



**Michael Koszalka**  
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August 31, 2021

Ms. Barbara Herbst  
7128 W. Kinnickinnic River Parkway  
West Allis, WI 53219

Dear Ms. Herbst,

At its monthly meeting held August 25, 2021, the West Allis Public Library Board of Trustees addressed the letter you forwarded to Board President Michelle Wadewitz dated July 31, 2021. Board members wish to thank you for taking the time to provide input relating to your experience involving a damaged book. Likewise, I appreciate the opportunity to explain the circumstances from the standpoint of the Library and the policy guiding book replacement costs.

Understandably, the issue you raise about replacing the damaged book with one that was less costly than the amount charged – on the surface – makes sense. However, the quality of print materials that the Library purchases, is typically superior in comparison to many books available through a book store or via Amazon (for example). The books we circulate often include reinforced binding so that the item may tolerate the diverse conditions that naturally involve numerous checkouts to our patrons. These Library Bound editions usually cost more than what customers pay for the same title at a book store or online. Additionally, a \$2.00 processing fee is added to each replacement to cover the charge associated with re-cataloging the item.

While we did our best to devise a default price that accompanies the cost to replace a damaged book, we also realize that each damaged book and situation is unique. We are grateful that you took responsibility for the damaged item and paid the replacement costs, but would have welcomed the opportunity to have spoken to you in person while you visited the Library that day, so that we could have heard the circumstances involved and perhaps worked out a compromise payment.

I hope that the above explanation helps shed some light on the fees associated with books in our collection, and the reason you were charged the \$19.99 replacement cost. I want to specifically thank you for your many years being a loyal and trusted user of the West Allis Public Library, and sincerely hope that this experience does not deter you from visiting the Library in the future.

If I may be of further assistance or answer other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My direct phone number is (414) 302-8534 and my email address is [mkoszalka@westalliswi.gov](mailto:mkoszalka@westalliswi.gov).

Sincerely,

Michael Koszalka  
Library Director

C: West Allis Public Library Board of Trustees



