



THE ROLES OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

TRUSTEES

- Have legal authority over the library's policies, rules, and regulations for library.
- Control all funds.
- Oversee planning, fundraising, and liability protection.
- Evaluate the library's performance.
- Hire and evaluate the library director.
- Prosecute those who steal or damage library property.
- Contract for cooperative services.
- Establish fee structures for non-resident users.
- Accumulate excess funds for library construction, enhancements, and renovation.



ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Appropriate funds for the library or levy a special library tax.
- Appoint members of the library board and fill vacancies.
- May hold property on behalf of the library.
- May exercise eminent domain on behalf of the library.
- May purchase or lease lands and/or buildings for library purposes.

Trustees have a legal responsibility to maintain a free public nonsectarian library for all residents in the library's service area.

The primary responsibility of a trustee is the well-being of the library.

TO EACH HIS OWN

Elected and other municipal officials decide what is best for the library through the lens of what is best for the community.

Trustees focus on what's best for the community through the lens of what's best for the library.

* NEITHER ELECTED OFFICIALS NOR TRUSTEES

- Manage the day-to-day business of the library.
 - Hire, fire, or evaluate library personnel, apart from the director.
- Receive preferential treatment as library patrons.



GOOD TRUSTEES

- Respect the important role libraries play in the life of the community.
- Participate in orientation.
- Attend meetings regularly.
- Devote the time and attention required.
- Share their skills on committees.
- ⊙ Understand the community and its needs.
- ⊙ Stay current on library trends and issues.
- ⊙ Exercise discretion and respect confidentiality outside board meetings.
 - Bring serious issues to the library director's attention so that the director can address them.
- ⊙ Put personal agendas aside when making decisions.
- ⊙ Actively support the implementation of board decisions. !!!
 - Advocate for the library with elected officials and in the community.
 - Avoid conflicts of interest.
- ⊙ Understand their role and how it differs from the role of the library director.
- ⊙ Have an open mind and respect differing viewpoints.
 - Respect diversity.
 - Advocate for equitable pay for library personnel.
- ⊙ Understand and respect the role of the director.
- ⊙ Work cooperatively with other board members.
 - Focus on a secure future for the library.

- ⊙ Are open to new ideas for programs and services.
 - Cultivate connections that will benefit the library.
 - Actively support fundraising.
- ⊙ Work to raise the library's visibility and improve public library services.

THE BEST TRUSTEES

- ⊙ Applaud the library's successes.
 - Attend social, fundraising, educational, and other important functions in and for the library.
 - Make themselves and their particular expertise available to the director, when needed.
- Are avid library users themselves!

POLITICS HAVE THEIR PLACE...BUT NOT ON THE LIBRARY BOARD!

While political bodies may appoint trustees, once trustees assume their responsibilities on the board, they cease to represent partisan political interests. As trustees, they serve solely in the best interests of the library. As champions for the library, trustees separate their decision-making from external politics except to take into account political realities as they influence the library's prospects.