



Trustee of the Library Board–Job Description and Responsibilities

Our Mission: The Fairport Public Library, using both its resources and those available through the Monroe County Library System, provides equal access to educational, informational, and recreational resources for the residents of the Fairport Central School District with professional, courteous, and friendly service. The library is an integral and cooperative part of the community, promoting the concept of life-long learning while maintaining sound fiscal management.

Purpose: To advise, govern, oversee policy and direction, and assist with the leadership and advocacy of the Fairport Public Library so as to support the library’s mission and needs.

Meetings and time commitment:

- The Library Board of Trustees generally meets on the second Tuesday of each month usually at 6:30pm. Meetings typically last 1 to 2 hours.
- Participate on two standing committees of the Board, and serve on ad-hoc committees as necessary.
- Committees of the board meet 6 or more times a year, dependent upon their respective work agenda. Some committees meet more often.
- Special Board meetings or workshops are called as needed.

Length of term: Ordinarily, elected terms are for five years. However, in the case of a midterm vacancy, the appointed trustee will hold office for the unexpired term.

Trustee Duties and Responsibilities: The New York State Board of Regents, the institution responsible for the chartering and oversight of education corporations in New York, describes the duties of trustees as those of “**Care, Loyalty and Obedience.**” All actions must be taken with these principles in mind.

The **responsibilities** of trustees are few in number but broad in scope. They are:

- Create and develop the mission of the library;
- Regularly plan and evaluate the library's service program based on community needs;
- Select, hire and regularly evaluate a qualified library director;
- Secure adequate funding for the library's service program;
- Exercise fiduciary responsibility for the use of public and private funds;
- Adopt policies and rules regarding library governance and use;
- Maintain a facility that meets the library’s and community’s needs;
- Promote the library in the local community and in society in general;
- Conduct the business of the library in an open and ethical manner in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and with respect for the institution, staff and public.

**Members of the board share these responsibilities while acting in the interest of the Fairport Public Library. Each member is expected to make recommendations based on his or her experience and vantage point in the community.*

Checklist for Effective Library Trustees:

- Be active and informed about library matters in general and of those affecting your library. Ask questions of the director and study the issues.
- Attend all board meetings and be prepared to participate knowledgeably.
- Question issues until you understand. Don't be reluctant to vote "No" on a proposal you don't understand or are uncomfortable about.
- Be a team player and treat your fellow board members with respect.
- Support board decisions even if you disagree. A democracy works by the rule of the majority. Seek reconsideration in the future if circumstances change.
- Understand the roles of all involved—the board, director, staff, Friends, and patrons. Respect all opinions; whether you agree or not.
- Conflicts of interest by any board member are the concern of all members of the board. A trustee or family member may not receive, or appear to receive, any gain, tangible or intangible, in dealing with the library.
- Advocate for the library in every manner possible.
- Support competitive salaries in order to attract and retain qualified staff. Appropriate compensation is a direct measure of the commitment and respect a community has for the institution and its staff.
- Annually evaluate the board, individually and as a whole. This process has proven to be an effective means to improve intra-board communication and bring focus to the tasks at hand.
- Understand and respect the role of the director as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the library corporation and support the director's administrative decisions.
- Be alert to community concerns that can be addressed by the library's mission, objectives, and programs.
- Help communicate and promote the library's mission and programs to the community.
- Become familiar with the library's finances, budget, and financial/resource needs.
- Understand the policies and procedures of the Fairport Public Library.
- Lastly, it's about the Library, not about you. Always remember that your primary job is to provide the highest quality library service possible for your community, not the cheapest.

For more in-depth information about a trustee's governance role and responsibilities, please reference the *Statement on the Governance Role of a Trustee*

http://www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement_governance.html and *NYS Library Trustee Handbook*: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/handbook/handbook.pdf>