

GOALS

Governance • Operation • Accountability • Leadership • Strategic Direction

Cutchogue New Suffolk Free Library's Principles of Stewardship

This document contains the best practices for the Library's governance. It describes in detail the expectations, obligations and fiduciary responsibilities of the Trustees as individual members and members of the collective Board of Trustees.

DUTY OF LOYALTY

1. Trustees are obligated to exercise an undivided and unselfish loyalty to the Library. Trustees must exercise their powers in the best interests of the Library, not their own interests or in the interests of another person or entity, even if charitable in nature.
2. Trustees should fully understand their legal and fiduciary responsibilities to the Library and the public.

DUTY OF OBEDIENCE

1. Trustees are obligated to further the mission of the Library they serve, to be faithful to its purposes and goals.
2. Trustees must act in conformity with the state and federal laws applicable to Library including the Open Meetings Law.
3. Trustees must adhere to the Library's Code of Ethics and all policies adopted by the Library that are applicable to them as individual Trustees or to the Board as a whole.

DUTY OF CARE

1. Trustees of the Library shall discharge their duties as a trustee, including those performed as a committee member:
 - a. In good faith;
 - b. With the care that an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances;
 - c. In a manner the Trustee reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the Library.

2. The duty of care entails a duty of reasonable inquiry. Trustees are obligated to ask questions and demand information to allow them to have sufficient information and understanding to make decisions.

BEST PRACTICES

1. Composition of the Board – In selecting Trustees the Board should:
 - a. Strive toward representation that reflects the diversity of the Library’s constituents and that includes individuals who value cultural sensitivity and equity.
 - b. Seek out individuals who can bring new ideas and community perspectives.
 - c. Include individuals with expertise in budget and financial management, investments, personnel, fundraising, public relations and marketing, governance, advocacy, and leadership, as well as people knowledgeable about the Library’s programs, or who have a special connection to its constituency.
2. Supporting Trustees – The Board should:
 - a. Establish an effective systematic process for educating Trustees to ensure that each person is equipped with the information needed to carry out the Board’s oversight functions, to act on legal, ethical and fiduciary responsibilities and to know what programs and activities the Board and Library offer.
 - b. Provide educational opportunities for Trustees to attend programs sponsored by SCLS and other organizations.
3. Individual Obligations – Trustees should:
 - a. Receive an orientation about their responsibilities as a Trustee.
 - b. Regularly attend all Board meetings and come fully prepared by reviewing monthly board packets in advance.
 - c. Understand and be able to articulate the Library’s mission and vision and describe its programs and activities to the public.
 - d. Be knowledgeable about the Library’s finances, fundraising and operating environment.
 - e. Actively serve on Board committees to facilitate the work of the Board and receive from the President a description of each committee’s jurisdiction.
 - f. Demonstrate a personal stake in the Library by donating time, assisting with fundraising, holding membership in the Friends of the Library and attending major Library functions.
 - g. Attend educational programs sponsored by SCLS and other organizations.

- ii. pursuit and attainment of the goals of the Library and the strategic plan,
 - iii. strengths and weaknesses of processes and procedures, and
 - iv. interactions with staff leadership.
- i. Hire, oversee, and annually evaluate the performance of the Library Director by:
 - i. defining the Director's responsibilities,
 - ii. undertaking a careful search to find the most qualified individual for the position,
 - iii. providing the ethical and professional support the Director needs to further the goals of the Library,
 - iv. conducting an annual review of the Director's performance in relation to the Strategic Plan and other operational and organizational responsibilities. This review will be done prior to changing the Director's compensation package (salaries, benefits and bonuses).
- j. Establish an organizational transition plan to maintain daily operations during the time of a change in executive or board leadership.