

Dane County Library Board of Trustees/Job Description

References: Dane County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 15.27 (1)
Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43.58

Legal Responsibilities

Members of the library board are mandated by Wisconsin law to control

- Library funds
- Library property
- Library expenditures
- The selection and hiring of a library director, the creation of other staff positions and the assignment of duties

Members of the library board are required to maintain open records and hold open meetings under the requirements of Chapter 19 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Fiduciary Responsibilities

Public library trustees are public officers and therefore have a responsibility to:

- Obey federal, state, county, and local laws as they relate to libraries
- Conform practices to board by-laws;
- Manage all library assets wisely;
- Recognize that the library's best interests must prevail over any individual interest;
- Attend board meetings regularly, participate actively, and ensure adequate record keeping and documentation; and
- Be diligent in developing library plans and policies.

Examples of Duties

- Select, hire, and oversee a competent and qualified library director.
- Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation and program of the library.
- Develop a long range plan for commitment of resources to meet the changing needs of the service population. Prepare a statement of purpose, service goals, and objectives.
- Adopt an annual budget adequate for meeting goals and objectives; work actively for public and official support of the budget.
- Review monthly financial statements in context of the annual budget, approve reasonable expenditures that are within the approved budget, forward approved bills for payment by county.
- Negotiate, approve, and enter into contracts for services (for example, for interlibrary loan, interlibrary delivery, open access).
- Develop and maintain capital improvement plan.
- Establish, support, and participate in a planned public relations program. Interpret the library's role and plans to community boards and committees, governing officials, and the general public.

Qualifications for Library Trustees

- Willingness to devote time and talents
- Ability to think clearly, question objectively, and plan creatively
- Skill in communicating and cooperating
- Awareness and appreciation of the library's past, present, and future role in society
- Willingness to become more knowledgeable about library services and standards of operation within Dane County
- Ability to represent the Library Board in public forums, to act as an advocate for library services, and to reflect the concerns of the public at library board meetings.

Collectively, the Library Board of Trustees should represent:

- A diversity of interests
- A balance of age, race, sex, and socioeconomic levels
- A variety of occupational and personal backgrounds
- A diversity of geographic areas within Dane County