

**Geauga County Public Library
Operating Policy Manual**

SECTION: LIBRARY BOARD TRUSTEES
NUMBER: 250
EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 19, 2022

Members of the Geauga County Board of Trustees are appointed by County Commissioners or the Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. The library board, each year, may make a recommendation to the appointing authority. One library trustee is appointed each year. The library board may recommend re-appointment of a trustee.

Trustees are not employees of the library. They receive no remuneration for their work. Trustees may be reimbursed for attending library workshops and conferences, in the same manner as library employees.

The following are guidelines used by the library board to select candidates to recommend for appointment.

GUIDELINES FOR A RECOMMENDATION TO COMMISSIONERS OR JUDGE

1. Library trustees should be registered GCPL library cardholders. Further, trustees need recognition of the library's importance as a center of information, and its role in the promotion of reading and life-long learning. Nominees should have an interest in the function and purposes of public libraries, a commitment to the promotion and advancement of public library services, a determination to be a team member, a willingness to ask questions and offer suggestions, and a desire to be an ambassador for the public library. The library trustees must have a readiness to devote the time and effort to attend board and committee meetings and in carrying out all other duties of trusteeship.
2. In order to bring balance to the board, recommendations shall be based on such criteria as: diversity of interest, age, gender, socio-economic level, interest in public libraries, and experience or knowledge in a variety of fields.

Library trustees are required by law to be registered voters in Geauga County. Place of residence in the library district may also be an important factor in serving on the library board, but no trustee represents any geographical area or any other constituency. Library trustees need to be advocates for effective, efficient library service in the entire district.

3. The composition of the board may be balanced by including members with experience in such areas as: education, accounting, law, personnel, public relations, labor relations, parenting of school-age children, community service, public office or executive, library or business experience.
4. A commitment to the philosophy of intellectual freedom is essential in a board member.

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STATEMENT OF ETHICS

Trustees in the capacity of trust upon them shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity, and honor.

Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the situation.

It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.

Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally agree.

A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.

Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

Library trustees are bound by the Ohio Ethics Law chapter 102 and related statuses 2921.42, 2921.421, and 2921.43 of the Ohio Revised Code. Appropriate statutes are included in the Trustee Handbook provided to each trustee.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association and the Public Library Association, July 1985.

Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988 and approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January 1989.

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