



## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

### **TRUSTEE APPLICATION PACKET**

The La Conner Library Board announces a vacancy on the La Conner Library Board of Directors, beginning \_\_\_\_\_. Persons interested in applying for the position, should read the following application materials carefully, and then indicate interest by filling out the Interview Application Form at the end of these materials.

Questions about these materials may be addressed to the Board of Directors.

Applicants are encouraged to attend at least one, and preferably two board meetings before deciding if they are interested in submitting an application.

La Conner Library trustees are appointed by the Skagit Board of County Commissioners. The new appointee will become a voting member of the Board upon notification of appointment.

#### **Who is Eligible to be a Library Trustee?**

Trustees are volunteers who are appointed to a term of either five or seven years, and as established in state law, can serve a maximum of two terms. (La Conner trustee terms are for 5 years.) Trustees may be removed from office by the appointing authority for just cause, such as not fulfilling the duties of the office.

In library districts the county or counties' legislative authority (ies) appoint trustees. In regional libraries the contracting authorities make the appointment, and in municipalities the recommendation of the mayor or city manager is usually submitted to the council for approval. Library trustee appointments are non-partisan.

No state law prescribes eligibility. Trustees may serve in other governmental positions if the offices are not incompatible. The Washington State Supreme Court judicial doctrine

cites that “Offices are incompatible when the nature and duties of the offices are such as to render it improper, from considerations of public policy, for one person to retain both offices.”

### **What are the Qualifications for a Library Trustee?**

The issues and decisions involved in the administration of the modern public library are varied and complex. Trusteeship is not an honorary position. It is a working relationship with the community, library staff and fellow trustees.

Trustees must devote a great deal of time and express a high level of interest to fulfill their duties. Commitment is the primary qualification for those who serve on the board.

Effective boards consist of informed, dedicated citizens who represent a cross-section of the community. There is a direct correlation between the quality of library service a community offers and the knowledge, capability, and enthusiasm of its board members.

Effective trustees are citizens who have:

- Readiness to devote time and effort to learning about the library in addition to the duties, responsibilities, and authority of trusteeship.
- Recognition of the importance of the library as a center of information, culture, recreation, and lifelong learning in the community.
- Sound judgment, a sense of fiscal responsibility, legal understanding, and political awareness.
- Skill in board management, an open mind, intellectual curiosity, respect for the opinions of others, and the ability to work cooperatively with others.
- Willingness to become knowledgeable about librarianship including application of standards, identifying trends, and new developments.
- Rapport with the community, including a concerned awareness of diverse social and economical conditions, needs, and interests of all segments of the public.
- Position of leadership in the community, government, business, education, finance, law, or related fields.
- Initiative and ability to plan creatively, to establish policies for effective operation of the library, and to withstand pressures and prejudices when providing impartial service to the patrons.

## **What do Trustees Do?**

Trustees are appointed to represent and reflect the community's interest in the library. In carrying out their responsibilities, boards can use the principle, "trust but verify." Trustee Boards delegate management authority to the library director.

To oversee the management of the library and ensure its success, the board of trustees has seven major tasks:

1. Establish the library mission.
2. Define the long-range plan.
3. Set policies that align with the library mission and support both library customers and staff of the library.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the library.
5. Oversee the funding and approve the library budget or tax levy.
6. Hire and annually evaluate the director.
7. Advocate for the library.

## **Here are some examples of Board of Trustees' Duties:**

1. Know community needs, keep abreast of library trends, and actively participate in state and national library associations.
2. Set up an organizational structure for the library board and adopt bylaws that meet Open Public Meetings laws.
3. Assure that board minutes, library policies, plans, and other information or reports are available to the public as required by law.
4. Once the board adopts a policy or plan all members support the decision and support staff that implement decisions.
5. In coordination with the director, develop and adopt the library's mission statement, long-range, strategic and annual plans.
6. Know local, state, and federal laws related to libraries.
7. Employ a competent and qualified director, maintain a current job description, and evaluate the director annually on previously agreed upon criteria.
8. Clearly delegate operations to library director avoiding procedural micromanaging.
9. Discuss, adopt, and periodically review policies.
10. Review and adopt the annual library budget or levy, assuring that long-range plan goals will be addressed by the budget priorities.
11. Adopt a clear materials selection policy that supports the diverse needs and interests of the community.
12. Plan for, secure, and maintain adequate funding for the library within legal limits of library funding.
13. Adopt adequate salary scales, benefits, and continuing education opportunities for library staff within budget limits.
14. Actively communicate and discuss library policy issues with the public.

15. Support the library public relations program.

For additional clarification of roles, a chart of the Library Board and the Library director responsibilities is attached. It may also be viewed online at [The Board and Director Responsibilities section of the Washington State Library Trustees Manual](#), page 7-10.

(URL: <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/libDev/downloads/trustee/02-boarddirectorroles.pdf> )

**LaConner Regional Library District  
Library Trustee Application Form**

Name:	Telephone:
Address:	Skagit Resident:    Yes    No
Email:	

Education:

Occupations/Work Experience:

If Retired, Former Occupations:

What past experience do you feel make you qualified to be a library trustee?

My perceived strengths and weaknesses include:

What services do you think the library should provide?

What are your thoughts on a countywide library system and/or co-operative activities between the libraries in Skagit County.

Your availability for monthly meetings:

Preferred time:

Have you attended a board meeting, to see if this is something you want to commit to?

Comments:

Effective: 5/7/04; revised 4/10/07

[Return to Policy Page](#)