

1.2 Board Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy

1. The management of the library is the responsibility of the library director. It is the director's job to select books and other library materials, employ the staff and supervise day-to-day operations. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to set policies for library operations while keeping in mind its fiscal responsibilities to the taxpayers of the county.
2. Trustees must distinguish clearly between their personal attitudes and philosophies and those of the institution. After a policy or rule is adopted by a majority of the library board, individual trustees should not criticize or disagree with those decisions publicly.
3. 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 not divulge information learned during executive sessions of the board, or any information regarding future board plans or actions until such action is officially taken.
4. The Board of Trustees must notify the library director in a timely fashion of all board meetings. The director is expected to attend board meetings.
5. Trustees must be prepared to resist censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
6. Trustees who accept library board membership are expected to perform all the functions of library trustees. If a trustee is unable to attend meetings regularly and complete work delegated to him or her, the trustee should resign so that an active member can be appointed.
7. Conflicts of Interest: The summary below is subordinate to the Schenectady County Ethics and Disclosure Law, and includes issues relevant to the SCPL.
 - a. Conflict of Interest means a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between the private interests and official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. "Interest" means a direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit accruing to a Library trustee or employee as the result of a contract with the Library which such officer or employee serves. Persons in a position of trust include staff members, officers, and board members of SCPL.
 - b. Full disclosure shall be made as soon as practical by the interested parties to the full Board of Trustees in all conflicts of interest, including but not limited to the following:
 - i. A board trustee is related to another board member or staff member by blood, marriage or domestic partnership.
 - ii. A board member or his/her organization accrues a direct or indirect pecuniary or material benefit from a SCPL transaction or staff member of such organization receives payment from SCPL for any subcontract, goods, or services other than as part of her/his regular job responsibilities or as reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred as provided in the bylaws and board policy.
 - iii. A board member is a member of the governing body of a contributor to SCPL.

- iv. A trustee working as a volunteer on behalf of SCPL who meets any of the situations or criteria listed above shall report their conflict to their supervisor or the Trustees.
- c. Following full disclosure of a possible conflict of interest or any condition listed above, the Board of Trustees shall determine whether a conflict of interest exists and, if so, the Board shall take action necessary to address the conflict and protect SCPL's best interests. Votes on conflict of interest issues shall be by a majority vote without counting the vote of any interested trustee, even if the disinterested directors are less than a quorum provided that at least one consenting trustee is disinterested.
- d. No Trustee shall serve as an employee of the SCPL.
- e. An interested Board member, officer, or staff member shall not participate in any discussion or debate of the Board of Trustees, or of any committee or subcommittee thereof in which the subject of discussion is a contract, transaction, or situation in which there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest. However, they may be present to provide clarifying information in such a discussion or debate unless objected to by any present board or committee member.
- f. Any board member in a position to make decisions about spending SCPL resources which may result in a conflict of interest has a duty to disclose that conflict as soon as it arises (or becomes apparent); s/he should abstain in any final decisions.