

Program and Event Policy

Philosophy and Scope

The Sparta Free Library plans and implements programs and events to support the mission and vision of the Sparta Free Library by providing users with opportunities for information, education, culture, and recreation. Library sponsored programs and events include, but are not limited to, speakers, community forums, discussion groups, demonstrations, displays, storytimes, parties, and live or media presentations.

Library programs are open to the public. Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. The Library's philosophy of open access to information and ideas extends to Library programming and program topics, speakers, and resources are not excluded from programs because of possible controversy.

Programs may be held on site at any Library agency, or off site. Any sales of products at Library programs must be approved by the Library and benefit the Library. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or of the views expressed by the presenter or the participants.

In addition, the Library draws upon other community resources in developing programs and actively partners with other community agencies, organizations, educational and cultural institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored public programs. Professional performers and presenters that reflect specialized or unique expertise may be hired for Library programs; performers and presenters will not be excluded from consideration because of their origin, background, or views, or because of possible controversy. Library staff who present programs do so as part of their regular job and are not hired as outside contractors for programming.

Responsibility for Program and Event Development and Implementation

In planning and carrying out its sponsored programs, the Sparta Free Library aspires to meet the standards set forth in the Library Bill of Rights. The Library also recognizes that the resources available for the sponsorship of programs are limited and the selection, planning, and implementation of Library sponsored programs ultimately rests with the discretion of the library director and the Board of Library Trustees. This responsibility is largely shared with the other professional librarians on staff.

Sparta Free Library's director and professional staff utilize staff expertise, collections, services, and facilities in developing and delivering programming. The following criteria are used in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Availability of program space
- Treatment of content for intended audience
- Presentation quality
- Presenter background/qualifications in content area
- Budget
- Historical or educational significance
- Connection to other community programs, exhibitions or events
- Relation to Library collections, resources, exhibits and programs

A program does not have to meet all criteria to be acceptable.

Requests for Reconsideration

The Sparta Free Library recognizes that some programs or events are controversial and that any given program or event may offend some patrons. Selection or presentation of programs and events will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely based on the principles stated in this policy.

Responsibility for the program and event attendance of children and teens rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection or presentation of programs and events will not be inhibited by the possibility of child or teen attendance.

The Sparta Free Library selects and presents programs and events using established criteria and full consideration of varying age groups and backgrounds of patrons. Patrons who wish to continue their requests for review of a Library program may submit the Request for Reconsideration of Library Program form. Requests for review of programs will be considered in the same manner as requests for reconsideration of library materials.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Programs and Events Procedure

To request that a program or event be reconsidered, a patron must:

- Have viewed, seen, heard, or experienced at least part of the program or event
- Have reviewed the Sparta Free Library Program and Event Policy
- Complete the Request for Reconsideration of Library Program form, which is available at the library and on the library website. Only completed forms will be reviewed by the library.

Individual and series programs and events may only be reviewed once every 5 years, unless substantial content changes have been made.

Process:

1. Submitted forms will be considered by the Library Leadership Team (Director, Adult Services Librarian, and Youth Services Librarian). Requests will be reviewed in relation to the library's mission and program and event policy. The Library Director will reply to the complainant within thirty days of receipt of the request.
2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complainant may request that a review of the Request for Reconsideration be done by a Review Committee consisting of two members of the Library Board, two programming coordinators, and one staff member. The Review committee will present their recommendation to the Library Board. The Library Board will make the final decision regarding the material based on this committee's recommendation.

No program or event that has had its appropriateness challenged shall be postponed or cancelled except upon the recommendation of the Review Committee, with the concurrence of the Library Director, or upon formal action of the Library Board of Trustees when the recommendation of the Review Committee is appealed to it.

Policies/Documents referenced during creation:

Medina County District Library Program Policy

Oak Park Public Library Program Policy

Cuyahoga Fall Library Program Policy

The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Program Policy

Approved by Library Board 3/4/19