content maintained on a City or KPU social media site that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure.

12. Employees representing the City or KPU on City or KPU social media sites shall conduct themselves at all times as a professional representative of the City and KPU and in accordance with all municipal policies.

13. All City or KPU social media sites shall utilize authorized City or KPU contact information for account set-up, monitoring and access or at least two employees of any given department or division shall have administration privileges on that department’s or division’s social media account(s).

14. The City or KPU reserves the right to change, modify, or amend all or part of this policy at any time.
V. CONTENT GUIDELINES

1. The content of City or KPU social media sites shall primarily pertain to municipal sponsored or endorsed programs, services, and events. Content includes, but is not limited to, information, photographs, videos, and hyperlinks. Content or resources that are not specific to municipally sponsored or endorsed, shall clearly state within the content posted that such information is being provided as a courtesy.

2. The City or KPU shall have full permission or rights to any content posted by the City or KPU, including photographs and videos.

3. Postings shall be made during normal business hours or on an as-needed basis to appropriately inform the public of situations requiring immediate attention. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City or KPU social media sites shall review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site’s use policies and terms and conditions.

4. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City or KPU social media sites shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Instead, postings on any of the City or KPU social media sites by an authorized municipal employee shall only reflect the views of the municipality.

5. Postings must contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any municipal policy or state or federal law;

6. Postings may NOT contain any personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public;

7. Postings to City or KPU social media sites shall NOT contain any of the following:
   i. Comments that are not topically related to the particular posting being commented upon;
   ii. Comments in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures;
   iii. Profane language or content;
   iv. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation, as well as any other category protected by federal, state, or local laws;
   v. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
   vi. Solicitations of commerce which are not authorized by the City or KPU;
   vii. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
viii. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;

ix. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party; or

x. Personal attacks.

8. These guidelines shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink on all City or KPU social media sites. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained for a limited time, including available time, date and identity of the poster.

9. City and KPU reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of its social media site, when deemed appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication that is posted on a City of Ketchikan and Ketchikan Public Utilities social media site.

10. Except as expressly provided in this Policy, accessing any social media site shall comply with all applicable municipal policies pertaining to communications and use of the internet by employees, including e-mail content.

11. All of the content on City or KPU social media sites must be provided to the Department or its designee for review, approval and subsequent posting to the social media site.

VI. COMMENT POLICY

All comments posted to the City or KPU social media pages will be monitored. The City or KPU reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments including those that:

- Contain obscene language or sexual content
- Threaten or defame any person or organization
- Violate the legal ownership interest of another party
- Support or oppose political candidates or causes
- Promotes illegal activity
- Promotes commercial services or products
- Are not related to the particular topic

You participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username, and any information provided.

The City or KPU reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed to be in violation of its Social Media Policy or any applicable law.

VII. SCOPE

This policy applies to all departments, divisions, elected officials and employees of City of Ketchikan or Ketchikan Public Utilities.

VIII. AUTHORITY TO PROMULGATE POLICY
The City Council of the City of Ketchikan in Ketchikan, Alaska maintain the authority granted by the Ketchikan Home Rule Charter and Ketchikan Municipal Code to order policy and the guidelines and implementation.

IX. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy will take effect as of the signing date.

Dated at Ketchikan, Alaska this __22__ day of __August__, 2018.

[Signature]
Karl Amylon
City/General Manager
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Division</th>
<th>Accounts</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Youtube</th>
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*Notes:

The Fire Chief also has access to the following City/KPU Facebook accounts in order to post emergency information: City of Ketchikan; Live in Ketchikan; Ketchikan Police Department; KPU Telecommunications; KPU Electric

The Police Department uses Facebook to post some photos, share upcoming community events and until recently used it to post press releases. They have also used it to receive incoming tips via Messenger about community concerns from citizens.

Ketchikan Public Library uses these accounts to publicize Library events, services, unexpected closures (for example when there is a power outage), and other Library initiatives. The Library follows many Ketchikan non-profits and community organizations and selectively share their posts if they would be of interest to Library followers.

The Museum Department often shares information and resources that are of interest to Museum subscribers/viewers but not directly sponsored nor officially endorsed. An example – Delores Churchill is teaching a class in Juneau that many Totem Heritage Center students would love to know about but the Museum is not involved in this class at all. However, sharing this information is relevant, mission-based and an important service that can be provide as outreach to the Ketchikan community.
MEMORANDUM

To: Library Advisory Board
From: Pat Tully, Library Director
Date: December 26, 2023
Re: Response to Board agenda items regarding YA NF collections

1. Discussion of the location of the nonfiction shelves in the teen/young adult section of the Library.
Kelly Johnson, Office Manager and staff liaison to the Teen Advisory Group (T.A.G.): The Teen/YA Nonfiction shelves are currently outside the Teen Room on either side of its entrance. Those shelves had housed Adult Graphic Novels but Head of Adult Services Lisa Pearson relocated this collection, freeing up the space for Teen/YA Nonfiction. Teen/YA Nonfiction is the least "browsed" of all the YA collections, with teens usually researching what they want/need and then finding it by Dewey number. However, the extra space does allow for more display for various subjects/titles that seems to be beneficial to the circulation of the collection, especially art and D&D titles.
Amie Toepfer, Head of Youth Services: The Teen Room is a small space with limited shelving options. Moving the Teen/YA Nonfiction to the shelves immediately outside the room is a huge benefit to the teen collection as a whole because it allows for more display space and the expansion of the popular Manga collections.

2. Discussion of the proportion of fiction to nonfiction books in the teen/young adult section of the Library.
Kelly Johnson: In the old building, all YA/Teen Nonfiction books were intershelved in Children’s Nonfiction. When the new building, with its dedicated Teen Room, opened in 2013, we moved YA/Teen Nonfiction books out of Children’s Nonfiction and placed them in the Teen Room. The collection then grew under the care of the Children's librarians and very active T.A.G. members who have recommended many titles/subjects over the last decade.
T.A.G. members find that the school libraries have adequate nonfiction books to support their research and schoolwork, and in selecting for the Public Library’s YA/Teen Nonfiction collection they have focused on mental and emotional health, art, crafting, and gaming - specifically RPGs (Role Playing Games), culinary arts, and life skills. The Young Adult/Teen Nonfiction collection also has a variety of biographies to support the Schoenbar annual English requirements. However, there is not a lot of YA non-fiction printed other than sets, which usually do not cover topics of interest to teens.
Amie Toepfer: Books in the YA/Teen Nonfiction collection do not circulate nearly as much as Teen Fiction and Graphic Novels. With that in mind I always try to purchase books on subjects that are in demand, though it can be difficult to find age-appropriate titles in some subject areas. The Library does not purchase for curriculum support, which limits what is available for us to purchase. As Kelly noted, lots of the YA nonfiction are large sets that are geared towards curriculum support and are thus more suitable to a school library.