Library Program Policy

Purpose:

The Kent Memorial Library develops and presents programs to our community that provide information, support life-long learning, and entertain. Programming is an integral component of library services that promotes and complements the Library's other services and collections. It supports the Library's role as the center of the community.

Library programs and displays are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of Suffield residents, and aim to represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints by providing access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and educational needs of the all residents. This policy provides guidelines for the development, management, and oversight of programs presented by the Library.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship:

The Library recognizes the importance of programs and displays as a resource for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas, and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. In order to uphold public trust, the Library prioritizes the representation of a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes. The Library is prohibited by state statutes from removing, excluding or censoring any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive

The Library is guided by the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements.

Definition of a Program:

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

Library displays and programs are created or curated by librarians. A public display or program is created or curated by a public group, organization or individual. Use of a public meeting room by an organization or individual to hold a public event is not a library program.

Scope:

This policy applies to all library programs, including those conducted virtually or asynchronously.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Library Commission delegates the development, presentation and oversight of programs to the Library Director and library staff.

The final responsibility for a library program is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by librarians who are professionally trained to curate and develop programs.

Program attendees are responsible for complying with the Library's Behavior Policy.

Program Selection:

The Library strives to present programs that are educational, informational, cultural or recreational. Topics, content and timing of library programs are developed with consideration of available resources and keeping community needs and interests in mind. Program selection is based upon the suitability of topic, format and intended audience. A program will not be excluded because its topic may be regarded by some as controversial. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the content or of the presenter of the program.

The Library provides programs created or curated by librarians, as well as allowing programs created by members of the public or community groups and presented in the public library. The library staff shall differentiate between library programs that are created or curated by librarians of the public library and those programs that are created by members of the public or community groups and exhibited in the public library.

Library programs must have an educational, informational, cultural or recreational value to the community. Programs of a purely commercial nature or those designed for the solicitation of business will not be offered by the Library.

Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.

Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of patrons.

Program Development, Coordination and Supervision:

Library programs may originate from library staff, partnering institutions, or members of the public.

In the event of a co-sponsored program, supervision of the program may be delegated to the co-sponsoring organization depending upon the timing and venue of the program. All programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library, however, must abide by this policy regardless of where they are hosted.

Program Access*:*

Library programs are free and open to the public on a first-come first-serve basis. Due to room capacity limits and staffing levels, the Library reserves the right to limit the number of attendees for any given program.

Program registration may be made in advance online, over the phone, or in person. For programs targeted to a specific audience, e.g. children or teens, and promoted as such, preferential admission may be offered to those groups on a first-come first-serve basis, limited to

those individuals as the Library deems appropriate. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a library program should contact the Library at least one week prior to the program.

Virtual Programs:

Some library programs may be offered using a library-approved virtual meeting platform that registered patrons may use to access the virtual program from their own internet-enabled devices. This may include programs that are simultaneously run at the physical library as well as programs that are offered only virtually. While hosting the virtual program, library staff, partnering organizations, and program facilitators will follow industry standard best practices for virtual events.

Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed of that fact at the start of the program.

Live virtual programs require advance registration. Registered participants will receive via email a link to log on to the program and must not share that link with others. Information collected during the registration process will be used only to communicate information about that program or to confirm eligibility to participate in that program.

Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Library's Behavior Policy and failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk.

Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. The Library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software, but makes no guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every library program successfully. Nor can the Library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

Program Materials:

Books, CDs, DVDs or other ancillary materials related to the content of a program may be offered for sale at a library program as a convenience to attendees.

Program Evaluation:

To provide the highest quality and most useful programming, library staff will gather information about program results to guide future programming decisions. Outputs, such as the number of attendees at a program, will be gathered for all or almost all programs. Outcomes, such as how well the content of a program helped attendees learn about the program's topic, will be gathered at times when such data is required for grant reporting or would be helpful in evaluating a new program topic or format.

Procedures for the Questioning of Library Programs by Patrons:

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion regarding materials found in the collection. Individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library or other educational material, display or program are directed to the *Material Review and Reconsideration Policy* and *Material Review and Reconsideration Policy Form*. The Library limits the consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individuals residing in Suffield.

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

This policy is housed on the Kent Memorial website at https://www.suffield-library.org/about-kml/library-policies/

Additionally, a copy is maintained in the Library's Director's office.