

Montana State Library

SERVICES TO LIBRARIES

Trustee Manual

What Does a Trustee Do?

A trustee knows

the organization of the library Board

the library services and resources available

who uses the library and who does not use it

information needs and interests of the community

how to work effectively in a group

the services available at the State Library

national library trends, standards and developments

library terminology

A trustee attends

every Board and assigned committee meeting

federation meetings

professional meetings such as Montana Library Association conferences

other local meetings and workshops relating to library business

A trustee plans

for future growth and priorities of the library

library policy

active community awareness programs

orientation for new Board members

A trustee supports

the library and the director

the local governing body

the community

local, state and federal legislation related to libraries.

A trustee advocates

to articulate the library's needs

to seek funding

to promote the library

to develop good personal relations with local, state and federal government representatives

to make the Board and library visible in the community

for the community to receive excellent library service

A trustee remembers

the library Board acts only as a whole

an individual trustee may act on behalf of the library only when authorized to do so by the Board

the Board does not run the day-to-day operations of the library

Golden Rules for Board Members

Leave the actual management of the library to the director. It is the director's responsibility to select books, employ the staff and supervise day-to-day operations.

After a policy or rule is adopted by the majority vote of the library Board, do not criticize or re-voice your opposition publicly.

Respect confidential information. Do not divulge information regarding future Board actions or plans until such action is officially taken.

Observe any publicity and information policies of the Board and library. Do not give information individually but refer requests to the library director or appropriate trustee.

Do not hold Board meetings without the director.

Treat the director and staff members in an objective manner. Under no circumstances should you listen to grievances of staff members or treat individual problems on your own. The director is in charge of the staff and has administrative control up to the point where a grievance is presented to the library Board.

Complaints from the public are the director's responsibility. Complaints submitted directly to the Board or an individual trustee should be referred to the director. Continued problems should be taken up at the Board meeting only if policy revision is necessary or legal re are involved.

All rules and policies must be approved by a quorum of the Board at a regular meeting.

Assume your full responsibility as a Board member. If you are unable to attend meetings regularly and complete work delegated to you, consider resigning so an active member can be appointed.

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