



Trustee Ethics and Responsibilities Policy

PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District (FVRL) 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:

TRUSTEE 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. Trustees must:
- 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.
- Be prepared to support the efforts of library staff in resisting censorship.
- Support the acquisition and maintenance of a complete and balanced library collection.
- Keep confidential any matters discussed in executive session.
- 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 discrimination.
- 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 on behalf of the Board, nor take any private action, which may compromise the Board or the District.
- Respect the actions taken by a majority of the Board and clearly differentiate personal opinions from Board decisions.
- Avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the institution, and disqualify themselves immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Select, hire, and evaluate a competent and qualified Executive Director.

- Conduct work at the policy and planning level, by reviewing and adopting policies as necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the District and provision of quality library service.
- Adopt mission and goal statements that form the framework for all library operations and long-range planning for FVRL.
- Understand and accept that implementation of Board actions is the responsibility of the Executive Director.
- Understand the financial needs of the District.
- Fulfill mandated fiduciary responsibilities by adopting and monitoring the District's annual budget and monthly expenditures as required by state law.
- Does not transfer or delegate its authority to set or enforce District policies to any other agency.
- Execute responsibilities as defined in adopted policies.
- Listen to the concerns of the public, refer complaints to the Executive Director, and act on such complaints at a public meeting only after they have been reviewed by the Board and the Executive Director.
- Monitor and evaluate districtwide 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

TRUSTEE COMMITMENTS

- Attend Board meetings regularly, or if attendance is impossible, notify the Executive Director or Board Chair in advance.
- 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 libraries of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District as an indispensable part of a livable community.

RESOURCES

Relevant policies

- [Asset Management](#)
- [Board of Trustees Bylaws](#)
- [Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#)
- [Electronic Signatures Policy](#)
- [Fiscal Management Policy](#)
- [Gifts and Recognition Policy](#)
- [Placement of New Library Facilities Policy](#)
- [Public Liability Policy](#)
- [Purchasing and Procurement Policy](#)
- [Travel and Subsistence Policy](#)

References

- [RCW 23.03.085](#)
- [RCW 24.03.090](#)
- [RCW 27.04.055](#)
- [RCW 27.12](#)
- [RCW 42.30](#)

HISTORY

Approved and adopted by the FVRL Board of Trustees:

June 11, 1992 as Code of Ethics for Library Trustees

Policy name revised to "Ethics, Code for Library Trustees" for easier indexing, February 10, 2003

Policy revised and combined with Role of the Board Policy: April 9, 2007

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