

**Mukwonago Community Library**  
**Program Policy**  
**Approved October 10, 2024 – Last Reviewed October 10, 2024**

This Program Policy reflects Mukwonago Community Library's (MCL's) ongoing commitment to providing high quality educational opportunities on a wide variety of diverse topics to the public. This policy governs all programs provided by the Library, whether they are provided by Library staff, in collaboration with other organizations, or via third parties contracted by the Library. A "program" is a planned, public event sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library that community members may choose to attend. Programs may include, but are not limited to, presentations, speakers, seminars, demonstrations, and workshops. A program can be a single event or a series of events, be a scheduled or a pop-up event, take place inside or outside of the Library, or take place online. This policy provides structure and consistency for meeting MCL's commitment to offer a well-rounded programming schedule.

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**I. Programming Objectives**

MCL supports its mission, vision, and values by providing programs that meet the educational, informational, professional, and recreational needs of the community.

- A. Programming is an integral component of library service that:
  - a. Expands the Library's role and visibility in the community
  - b. Introduces the public to the Library's facility, materials, and services
  - c. Provides opportunities for lifelong learning, the exchange of ideas, and entertainment.
- B. The Library's philosophy of open access to information extends to programming. MCL affirms the statement provided by the American Library Association in "Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights."
- C. The Library does not discriminate or endorse specific viewpoints through its programming.
- D. Programs aim to present a broad spectrum of opinions and viewpoints.

- E. Programs are not used for commercial, religious, or partisan purposes, or business solicitation.

## **II. Responsibility for Program Development**

The Library Board of Trustees establishes an annual programming budget to be allocated as deemed appropriate by the Library Director. The Library Director holds ultimate responsibility for programming, delegating program management to appropriate staff.

- A. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and are not hired as outside contractors for programming. Library staff need to balance programming with their other job duties.
- B. Library staff in charge of planning programming have a duty to schedule programs that inform, educate, entertain, and enrich.
- C. Library staff will constantly examine their personal biases and engage in professional development in order to curate a well-rounded schedule of a wide variety of programs that individual Library users may select from to suit their needs or interests.
- D. Programs are scheduled by professional staff who use their experience, judgment, expertise, and data to inform their decisions, which are based on the selection criteria set forth in Section III.

## **III. Criteria for Program Development**

MCL selects programs to serve a public that includes a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, abilities, sensory preferences, reading skills, needs, and interests. MCL strives to provide appropriate and interesting programming to meet those needs.

- A. Library staff use the following criteria in program planning:
  - a. Support of the Library's mission and service goals
  - b. Community needs and interests
  - c. Presentation quality and content treatment for the intended audience
  - d. Presenter background and qualifications
  - e. Availability of program space
  - f. Costs
  - g. Staff time
  - h. Safety of visitors, performers, and staff
  - i. Connection to community programs, exhibits, or events
  - j. Relation to Library collections, resources, and services
  - k. Potential to expand the Library's role and visibility in the community
  - l. Historical, educational, or cultural significance
  - m. Availability of volunteers to help

- B. MCL may collaborate with other agencies, organizations, and businesses for compatible programs.
- C. Professional performers and presenters with specialized expertise may be hired. All outside contractors will be required to sign a contract with the Library.
- D. The views and opinions of program presenters do not necessarily represent those of the Library.
- E. Programs may be held on or off-site, including virtually.
- F. Animals that are part of a Library-sponsored program are allowed in the Library. They must exhibit appropriate behavior and be accompanied at all times by their handler and/or trainer.
- G. MCL recognizes that some programs may be considered controversial by some members of the community. Through a balanced programming schedule, MCL strives to represent a variety of perspectives, to entertain, educate, and expand the whole person and the whole community. Program topics, speakers, and resources are not excluded from programs because of possible controversy.

#### **IV. Requests for Programs**

MCL encourages and welcomes Library user suggestions, comments, and ideas about its programs and programming schedule. Programs are regularly evaluated by staff members who developed and presented them, and library user feedback is valued in developing interesting and appropriate programs for the community.

- A. All requests for programming are subject to the same criteria set forth in this policy.
- B. MCL may not be able to accommodate all requests for programming. Library staff will use the criteria in Section III “Criteria for Program Development” to determine if the Library has the appropriate resources for any new programs. MCL maintains final decision making on identifying and presenting programs consistent with this Policy.

#### **V. Program Access and Considerations**

Library-sponsored programs are generally free and open to the public. Some restrictions may be placed due to limited resources or other considerations.

- A. A fee may be charged for materials or costs associated with some programs. These will be clearly listed on all marketing materials.
- B. Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited.

- C. Adult supervision is required at all programs involving youth, in accordance with the MCL's Public Behavior Policy, unless otherwise stated by the program facilitator.
- D. MCL staff may record Library programs, activities, and events for use in marketing and promotions.
  - a. The Library will post signage to indicate when recording may occur.
  - b. If a library user does not wish to be recorded, they may tell the staff member.
  - c. See the "Confidentiality, Privacy, and Surveillance Policy" for more information.
- E. MCL strives to provide an accessible and inclusive environment for all Library program attendees. Please contact the Library with any questions or concerns about program access.
- F. MCL assumes no liability for patron interactions with potential allergens or risk factors. Program attendees are encouraged to contact staff with questions about known allergens.
- G. The Library does not deny access to programs if a patron owes a fine or fee.
- H. The sale of books, DVDs, CDs, or items directly related to the purpose of the program are allowed as part of a library-sponsored program at the discretion of the Library Director.
- I. Programs sponsored by the Friends of the Library may include fees, merchandise sales, or fundraising efforts.
- J. The Library assumes no responsibility for personal property loss or damage during programs.

## **VI. Library's Rights Reserved**

MCL reserves the following rights to ensure a safe, enjoyable program experience for all Library users.

- A. Limit attendance due to space or program nature
- B. Change, eliminate, or add a program to the programming schedule at any time
- C. Set appropriate age limits and deny access to a program based on those limits
- D. Cancel or postpone programs due to unforeseen circumstances
- E. Deny attendance to disruptive individuals or those violating MCL policies

## **VII. Requests for Program Reconsideration**

MCL does not promote or endorse beliefs or viewpoints. Rather, it provides programs from a wide variety of points of view so that individuals can examine issues freely, form their own opinions, judgments, and beliefs, and make their own decisions. MCL's

program offerings are predicated on the individual user's right to access information as set forth herein, along with every user's right to access information that is free from censorship by others. The choice of which programs to attend by Library users is an individual matter. While an individual user may select or reject programs for themselves or their family, Library users may not exercise censorship or otherwise prevent or limit the freedom of others to access MCL's programs.

MCL recognizes that a diversity of programs may result in user requests for reconsideration of decisions regarding program scheduling. This may include the denial of requests to add a program to the schedule or to reconsider presenting an upcoming program. The following criteria and procedures have been developed to ensure that such requests, objections, or complaints are handled in a timely and consistent manner.

- a. Library users are welcome to share their viewpoint in a respectful manner. At all times during any such discussion, both library staff and library users must follow MCL's Public Behavior Policy.
- b. Parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) have the sole right and responsibility to restrict their own children's access to library resources as they see fit. For this reason, MCL does not reconsider program decisions based on objections or complaints regarding children's access to programs or age appropriateness of programming.
- c. Programs will not be automatically removed from the schedule upon request or if an objection is made. Instead, programs will remain scheduled and will occur as the process set forth herein is followed to conclusion.
- d. If the program has already occurred or the Request for Program Reconsideration is given with not enough notice to allow for the full Reconsideration process to be completed, the Request will be treated as a complaint and will be addressed by the Library Director as such.
- e. Any Library user objecting to Library-sponsored programs may use the following process to share their concerns.
  - i. First, Library users may speak with any Library staff member directly. Any Library user wishing to share concerns or objections about MCL programs will receive respectful attention from staff members. The staff member should contact one of MCL's in-house programming staff or the Library Director for assistance in discussing the user's concerns, as MCL's in-house programming staff and the Library Director are ultimately responsible for receiving and reviewing such objections and Requests for Reconsideration pursuant to this policy.

- ii. If the Library user is not satisfied with the explanation provided by the in-house programming staff or the Library Director; if in-house programming staff or the Library Director is not available; or if the user would prefer to share his or her concerns or objection in writing, the Library user may obtain a “Request for Program Reconsideration” form (Addendum 2) available at the Circulation Desk or Info Desk. A Library user must have an up-to-date library card valid at the Mukwonago Community Library in order to submit a Request for Program Reconsideration.
- iii. One “Request for Program Reconsideration” form per individual program must be fully completed, signed, and routed to the Library Director.
  - 1. The Library Director will notify the Library user in writing within five (5) business days of receipt confirming that the Request has been received and inviting the Library user to schedule an in-person meeting with the Library Director.
  - 2. The meeting between the requester and the Library Director should be held within ten (10) business days of the Library Director’s confirmation of receipt of the Request. The Library Director will provide the user with a copy of the Program Policy of the Mukwonago Community Library at the meeting.
  - 3. After the meeting with the requester, the Library Director will meet with the appropriate programming staff to review the Request and obtain the staff member’s recommendation. The Library Director may also appoint an ad hoc committee of Mukwonago Community Library staff to review the item in question. The ad hoc committee will provide the Library Director with a recommendation regarding the Request within one (1) week of the Library Director’s meeting with the requester.
  - 4. Within five (5) business days of receiving the programming staff’s recommendation or the ad hoc committee’s recommendation (if one is appointed), the Library Director will decide whether the program should be added to or removed from the programming schedule and will notify the requester in writing with the decision and reasons for it.
  - 5. The requester may appeal the Library Director’s decision by submitting a written request to the President of the Library Board of Trustees for a hearing before the Library Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled meeting. This request must be submitted within sixty (60) days of receipt of the Library Director’s decision.

- a. To allow staff sufficient time to respond to this appeal and prepare the agenda, appeals received less than seven (7) business days before that month's meeting may be postponed to the next month's meeting.
  - b. The requester will be notified in advance as to the date and time when they may address the Library Board.
  - c. The Board reserves the right to limit the length of the requester's presentation at the hearing.
- 6. The Library Board of Trustees does not substitute its judgment for that of the Library Director. As a non-partisan, quasi-governmental body, the Library Board cannot base its determination on personal views, isolated sections of the program, or whether the program and/or its facilitator/creator may be viewed as controversial or objectionable. Programs are selected for inclusion in MCL's schedule based on their overall contribution to the mission and vision of the Library; similarly, programs are considered throughout the reconsideration process as the whole of their value to the community.
  - a. The Library Board's responsibility upon hearing an appeal is limited to determining whether the Library Director handled the Request for Program Reconsideration in accordance with these stated policies and procedures of the Mukwonago Community Library. If the Library Board determines that the Library Director followed MCL's policies and procedures, it must affirm the Library Director's decision.
  - b. After the Library Board has heard the requester's presentation and heard from the Library Director, the Board will conduct a vote to determine if the Director followed all policies and procedures in addressing the Request for Reconsideration.
- 7. The Library Board President will communicate the Library Board's decision in writing to the requester within five (5) business days of the vote.
- 8. The Mukwonago Community Library Board of Trustees serves as the final authority and arbiter on matters of reconsideration and its decision is final. Repeated or redundant requests by an individual or a group to reconsider programs already determined to remain on the schedule or those with similar content and/or facilitated by the same presenter will not be considered within five (5) years of the last request. The Library Director will notify in writing each requester asking for repeated or redundant reconsideration of programs of the Board's decision and then will notify the Library Board.

## **Revision History**

**October 10, 2024**      Policy created. Legal reviewed.



## Addendum 1

### Request for Program Reconsideration

Your opinion is important to us. If you have an objection to an MCL program, please complete this form, indicating as clearly and legibly as possible the nature of your objection. The request is valid only if the entire form is completed, signed, and routed to the Library Director.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Library Card Barcode\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\*per MCL's Program Policy: "A Library user must have an up-to-date library card valid at the Mukwonago Community Library in order to submit a Request for Program Reconsideration."

(1) Program of concern: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Date(s) of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

(3) What brought this program to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

(4) Have you previously attended this program in its entirety?      Yes      No

(5) Please comment on the program as a whole as well as being specific about those issues that concern you. (Please continue on back of this form if you need more space or attach additional pages.) \_\_\_\_\_

(6) What action do you recommend the Library take regarding this program?

(continue on the next page)

(7) Explain how this action would improve the Library's service to the community and if it aligns with the Program Policy approved by the Library Board.

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(8) Are there any resources you would suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

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(10) What programs would you suggest as possible replacements for this program?

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I acknowledge that once submitted, this form becomes a matter of public record per Wis. Stat. § 19.32

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### Staff Use Only

Received by:	Date:
Received by Library Director:	Date:
Collection Developer Review and/or Committee:	Date:
Decision Sent to Requester:	Date:

Staff Action: