

## North Valley Public Library

### Exhibit Space and Bulletin Board Policy

Approved by Library Board 7/19/06

In keeping with the North Valley Public Library's mission to *provide a commons environment that addresses the need of people to meet and interact with others in the community*, the library offers a bulletin board and space for individuals and local agencies to post information about events and services.

The following individuals and organizations are authorized to post items on the library's bulletin boards and display areas:

- a. local, state and federal government
- b. educational institutions
- c. non-profit organizations
- d. community organizations and clubs
- e. Missoula and Bitterroot-based individuals offering services (at the staff's discretion)
- f. Local for-profit companies (at the staff's discretion)

Individuals and organizations wishing to post materials in the library must first get permission from library staff. Library staff members will initial and date all postings. At least once a month, library staff will remove all outdated or unauthorized postings.

The library endorses the American Library Association's document entitled "Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards: **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**" (see appendix A).

A patron may question the suitability of a particular item on display at the library. In such a case, the patron will be asked to complete a Request for Consideration of Library Resources form (see appendix B).

The form will be reviewed by the library director and a committee of no less than three library staff members will meet to consider the patron's request.

A decision will be made about the suitability of the item for the library's exhibit space or bulletin board based on the criteria outlined in this document. The patron will be informed in writing within 30 days of the library's decision to retain, remove, or reclassify the item in question.

If the patron disagrees with the library's decision, s/he may appeal to the library board, who will consider the request using the same criteria outlined in this policy. The library board will inform the patron of their decision in writing within thirty days. The library board's decision will be final.

Requests for Reconsideration of Library Resources will be retained by the library for five years after the date of the request.

## Appendix A – Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

### Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Libraries often provide exhibit spaces and bulletin boards. The uses made of these spaces should conform to the [Library Bill of Rights](#): Article I states, "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation." Article II states, "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Article VI maintains that exhibit space should be made available "on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use."

In developing library exhibits, staff members should endeavor to present a broad spectrum of opinion and a variety of viewpoints. Libraries should not shrink from developing exhibits because of controversial content or because of the beliefs or affiliations of those whose work is represented. Just as libraries do not endorse the viewpoints of those whose work is represented in their collections, libraries also do not endorse the beliefs or viewpoints of topics that may be the subject of library exhibits.

Exhibit areas often are made available for use by community groups. Libraries should formulate a written policy for the use of these exhibit areas to assure that space is provided on an equitable basis to all groups that request it.

Written policies for exhibit space use should be stated in inclusive rather than exclusive terms. For example, a policy that the library's exhibit space is open "to organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, or charitable activities" is an inclusive statement of the limited uses of the exhibit space. This defined limitation would permit religious groups to use the exhibit space because they engage in intellectual activities, but would exclude most commercial uses of the exhibit space.

A publicly supported library may designate use of exhibit space for strictly library-related activities, provided that this limitation is viewpoint neutral and clearly defined.

Libraries may include in this policy rules regarding the time, place, and manner of use of the exhibit space, so long as the rules are content neutral and are applied in the same manner to all groups wishing to use the space. A library may wish to limit access to exhibit space to groups within the community served by the library. This practice is acceptable provided that the same rules and regulations apply to everyone, and that exclusion is not made on the basis of the doctrinal, religious, or political beliefs of the potential users.

The library should not censor or remove an exhibit because some members of the community may disagree with its content. Those who object to the content of any exhibit held at the library should be able to submit their complaint and/or their own exhibit proposal to be judged according to the policies established by the library.

Libraries may wish to post a permanent notice near the exhibit area stating that the library does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of exhibits or exhibitors. Libraries that make bulletin boards available to public groups for posting notices of public interest should develop criteria for the use of these spaces based on the same considerations as those outlined above. Libraries may wish to develop criteria regarding the size of material to be displayed, the length of time materials may remain on the bulletin board, the frequency with which material may be posted for the same group, and the geographic area from which notices will be accepted.

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Adopted July 2, 1991, by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 2004.

## Appendix B – Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form

### Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources

The board of trustees of the North Valley Public Library has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to the library staff under the supervision of the library director, and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to the Library Director, North Valley Public Library, 208 Main St., Stevensville MT 59870

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent self? \_\_\_\_ Organization? \_\_\_\_

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_ Textbook \_\_\_\_ Video \_\_\_\_ Display

\_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_ Library Program \_\_\_\_ Audio Recording

\_\_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_\_ Electronic information/network (please specify)

\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
3. Have you examined the entire resource?
4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)
5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?