

BOARD MEMBER ETHICS

The Board of Trustees of the Westhampton Free Library recognizes that sound, ethical standards of conduct serve to increase the effectiveness of Library board members and their staff, as leaders in their community. Actions based on an ethical code of conduct promote public confidence and the attainment of Library goals. The Board also recognizes its obligation to set forth a code of ethics under the provisions of the General Municipal Law.

The Board therefore adopts the following code of ethics, and its accompanying regulation, for the guidance of its officers and employees. Board members and their staff commit themselves to:

- ASSURING the opportunity for high quality library service for every district resident making the well-being of library service the fundamental principle in all decisions and actions;
- REPRESENTING the entire community without fear or favor;
- ACCEPTING all responsibilities as a means of unselfish service, while not using their positions for personal gain;
- ACTING as part of a team with mutual respect and regard for each other's respective responsibilities and duties, recognizing that the strength of a library board is in acting as a board, not as individuals;
- PRESERVING the obligation of having all issues considered fairly and without bias;
- UPHOLDING the principles of due process and individual dignity, and protecting the civil and human rights of all;
- MAINTAINING high standards and the effectiveness of library service research and continuing professional development;
- OBEYING all national, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to libraries and public agencies; and
- INSTILLING respect for community, state, and nation.

Ref: General Municipal Law §806-808

BOARD MEMBER ETHICS REGULATION

Pursuant to the provision of Section 806 of the General Municipal Law and Board Policy, the Board of Trustees of the Westhampton Free Library promulgates these rules of ethical conduct for the officers and employees of the Library. These rules shall not conflict with, but shall be in addition to any prohibition of Article 18 of the General Municipal Law or any other general or special law relating to ethical conduct and interest in contract of municipal officers and employees.

1, "Officer or Employee" means an officer or employee of the Library, whether paid or unpaid, including members of the Board of Trustees and their professional or nonprofessional staff and appointees.

2. "Interest" means a pecuniary or material benefit accruing to a municipal officer or employee unless the context otherwise requires.

Standards of Conduct

Every Officer and Employee of the Library shall be subject to and abide by the following standards of conduct:

1. Gifts: An Officer or Employee shall not directly or indirectly solicit any gift or accept or receive any gift having a value of \$75 or more, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him or her in the performance of his or her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his or her part.
2. Confidential information: An Officer or Employee shall not disclose confidential information acquired by him or her in the course of his or her official duties or use such information to further his or her personal interest.
3. Representation before the Board: Subject to the foregoing, an Officer or Employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the Library.
4. Representation before the Board for a contingent fee: An Officer or Employee shall not receive or enter into any agreement, express or implied, for compensation for services to be rendered in relation to any matter before the Library, whereby the compensation is to be dependent or contingent upon any action by the Library with respect to such matter, provided that this paragraph shall not prohibit the fixing at any time of fees based upon the reasonable value of the services rendered.
5. Disclosure of interest in matters before the Board: To the extent that he or she knows thereof, any Officer or Employee of the Library, whether paid or unpaid, who participates in the discussion or gives official opinion to the Board on any matter before the Board shall publicly disclose on the official record the nature and extent of any direct or indirect financial or other private interest he or she has in such matter.

BOARD MEMBER ETHICS EXHIBIT

Board Credo

I will, at all times, act as a member of the Board, and only on the solid base of Board action. "There is no Board unless it is in session."

2. I will adhere to my proper function as a maker of policy, and will steadfastly refuse to be a part of any invasion by the Board into administration. I will not hear complaints from the staff unless:
 - a. The complaint is first considered by the Library Director; and
 - b. Subsequently, the complaint is presented in writing to the entire Board in executive session.
3. I will recognize always that, with the exception of matters properly discussed and actions taken in Executive Session, the people have a right to know the facts concerning all actions taken by the Board. However, only written requests for facts will be recognized by the Board.
4. I acknowledge that, as a Board member, I represent the entire community.
5. I will take steps to familiarize myself with the program of Library service for which I was elected to make policy.

6. I will remember at all times that library administration is subject to many pressures. I will support administration when its resistance to pressure is on behalf of good library service.
7. One of my greatest responsibilities as a Board member is to cooperate in the provision of opportunities for the professional staff to grow in service the in library field which will benefit the residents of the district.
8. I will be responsive to the community with reference to my actions as member of the Board. These actions will in all cases be in accord with my own conscience and judgment.
9. I know that only through the development of library service and efficiency can local control of library services be preserved.
10. A Board member, operating under the highest ethical standards, should:
 - a. observe and enforce state laws and regulations pertaining to public libraries;
 - b. accept office as a means of unselfish service;
 - c. transact Library business only in regular session;
 - d. represent the entire community without fear or favor;
 - e. remember at all times that he/she is one of a team;
 - f. accept all Board decisions once they are made and assist in carrying them out effectively;
 - g. delegate administrative action to the Library Director and confine Board action to policy making, planning and appraisal;
 - h. employ only competent, trained personnel and those only on the recommendation of the Library Director;
 - i. preserve the right and obligation of libraries to present multiple points of view in its ever evolving collection of resources.

BOARD MEMBER ETHICS EXHIBIT

Officer or Employee

Hired as Consultant or Independent Contractor

To: Board of Trustees

The undersigned is an officer or employee of the Westhampton Free Library holding the position of _____

I hereby notify the Board of Trustees that I currently have an interest in the _____ proposed/actual contract regarding _____

Dated _____

The nature and extend of such interest is _____

I submit this notice to you in accordance with the provisions of Section 803 of the General Municipal Law.

Date: _____

Print or Type Name _____

Signature _____

Adopted by Board of Trustees: July 21, 2009
Amended: June 2010