

Cranbury Public Library

Resolution 2024-2

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE CRANBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY TO BE A BOOK SANCTUARY

WHEREAS, the freedom to read is a human right, constitutionally protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, and individuals have the right to free inquiry and the equally important right to form their own opinions; and

WHEREAS, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”; and

WHEREAS, books do not require readers to agree with topics or themes but instead allow readers to explore and engage with differing perspectives to form and inform their own views; and

WHEREAS, the Cranbury Public Library strives to address the needs of all segments of Cranbury’s heterogeneous community for timely information that will prepare library users to address the issues that impact them and the community; and

WHEREAS, the Cranbury Public Library’s collection represents diverse points of view both to reflect the community and to support the free exchange of contrasting views and ideas that is critical to a democracy; and

WHEREAS, the Cranbury Public Library provides that access without endorsing or agreeing with every idea in circulation; and

WHEREAS, it is contrary to a democratic spirit and the free exchange of ideas to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author; and

WHEREAS, it is contrary to a democratic spirit and the free exchange of ideas to label, judge, censor, and/or segregate works as subversive or dangerous and inhibit public access to controversial material; and

WHEREAS, book bans often seek to impose restrictions based on the political, ideological, or cultural preferences of the individuals calling for book bans; and

WHEREAS, over the last several years, there has been a significant increase in censorship activities in the United States resulting in books being removed from library shelves and schools; and

WHEREAS, legislation passed, bills introduced, and executive orders implemented in numerous states seek to ban books and access to books, and are often targeted at books written by and about LGBTQ+ persons and people of color, outsiders, newcomers and people from marginalized backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, the Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees declare their opposition to the banning of books in any form; and

WHEREAS; the Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees affirms a diversity of experiences and perspectives and recognizes the equal humanity and dignity of all persons; and

WHEREAS the Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees embrace the freedom to read as a cornerstone of democracy; and

WHEREAS, the Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees recommits to its 2017 endorsement of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and their Freedom to Read statement; and

WHEREAS, the Cranbury Public Library has a material selection process that is fair, deliberative, equitable, and accessible to the public as set forth in its Collection Development and Maintenance Policy adopted by the Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees declare that the Cranbury Public Library is a book sanctuary library.

As a book sanctuary library, the Cranbury Public Library shall be a place to: borrow and read challenged books; make endangered books accessible pursuant to the standards of quality and diversity that constitute the Cranbury Public Library's own collection policy; host programs and events that may include banned and challenged books; and educate others on the history of book banning and burning.



Andre Mento

President, Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees



Kirstie Venanzi

Vice-President, Cranbury Public Library Board of Trustees