



Trustee Ethics and Responsibilities Policy

ETHICS

As a member of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District Board of Trustees, I will support the mission of a public library in a free society. More specifically, I will:

- Work to ensure that the public has equal access to information, both as a Constitutional right and as the best way to sustain a democratic way of life.
- Resist efforts by groups or individuals to censor library materials.
- Support the acquisition and maintenance of a complete and balanced library collection.
- Support District efforts to meet the library and information needs of all patrons.
- Maintain independent judgment without regard to personal benefit, special interests, or influence of partisan political groups.
- Protect the privacy of library users.
- Keep all library policies free of racism, sexism, and other bigotries.
- Conduct work at the policy and planning level, understanding that implementation of District policies and plans is the responsibility of the Library Executive Director.
- Follow legal and ethical practices in making decisions.
- Recognize that authority rests with the whole Board assembled in public meetings and make no personal statements or promises, nor take any private action, which may compromise the Board or the District.
- Support the actions taken by a majority of the Board and clearly differentiate personal opinions from Board decisions.
- Keep confidential any matters discussed in executive session.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Trustees of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District is responsible for providing and maintaining quality public library services for the citizens of the regional library district as set forth in RCW 27.12 and any other applicable laws. To set direction, monitor and review library performance, and to fulfill the obligations of the public trust, the Board:

- Selects, hires and evaluates the Library Executive Director who is responsible for library operations on behalf of the Board.
- Focuses on policy and planning level work.

- Adopts mission and goals statements that form the framework for all library operations and long range planning. The adopted mission and goals statements are administered by the Library Executive Director.
- Works with the Library Executive Director and other appropriate officials for the library to receive adequate funding.
- Adopts and monitors an annual budget as required by state law.
- Reviews and adopts policies necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the library and provision of quality library service; does not transfer or delegate its authority to set or enforce such policies to any other agency.
- Executes responsibilities as defined in adopted policies.
- Monitors and reviews district-wide library planning to ensure that such planning considers, but is not limited to:
 - significant changes in the service area
 - technological advances within the field
 - significant developments in library service within the state, region, and nation
 - development of other services within the regional library district
 - planning efforts of other organizations within the district
 - legislative issues
 - financial conditions
 - growth projections
 - facilities development
 - principles of efficient and effective provision of quality library service
- Listens to concerns of the public, refers complaints to the Library Executive Director, and acts on such complaints at a public meeting only after they have been reviewed by the Library Executive Director.
- Maintains up-to-date bylaws.
- Individual members of the Board agree to:
 - Attend Board meetings regularly and, when attendance is impossible, notify the Library Executive Director or Board Chair.
 - Read the distributed materials before each meeting.
 - Participate constructively in the decision-making process.
 - Speak on behalf of the Board when appropriate.
 - Keep abreast of important developments in library trends and practices.
 - Participate in Board development activities.
 - Become familiar with national, state, and local laws and with rules and regulations regarding libraries.
 - Support and promote the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District as an indispensable part of a livable community.

POLICY HISTORY

- Adopted: June 11, 1992 as “Code of Ethics for Library Trustees”
- Policy name revised to "Ethics, Code for Library Trustees" for easier indexing, 2/10/03
- Policy revised and combined with “Role of the Board Policy”: April 9, 2007
- Reviewed March 9, 2009
- Revised and reaffirmed April 13, 2009