

# **Dover Plains Library Trustee Code of Conduct and Ethics**

## **I. Introduction:**

1. The purpose of the Dover Plains Library Trustee Code of Conduct is to clearly define the expectations and responsibilities of the Trustee role. It advises Board members of their relationships with the Dover Plains Library, the governing body (Board of Trustees (BoT), and all staff, volunteers, patrons and community. This policy will be given to each board member at election.
2. Members of the Dover Plains Library Board of Trustees have legal authority for the conduct of the Dover Plains Library only when acting as a body, in a properly convened session. Board members acting as individuals have no authority over library personnel. They shall neither direct nor request that employees and/or the Library Director perform their jobs or other tasks, either in oral or written communications. The only exception is when there has been a duly-approved resolution by the Board of Trustees.
3. Members of the Board are free to speak to individuals on library issues outside of Board meetings; but, such public expression is not Board policy. Information from executive sessions must remain confidential at all times, unless release is appropriately authorized by Board resolution. The Board will not be bound in any way by any individual's statement or action. When exercising their authority and individual rights, members of the Board are asked to be mindful of the impact their actions may have upon the mission of the Board and the operation of the Dover Plains Library. Trustees are advised to consider how their words may be construed by the public.

## **II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to state the conduct that is expected of the Dover Plains Library Board members.

As members of the Dover Plains Library Board:

- We strive to advance the Dover Plains Library's mission, vision and strategic plan.

- We uphold the integrity of the Dover Plains Library and exercise our fiduciary responsibility with taxpayer funding.
- We approve and uphold the Bylaws of BoT of the Dover Plains Library.
- We develop our knowledge and understanding of public libraries' services and potential.
- We embrace the principles defined in the American Library's Association's Code of Ethics.
- We act with mutual respect and understanding, seeking to listen, learn, and educate ourselves about diverse viewpoints.

### **III. Roles and Responsibilities**

Library Board members will:

- Represent the Library in a positive and supportive manner at all times.
- Attend all regular and special meetings of the Library Board and provide prior notice to the Board President of any inability to attend a meeting.
- Respond promptly to all scheduling requests concerning the Board or committees.
- Serve on one or more Board Committees and attend such committee meetings; and notify the committee if unable to attend.
- Distinguish between personal philosophies, attitudes, and convictions with positions adopted by the Board.
- Strive for transparency in Board meeting discussions and disclose any potential conflicts of interest in any matter being discussed.
- Not receive anything of value, based upon any understanding that a vote, official action or judgment of a member would be influenced thereby.
- Fulfill the requirement of participating in NYS-mandated training in prevention of sexual harassment training and 2 hours of continuing education for trustees annually.
- Follow all rules and procedures of the library and the Mid-Hudson Library System with no more authority than any other library user.
- Refrain from giving library employees directives, criticizing employees or attempting to undermine the chain of command of the library.
- When visiting the library are asked not to keep staff preoccupied and away from their regular duties.

Approved by Board of Trustees: November 8, 2023.

