What is a Library Trustee?

The American Heritage Dictionary defines a trustee as “a member of a board elected or appointed to direct the funds and policy of an institution.”

What is the term for a library trustee?

Some Library Trustees are elected, others are appointed. Some Trustees serve for a six year term, while other Library Board Trustees serve for a four year term.

Are Library Trustees paid a salary?

As required by Illinois law, Trustees serve without compensation.

What is a Library Board and what does it do?

The Library Board is the governing body of the library. The Library Board does NOT micromanage the library. The Library Board DOES:

- Hire and evaluate the library director
- Oversee library funds
- Create policies for the library
- Advocate for the library

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What are the duties and responsibilities of a Library Trustee?

1. Employ a competent, qualified library director.

2. Create written policies to govern library operations and programs.

3. Determine library purposes and secure adequate funds for programs.

4. Know your community and its library needs, keep current on library standards and trends, and support the staff and director in carrying out library programs.

5. Participate in the library’s public relations program.

6. Prepare and approve the annual budget.

7. Know local and state library laws and support library legislation in the Illinois and federal governments.

8. Establish material selection policy for the library.

9. Attend board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file at the library.

10. Attend Trustee meetings and workshops and join professional library organizations.

11. Be aware of State Library and Library System resources.

12. Report regularly to governing officials and the general public.

Helpful Resources on WebJunction Illinois

ALTAFF Trustee Academy

The Trustee Academy provided by the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Founders (ALTAFF) is a series of online courses to help Trustees become viable assets to their Board and library.

Budgeting and Financial Management

Discover resources on the budgeting process, Illinois Property Tax System, and information relevant to Tax Caps.

Defining Your Roles and Duties

The Illinois State Library provides the Trustees Fact File, Third Edition. Its first chapter is dedicated to helping you identify your roles and duties as a library Trustee.

Laws and Standards

Become familiar with the laws and standards most pertinent to your tenure as a library trustee, including the Freedom of Information Act, the Administrative Ready Reference, and Serving Our Public.

Find the Illinois Trustees page on WebJunction Illinois!

1. Visit WebJunction Illinois at www.webjunction.org/partners/illinois

2. Click on Find it IL!

3. Scroll down the alphabetical list of topics and select Illinois Trustees.