

# Trustee Board Training

## Focus: Trustee Duties



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## Why Do Public Libraries Exist? VSA Title 22

### Chapter 3, § 67

(a) The General Assembly declares it to be the policy of the State of Vermont that **free public libraries are essential** to the general enlightenment of citizens in a democracy and that every citizen of the State of Vermont should have access to the educational, cultural, recreational, informational, and research benefits of a free public library.

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# What is the Primary Duty of the Trustees?

Well-Being of the Library

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## Primary Responsibility of Trustees

Well-Being of the Library

- Understand the community and its needs
- Understand the law & avoid Conflict of Interest
- Exercise discretion and respect confidentiality outside board meetings
- Put personal agendas aside when making decisions
- Plan for the future: Resilience

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## OVERSIGHT



Source:  
[https://www.flickr.com/photos/nicholas\\_t/10250370544/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nicholas_t/10250370544/)

## DAILY MANAGEMENT



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/amon-ra123m5/5624590992/>

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## Library Board Basic Tasks - Oversight

- Policy & Bylaws
- Advocate
- Strategic/long-range planning
- Promote & evaluate library
- Hire, fire, & evaluate a director
- Budget & funding sources
- Building/Grounds Safety & Vibe
- Community Link



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## Director Basic Tasks – Daily Management

- Daily operations & budget management
- Hire, train, supervise, & fire staff
- Connect public with information
- Select materials
- Track materials & members
- Implement policies
- Keep & report statistics
- Inform board of trends & local implications
- Act as spokesperson at meetings & with Press



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## What About the Friends?

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## How Do We Establish a Good Working Relationship with the Friends?

- Separate entity from the library (usually)
- Establish MOU between Friends and Trustees
- Differentiate types of fundraising done by each group & help public understand
- Engage the Friends in Strategic Planning
- Set up lines of open & honest communication and set clear expectations
- Express sincere appreciation

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## Ongoing Trustee Duties

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## Ongoing Trustee Duties

Prepare for board meetings; attend & participate



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mmmavocado/10925542573>

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## Ongoing Trustee Duties

Get to know the legal stuff: State & Federal Laws



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/pamwood707/5646757752>

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## Ongoing Trustee Duties

# Support Library Services: Visit & Observe



Source: San Jose Public Library  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sanjoselibrary/31234520260>

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## Ongoing Trustee Duties

# Talk About the Library in the Community



Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/90664717@N00/2686040967>

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## Ongoing Trustee Duties

Keep open to the future: read, think, listen

Source:  
<http://www.ala.org/tools/librariestransform/future/engage/TrendCards>

LIBRARY OF THE FUTURE  
 CENTER FOR THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIES

**TREND CARDS**

Each card includes information about the trend and considerations for why it might matter for libraries.

The trends are color-coded into broad categories of change:

- SOCIETY
- TECHNOLOGY
- EDUCATION
- THE ENVIRONMENT
- POLITICS & GOVERNMENT
- ECONOMICS
- DEMOGRAPHICS

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## Best Practices for Library Trustees

Source:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/the-seo-company/8114460868>

**BEST PRACTICE**  
 STRAIGHT AHEAD

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# Provide Orientation for New Board Members



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# Understand & Follow Open Meeting Law



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# Stick to Your Meeting Agenda



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# Allow All Trustees to Have a Voice in Meetings



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# Commit Time Outside of Board Meetings



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# Empower the Director to Manage the Day-to-Day Operations of the Library



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# Provide a Unified Vision & Mission



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# Have a Unified Voice in the Community



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# Represent the Library in Your Community



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## The Work of Library Trustees

- Vital to Our Democracy
- Vital to Our Communities
- Vital to Our Citizens

Thank you for the work you do!

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## Contact Me

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