

Warren-Newport Public Library District

Lake County, Illinois

Board of Trustees

Policy 4025

Community and Media Relations

Adopted: March 16, 2010

Reviewed/Revised: July 16, 2013; June 21, 2016*; April 23, 2019

*Title changed from *Public and Community Relations*

ARTICLE 1. INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the Warren-Newport Public Library District (WNPLD) is committed to maintaining continuing communication with present and potential users of WNPLD's services and resources so as to encourage usage of those services and resources by all residents. To that end, WNPLD makes use of a variety of media to disseminate its message and strives to cooperate with the media and to provide the community with accurate, timely, and positive messages about WNPLD.

ARTICLE 2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of WNPLD's public relations efforts are:

- to promote community awareness of library services;
- to stimulate public interest in and usage of WNPLD;
- to develop public understanding and support of WNPLD and its role in the community; and
- to establish WNPLD's reputation as a nonpartisan, nonsectarian, unbiased meeting ground for all ideas.

ARTICLE 3. RESPONSIBILITY

The Executive Director and the Head of Communications are responsible for coordinating WNPLD public information. While all staff members represent WNPLD to the community, the Head of Communications shall serve as the contact person for the media and will respond to media requests for information and interviews. He or she shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining relationships with area news media contacts representing newspapers, radio, cable, broadcast, Internet, and emerging and social media.

ARTICLE 4. MEDIA REQUESTS

When appropriate, the Head of Communications may put a reporter in contact with the Board President and/or the Executive Director.

When receiving a request for information about a specific program, the Head of Communications may put a reporter in contact with a staff member in charge of or involved with the program. When possible, staff members directly involved in programs will be identified and quoted to afford them more community exposure.

ARTICLE 5. TRUSTEES SPEAKING FOR THE BOARD TO THE PUBLIC OR MEDIA

Except for the Board President, individual Trustees may not speak to the public or media on behalf of the Board of Trustees unless authorized by the Board to do so. When speaking to the public or media about WNPLD or about Board action, Trustees should clearly define when their remarks represent personal opinion and when their remarks represent official Board position. Trustees must be aware that they are always seen as members of the Board of Trustees even when they designate their comments as personal.

ARTICLE 6. CRISIS COMMUNICATION

In case of media interest in a controversial, negative, or crisis issue, the Executive Director, the Board President, or a qualified designee will present a planned, positive, caring, and informed response. WNPLD will use these opportunities to promote its image as a public institution that is transparent, is aware of the issues, considers its patrons first, and is progressive and innovative in providing services and resources.
