

SOUTHERN TIER LIBRARY SYSTEM

TRUSTEE JOB DESCRIPTION

APPLIES TO: STLS Trustees

REFERENCES: *Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State*;
Statement on the Governance Role of a Trustee or Board Member;
Authority of the Board Policy
Conflict of Interest Policy

Library System trustees play a special, especially important role in husbanding the dedicated and prudent use of library resources, as well as striving to provide the services which best benefit and support the library community at large.¹ A Southern Tier Library System Trustee

is a person to whom property is legally committed in trust, both the physical property and the resources and services the System provides to its member libraries. While delegating day-to-day activities to competent staff, the trustees must always be mindful of how their decisions impact the future of our library community.

Trustees must fulfill the duties legally referred to as “care, loyalty, and obedience”², and must be tireless advocates for improving library services.³ The effective trustee must be well versed in good governance practices that will enable the board to meet the challenges presented by a rapidly changing political, social and cultural environment. All trustees are indemnified by an “umbrella” liability policy for Trustees and Directory Insurance coverage maintained by the System.

Trustees must act in good faith and exercise the degree of diligence, care and skill that an ordinary individual would deem prudent in a like situation. Trustees owe allegiance to the System and must act with the best interest of the system in mind, with fiduciary responsibility and dedication to the fulfillment of the System’s mission and goals.

The particular responsibilities of trustees are:

1. Select, hire and regularly evaluate a qualified Executive Director;
2. Secure and manage adequate funding to support the System’s mission and its physical property;
3. Develop and adopt policies regarding system governance and use;
4. Maintain a facility that meets the needs of the system and its services;

¹ Nichols, Jerry. Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State. 2010 ed. Palmer School of Library and Information Science. 2010; p. v.

²Statement of the Governance Role of a Trustee or Board Member. University of the State of New York Board of Regents, May 2012. n.p.

³ Nichols. Jerry. op. cit. p. 11

5. Conduct the business of the System in an open and ethical manner in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, STLS By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, as well as with respect for the institution, staff and public.
6. Avoid any conflict of interest when exercising Trustee duties.

By serving on the Board of Trustees, each trustee agrees to:

1. Attend all STLS Board meetings unless excused;
2. Participate on one or more Board committees;
3. Visit member libraries and interact with library staff, as circumstances permit;
4. Support Board decisions and maintain confidentiality of the Board's executive sessions;
5. Serve in leadership positions or undertake special assignments willingly;
6. Suggest and recruit possible nominees to the Board who can make significant contributions;
7. Promote the Southern Tier Library System and the Foundation for Southern Tier Libraries and support their fundraising activities.

Adopted by the STLS Board of Trustees April 17, 2012