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Gates Public Library Trustee Position Description

A library trustee is a service position within your community to provide a voice in charting the direction of your public library and helping to make decisions for your library's future. All interested candidates may submit your résumé for consideration to the library director by mailing it in, dropping it off during open hours, or emailing it to anna.souannavong@libraryweb.org. The library director will forward all interested applications to the president of the board. Board terms typically begin January 1.

TERM: 5-year term; 12 months/year

ACCOUNTABLE TO: Town of Gates taxpayers, elected officials as applicable, the community, and the people served by the library. The GPL Board of Trustees reports to the New York State Education Department.

BASIC FUNCTIONS: Library board members participate on the board to protect and advance the interests of the broader community by effectively governing the operations and promoting the development of the Gates Public Library. The board of trustees establishes policies and long-term goals for the library, oversees the general operation of the library, initiates and oversees the budget process, promotes and advocates for the library in the community, and hires and evaluates the library director.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Board and committees:

- Attends all board meetings and participates appropriately; prepares for board meetings by reading all provided materials, contributes to meeting discussions, and lends content expertise where applicable.
- Adheres to the Town of Gates code of ethics, the Board of Trustees Conflict of Interest Policy and Bylaws, and maintains confidentiality when required.
- Serves on committees as appointed by the board president.
- Abides by majority decisions reached by the board and publicly supports these decisions.

Library operations:

- Establishes library policies and reviews them on an annual basis, updating as needed.
- Participates in ongoing strategic planning to meet the changing needs of the community.
- Hires and regularly evaluates the performance of the library director.
- Takes action to maintain a facility that meets both library and community needs.

Financial oversight:

- Strives for adequate funding levels for library operations and maintains a clear picture of the library's financial situation, including regular review of financial reports of current income and expenses and understanding the various library-funding sources.

- Reviews monthly financial statements in the context of the annual budget, approves reasonable expenditures that are within the total approved budget, and forwards approved bills for payment by the town.
- Assists in budget preparation; represents and defends the library at local budget workshops.

Advocate for the Library:

- Becomes informed about the services and programs offered by the library and promotes these in the community.
- Supports basic library tenets such as: Intellectual Freedom, Freedom to Read, Confidentiality of Patron Records, Library Bill of Rights, and the Public's Right to Information.
- Keeps up with current library trends and practices through activities such as attending professional meetings, visiting other libraries, and talking to trustees from other libraries; and keeps up with library legislation at the local, state, and federal levels.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Commitment to provide the best possible library service for the community.
- Knowledge of the library's mission.
- Readiness to devote time and effort to the duties of trusteeship, including regular attendance at monthly meetings and preparation for those meetings.
- Ability to work with people, lead meetings, and communicate effectively.
- Must be a resident of the Town of Gates.

DESIRED SKILLS:

- Background/knowledge in the field of law, human resources, technology, facilities, finance and/or marketing.

About Public Library Boards in New York State: A trustee is a person to whom property is legally committed in trust. A library trustee's commitment is to both the physical property and resources of the library and the services it provides. The library board has the final responsibility to see that its library provides the best possible service to its community. Every trustee makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to faithfully carry out these duties. Under New York State law, library boards have broad and almost exclusive powers and authority to administer the library. The board should not only be concerned with the internal operations of the organization but also alert to external trends and changes that can affect the library's program of services. Being proactive and open to change is imperative in order to survive and thrive in a world in which change is the only constant. The public library board's primary job is to provide the highest quality library service possible for its community.