

Warren-Newport Public Library District
Lake County, Illinois

Board of Trustees

Policy 1007

Electronic Communication among Trustees

Adopted: April 18, 2011

Reviewed/Revised: July 16, 2013; August 20, 2013; July 21, 2015; October 16, 2018; June 16, 2020

ARTICLE 1. PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees of the Warren-Newport Public Library District (WNPLD) strives to keep both its members and the Executive Director informed about matters affecting the Board's work. The Board is also mindful of the requirements imposed by the Illinois Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120] and the Local Records Act [50 ILCS 205] as they apply to communications among Trustees outside normal Board meetings.

ARTICLE 2. NON-SUBSTANTIVE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Generally, Trustees shall not use electronic communications such as email or text messaging to conduct WNPLD business. Electronic communication to, by, and between Trustees is permitted on a limited basis for non-substantive matters such as:

- agenda items suggestions;
- reminders regarding meeting times, date, and places;
- Board meeting agenda or public record information concerning agenda items; and
- responses to questions posed by the community, administration, or staff.

There is no expectation of privacy for any messages sent or received electronically.

ARTICLE 3. ELECTRONIC BULLETIN BOARDS

The Board finds that electronic "chat rooms" and "bulletin boards" are inherently detrimental to the open meetings process and will not use such methods to conduct WNPLD business or deliberations.

ARTICLE 4. EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Section 4.01 Email from the Executive Director

The Executive Director may provide information relating to WNPLD business to Trustees using email. Any response from Trustees regarding these communications must be sent only to the Executive Director (i.e., there should be no "reply to all" responses). An appropriate record of these communications will be maintained in WNPLD files to assure compliance with open records laws.

Section 4.02 Use and Availability of Trustee Email

Email accounts are provided for Trustees through the WNPLD server. Library email is to be used exclusively for library-related matters. The use of library email for personal matters or to conduct private business matters is prohibited. Using library email as a contact on any campaign literature or for the endorsement of others' political, religious, civic, or business endeavors is prohibited. When a Trustee leaves the Board, their library email account will be deactivated, and any incoming mail will be redirected to the Board President.

Section 4.03 Email among Trustees

Two (2) Trustees may correspond between themselves provided such correspondence does not constitute a violation of the Open Meetings Act.

A Trustee may send email to all other Trustees regarding items of passing interest provided that no response is requested or required. Such emails should clearly state that no response should be made. It is required that any such emails be copied to the Executive Director for storage.

A Trustee may send email to all other Trustees regarding scheduling issues. Trustees may reply to the sender provided that their response is limited to the subject of the original message and does not cross over to items of substance.

Section 4.04 Agenda Items

Items of business for a Board agenda shall be directed to both the Board President and the Executive Director, so that the items may be included in the Board's agenda according to normal procedures. Action items shall be prepared and distributed by the Executive Director in accordance with the Board's established procedures.

Section 4.05 Response to Email

In recognizing the importance of timely communication in completing the work of the Board, Trustees and the Executive Director will make every effort to respond to email communications within 72 hours.

Section 4.06 Email from the Public

Emails from the public to the Board will be copied to all Trustees and the Executive Director. When an email from the public requires a response from the Board, the President or their designee will respond and will copy the other Trustees and the Executive Director.

ARTICLE 5. STORAGE OF EMAILS

WNPLD shall maintain records of emails as required by law.
