

## **Rusk County Community Library, Ladysmith**

### **PROGRAM POLICY:**

Rusk County Community Library -- Board Policies      Programming Policy

A "program" is a planned interaction between the library staff and the program participants for the purpose of promoting library materials, facilities, or services, as well as offering the community an informational, entertaining, or cultural experience. Programming includes such activities as story times, films, and activities, summer library program, speaker, and book or author discussion groups. The board, in conjunction with the library director, will establish a budget and goals for programming to facilitate the effective implementation of this service.

### ***CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF LIBRARY-INITIATED PROGRAMS***

The Library initiates programs and may also co-sponsor programs with community groups. Selection of library-initiated and co-sponsored programs must be flexible and broad. Library-coordinated and produced programs promote the library's goals of public information, education, recreation and cultural programming. In these programs the library presents a range of points of view and does not advocate a single approach.

-Library-initiated programs will be tested by the following standards:

1. Reliability of information
2. Timeliness
3. Popular interest
4. Integrity of presenters

### ***PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING A CITIZEN'S COMPLAINT***

#### ***CONCERNING LIBRARY-INITIATED PROGRAMS***

1. To receive consideration by the library, all complaints concerning library-initiated programs (including complaints from Library Board members) must be made in writing and address the following points:
  - a. Specifically, what is it about the program that causes concern to the complainant (speaker, performer, subject matter, location, etc.)?
  - b. Why does this cause concern to the complainant?
  - c. What action does the complainant suggest?
  - d. Did complainant attend the program?
2. The library-initiated programs about which a complaint has been made will not be canceled, nor be restricted in any way, before final action is taken by the Library Board on the complaint, unless the Library Director finds substantive justification for the program to be delayed or canceled until further investigation can be completed.

3. Within 30 days of the filing of the written complaint, the person planning the program will confer with the library director, then send a written response to the complainant, explaining in detail their decision regarding the complaint. The response will also inform the complainant that he or she may appeal the decision within 30 days.
4. Within 30 days following the written response, if it is the desire of the complainant, the Library Director will review the complaint and submit the complaint, along with his or her recommendations, to the Library Board.
5. Within 90 days of the filing of the written complaint the Library Board will review the complaint and take final action on it. In making its decision regarding the complaint the Library Board will employ all of the Criteria for Selection of Library-Initiated Programs listed above, along with the American Library Association's statements entitled "Library Bill of Rights" and "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource
6. The complainant will be notified in writing of the Library Board's decision in the matter.

***PROGRAMS NOT INITIATED OR SPONSORED BY THE LIBRARY***

The Library's "Policy on Meeting Rooms and Study Rooms" and the "Library Bill of Rights" govern programs at the library that are not initiated or sponsored by the library.

The Library Board of Trustees subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights, adopted January 23, 1980. Article VI states:

*Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.*

## Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for accessing information, education, and recreation. Library-initiated programs include, but are not limited to, lectures, displays, exhibits, community forums, performing and visual arts, participatory workshops, technology programming, creative learning programming, wellness programs, story times, continuing education, fairs and conventions, book clubs, discussion groups, demonstrations, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes. Library-initiated programs may take place onsite at the library, off-site at other locations, or online, and may be provided by library workers, volunteers, or partners. Libraries may also choose to promote their programs, services, and resources through displays and digital signs.

Library-initiated programs and displays utilize library worker expertise for community interests, collections, services, facilities, and providing access to information and information resources. They introduce users and potential users to library resources and the library's role as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Libraries should not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure they have equitable access to library resources. Library-initiated programs and displays should comply with all applicable laws, including the standards and requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act and state and local disability accessibility guidelines. If a program is held in a location not controlled by the library, the library should assure that the space is accessible to all users. If users overflow designated event areas during library events, libraries should secure accessible public spaces (e.g., ramps, pathways, and emergency exit routes) to ensure access and safety for everyone. Reasonable accommodations should also be made to have interpretation or real-time captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing at library-initiated programs when needed or requested by library users.

Libraries should actively seek to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in the communities served. Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those who speak and read languages other than English, including advertising for such events.

Concerns, questions, or complaints about library-initiated programs and displays are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources. These policies should apply equally to all people, including, but not limited to, library users, staff, and members of the governing body. The policies should set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Programs should not be canceled because of the ideas or topics of the program or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, nor should library workers censor or remove displays because someone may disagree with the content. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, any more than the purchase of resources for the library collection or curation of a display constitutes an endorsement of the resources content or its creator's views. Libraries should vigorously defend the First Amendment right of speakers and participants to express themselves.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries create programs for an intended age group or audience based on educational suitability and audience interest; however, restrictions on participation based solely on the gender, chronological age, or educational level of users violate this right and should be enforced only when not doing so would adversely impact the safety of the participants or interfere with the intended purpose of the program. Parents and guardians may restrict their own children's access to library programs, but no person or organization can interfere in others' access and participation. A parent or guardian may discuss their child's access to and participation in library programs with their child, but may not impose those decisions on others, including other people's children.

Libraries should not deny access to library-initiated programs if patrons owe the library for overdue fines or other fees. If libraries charge program participants for supplies used, they should make every effort to reduce economic barriers to participation.

Any collection and retention of program participants' personal information should be on an opt-in basis only. Photographs taken during a program cannot be used on any social media without permission of all identifiable individuals in the picture.