

Board of Trustees Policies

Duties and Responsibilities

A trustee is a person to whom property is legally committed in trust. Trustees of the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library are committed to both the physical properties and resources of the library and the services it provides. The library board has the authority and final responsibility to see that the library provides the best possible service to the community.

The responsibilities of trustees are:

- Create and develop the mission of the library and be prepared to articulate it clearly and concisely;
- Regularly plan and evaluate the library's service program based on community needs;
- Select, hire, and regularly evaluate a qualified library manager;
- Secure adequate, sustainable funding for the library's service program;
- Exercise fiduciary responsibility for the use of public funds;
- Adopt and regularly review policies and rules regarding library governance and use and defend them when challenged;
- Maintain a facility that meet's the library's and community's needs;
- Promote the library in the local community and in society in general; and
- Conduct the business of the library in an open and ethical manner in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, the ALA Core Values, and with respect for the institution, staff and public.

Board Member Election

New board members shall be recommended by current members and voted on during an executive session.

Board Member Oath of Office

New trustees must take the oath of office at the Ticonderoga Town Clerk's office within 30 days of appointment.

Board Member Resignation or Removal

The board believes that any citizen who is elected to the Board should do so with full knowledge of and appreciation of the investment in time, effort and dedication expected of all board members, and that the citizen's intent to serve reflects his or her intention of full term of office.

However, if for reason of health, change of domicile, or any other reason a member does decide to terminate service, the Board requests earliest possible written notification of intent to resign and the principal reason for resignation to the President of the Board so that the Board may plan appropriately for the continuity of board business.

A resignation becomes effective when officially accepted by the board at its regular meeting. The Board will announce the resignation and declare the vacancy at the meeting.

The board may remove a trustee from office through a vote in executive session for causes which may include, but shall not be limited to: absenteeism; conflict of interest; incapacitation, physical or mental; conviction of a criminal offense; incompetence or inattention to assigned duties.

Board Member Vacancies

Vacancies will be filled by appointment by the board of trustees. A board member so appointed as replacement will serve the remaining years of the term of office of the Board Member being replaced. Upon appointment by the board, the newly appointed board member will be sworn and seated immediately.

Board Member and Library Employee Ethics Policy

The Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library is dependent on the trust of its community to successfully achieve its mission. Therefore, it is crucial that all board members and employees conduct business on behalf of the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library with the highest level of integrity avoiding any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

Guiding Principles:

- Board members and employees should uphold the integrity of the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library and should perform their duties impartially and diligently.
- Board members and employees should not engage in discrimination of any kind including that based on age, race, class, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or belief system.
- Board members and employees should protect and uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in their use of the library's resources.
- Board members and employees should avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities or financial affairs are, or are likely, to be perceived as being in conflict with the best interests of the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library.
- Board members and employees should avoid having interests that may reasonably bring into question their position in a fair, impartial and objective manner.
- Board members and employees should not knowingly act in any way that would reasonably be expected to create an impression among the public that they are engaged in conduct that violates their trust as board members or employees.
- Board members and employees should not use or attempt to use their position with the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library to obtain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others.
- Board members and employees should not be swayed by any partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism.
- Board members and employees should not denigrate the organization or fellow board members or employees in a public arena.

Therefore:

To preserve and uphold the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library's reputation as an organization of unimpeachable integrity, each board member and employee will sign a "Conflict of Interest" statement and an "Ethics Statement" at the commencement of their service with the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library and annually thereafter.

Compliance:

If any board member appears to be in conflict of the "Guiding Principles" above, they will be asked to meet with the Board President to discuss the issue. The President will make a recommendation to the full Board based on the findings.

Board Member Education Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Board Education Policy is to comply with New York State Education Law Section 260-D which requires members of the library board of trustees, beginning January 1, 2023, to complete a minimum of two hours of board member education annually from a provider approved by the Commissioner of Education that addresses the financial oversight, accountability, fiduciary responsibilities and the general powers and duties of library board members.

Each member of the library board must demonstrate compliance with this policy by filing evidence with the library manager annually.

Administration

Each year board members are required to complete two hours of continuing education during their term on the library board.

Each board member shall demonstrate compliance with the requirements by filing with the library manager evidence of completion of board member education from an approved provider. Such evidence shall include one of the following:

1. Certificates of completion issued by one or more providers; or
2. A signed self-assurance of completion (included in this policy).
 - a. Such assurance shall identify the approved trustee education providers; a description of the format and content of the completed instruction activities, the date and time such member began and completed each instruction activity and an explanation of why a certificate of completion was not available from such approved providers.

Evidence of completion shall be submitted to the library manager by December 31st of each year.

Compliance will be tracked through the Library's Annual Report to the State.

Approved Providers

At the state level, board member education providers and activities (topics and formats) are approved by the New York State Library acting on behalf of the Commissioner of Education.

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In addition to pre-approving public library systems as board member education providers, the State library has delegated authority to public library systems to approve additional board member education providers and activities (topics and formats) for their member libraries.

Pre-approved providers:

- New York State Library/Division of Library Development
- Public Library Systems
- WebJunction
- New York Library Association
- Reference and Research Library Resources Councils
- Empire State Library Network
- Public Library Systems Directors Organization
- American Library Association including United for Libraries and other divisions.

Allowable Formats:

Trustee education may be delivered online or in person. The format of this education may include the following:

- Lectures
- Workshops
- Webinars
- Online courses
- State or national library association conferences

Costs of Continuing Education

Modest and reasonable costs incurred by a board member in complying with the board member education requirements may be reimbursed by the library in accordance with the Travel & Conference Policy. All continuing education requests for reimbursement must be pre-approved by the library board.

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Self-Assurance of Trustee Education Activity Completion

Beginning January 1, 2023, each library board member, elected or appointed, is required to complete a minimum of two hours of trustee education training annually.

Please use this self-assurance form if a certificate of completion is not available from the approved education activity provider. Please submit this form to the library manager. All forms will be kept on file for reporting on the State Annual Report. Board members should retain a copy of the form.

I give the following assurance:

I attended the following board member education activity:

Board Member Name: _____

Approved Provider: _____

Title of Activity: _____

Topic/Content: _____

Format (e.g. workshop, webinar, online course): _____

Date of Activity: _____

Contact Hours: _____

Board Member Signature

Date

Board Meetings

“Meetings” means the convening of the board as the governing body of the Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library in order to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter. The board has the authority to act only when a quorum is present at a duly called regular or special meeting.

Regular Meetings

All regular and special meetings of the board will be open to the public except as provided by law. All meetings will be conducted in compliance with state statutes. No meeting will be held at any place where discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age or national origin is practiced.

Regular meetings will be held on the fourth Thursday of each calendar month with the exception of November and December which is held the second Thursday of the month. The board may change the meeting schedule with proper notice. The purpose of each monthly meeting will be to conduct the regular business of the board. The board chairman will conduct the meeting, or in his or her absence, the vice chairman will conduct the meeting. If both are absent at the meeting, the trustee at the meeting with the longest period of service on the board will conduct the meeting.

Private or Social Meetings

Private or social meeting of a quorum for the purpose of making a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter are prohibited.

Adjourned Meeting

A board meeting may be recessed to another time if a quorum is not present or if additional business needs to be conducted at the regular time of adjournment. The time, date and place of adjourned meeting will be specified and appropriate notice given.

Special Board Meetings

Special board meeting may be convened by order of the chairman upon request of a majority of the board, the library manager, or by common consent of the board members. The board president or library manager will make the notification, stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which called at least 24 hours before such meeting is to be convened.

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The purpose of special meetings is to afford the board an opportunity to gather information and to discuss and fully explore various aspects of the library.

Emergency meetings may be called only in the event of an actual emergency. Notice appropriate under the circumstances will be given to the public and the minutes of the meeting will describe the nature of the emergency. No business other than that related to the emergency will be discussed at these meetings.

Executive Sessions

Executive sessions may be held during a regular, special or emergency meeting for any reason permitted by law. Meetings may be called solely for the purpose of executive session. Final action on an item discussed in executive session will be accomplished in open session.

A board member may request and, with consensus of the board, require the presiding officer to convene an executive session.

Executive sessions may be called to consider matters including the following:

- to consider employment matters relating to specific employees.
- to consider dismissal or discipline of any staff or board member.
- to discuss authority of persons

Action by the Board

- Any action required or permitted to be taken by the board or any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting if all members of the board or the committee consent in writing to the adoption of a resolution authorizing the action. The resolution and the written consents thereto by the members of the board or committee shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the board or committee. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the written consent of a member may be made electronically, where such consent is submitted via electronic mail, text, or other secured platform for electronic communications, along with information from which it can be reasonably determined that the transmission was authorized by such member.
- Any one or more members of the board or any committee thereof may participate in a meeting of such board or committee by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.

- Except as otherwise provided in this policy, the vote of a majority of the trustees present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is present at such time, shall be the act of the board.

Disposal of Surplus Library Material

Library property (i.e. print and non-print materials, equipment, supplies and/or any personal property) which in the judgment of the library manager is no longer necessary or useful for library purposes, may be disposed of in the following manner:

1. Books and non-print materials from the library's collection or gift materials may be discarded, sold, or, upon approval of the library manager, be given to local philanthropic, educational, cultural, government or other not-for-profit organization.
2. Any other personal property owned by the Board of Trustees having an individual value of less than \$100 may, at the discretion of the library manager, be discarded, turned in on new equipment, or made available for sale in accordance with the policies of the library's governing body.
3. No favoritism shall be shown to library employees, members of the Library Board or members of their immediate families who make bids on or purchase any library item declared surplus.

Patron Requests

The library welcomes patron interest in the collection and will seriously consider all requests that specific materials be acquired. The library is under no obligation to fill any particular request if not deemed suitable to the collection. Patron requests will be reviewed using the materials selection criteria in this policy. Any patron who would like to request a specific item for purchase should request it in writing and address it to the library manager.

Donations, Gifts and Memorials

The Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library is grateful for gifts, and its collection has been enriched by donations of materials as well as by contributions. Through donors, the library has been able to acquire materials which could not have been purchased otherwise.

Donation of Books and Audio Visual Materials

In accepting a gift of materials, the library reserves the privilege of deciding whether items donated should be added to the collection. Out of the many books and other materials which citizens so generously give, a considerable proportion can be used. Some materials cannot be used because any library material, though of value in itself, may be:

1. a duplicate of an item of which the library already has a sufficient number.
2. outdated-interesting but not of sufficient present reference or circulating value to the library.
3. in poor condition-which would not justify the expense of processing it, i.e. cataloging and preparing for circulation.

The material will be judged by the same standards of selection as those applied to the purchase of new materials.

The Ticonderoga Black Watch Memorial Library accepts gift books with the understanding that books which are useful to the library collection will be retained and other books disposed of in whatever manner the librarian deems best. The library reserves the right to interfile gifts with other collections on the same subject, so that all collections are organized and classified according to library standards for the best public service.

Gift Book Program

The library welcomes monetary contributions specifically for book purchases in memorium to or in honor of named individuals. In order that the library can properly honor the generosity, requests should be made in person, or in writing, to the library manager.

Donation of Art Objects and Other Types of Materials

Although such gifts are usually welcomed and valued, final decisions on their acceptance rests with the library manager and board of trustees.

Donations – Others, e.g. Monetary

The library welcomes cash contributions, gifts of real property, stocks and bonds. It is our custom to expend cash gifts on materials, equipment, or a project which is acceptable to the donor. Although it is unlikely, there may be an occasion in which the restrictions set by the donor make it impossible for the library to accept the contribution. All donations are subject to the approval of the library manager with the backing of the library board of trustees.

Recognition of Gifts

For memorial gifts to the library, the library may place within the book the name of the donor and/or the honoree, if desired.

Use of Gifts

All gifts are accepted with the understanding that it may someday be necessary that they be sold or disposed of in the best interest of the library. The library cannot commit itself to perpetually housing a donation.

Income Tax Statements

The library cannot appraise the value of a donation of materials or art. It will, however, issue the donor a letter and/or receipt acknowledging the donation. It is the donor's decision whether he or she will determine the value of the donation or utilize an independent appraiser. While the gifts to the library as a governmental unit qualify as tax deductible, the donor will have to consider the particular circumstances of his or her situation for the specific effect.

Revised by the Board of Trustees

2/27/2025

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

3/12/2024