VPL Ethics Policy

Date Effective: 6/15/2023

Revision Dates:

Date(s) Reviewed by Library Board: 6/14/2023, 01/2025

Policy Maintenance Performed By: Library Director

The Vinton Public Library is dependent on the trust of its community to successfully achieve its mission. Therefore, it is crucial that all Trustees conduct business on behalf of the Vinton Public Library with the highest level of integrity, avoiding any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

**Guiding Principles:**

* Trustees should uphold the integrity of the Vinton Public Library and should perform their duties impartially and diligently.
* Trustees should not engage in discrimination of any kind including that based on race, class, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or belief system.
* Trustees shall respect the opinions of their colleagues and not be critical or disrespectful when they agree or oppose a viewpoint different from their own.
* Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their library.
* Trustees should protect and uphold library patrons’ right to privacy in their use of the library’s resources.
* Trustees should avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities or financial affairs are, or are likely to be perceived as being in conflict with the best interests of the Vinton Public Library. See VPL Conflict of Interest Policy for more information.
* Trustees should avoid having interests that may reasonably bring into question their position in a fair, impartial and objective manner.
* Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statement between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.
* Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business and not disclose such information to anyone. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information Laws.
* Trustees should not knowingly act in any way that would reasonably be expected to create an impression among the public that they are engaged in conduct that violates their trust as Trustees.
* Trustees should not use or attempt to use their position with the Vinton Public Library to obtain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others.
* Trustees should not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism.
* Trustees should not denigrate the organization or fellow Trustees in any public arena.
* Trustees shall not interfere with the management responsibilities of the director or the supervision of library staff.
* Trustees shall support the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

It will also help your library function effectively if you:

* Recognize that all authority is vested in the board when it meets in legal session and not with individual board members.
* Represent the whole community to the library and not just a particular area or group.
* Are objective in hiring the Library Director.
* Don’t promise prior to a meeting how you will vote on a particular issue.

**Therefore:**

To preserve and uphold the Vinton Public Library’s reputation as an organization of unimpeachable integrity, each Board member will sign an Ethics Statement (see Appendix A) at the commencement of their service and the beginning of each fiscal year during their tenure with the Vinton Public Library. Signed statements will be kept on file with the Library Director for a minimum of 10 years beyond the last date of service.

**Compliance:**

If any Board member appears to be in conflict of the “Guiding Principles” above, he or she will be asked to meet with Board President and the City Administrator to discuss the issue. The Board President and the City Administrator will make a recommendation to the full Board based on their findings. If the Board President appears to be in conflict, then the Board Vice-President will meet with the City administrator to discuss the issue in their stead.

VPL Ethics Policy

Appendix A

I have read and understand the VPL Ethics Policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Vinton Public Library position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_