



Fact Sheet

Mid-Columbia Libraries and the Board of Trustees

Mid-Columbia Libraries (MCL) is an inter-county rural library district serving Benton, Franklin and parts of Adams counties including annexed and contracting cities. It operates under the laws of Washington State as a municipal corporation. The mission of MCL is to enhance quality of life by providing excellence in books and services for our residents and communities.

The MCL Board of Trustees is a governing board consisting of seven citizen members representing the various areas of the district. Each board member is eligible to serve for two complete terms of seven years. Terms of office are staggered to prevent complete Board turnover from occurring at one time.

As a governing board, with a broad range of powers and duties defined by state law, the MCL Board of Trustees is the policy-making body for the library district. Through the development of policies, the Board sets the direction of the library and gives the executive director and staff general guidance for the management of the library.

The MCL Board of Trustees also evaluates library program effectiveness and plans for the future, oversees budget and finances, hires an executive director to administer day-to-day operations, and advocates for the library. The Board of Trustees has legal authority to levy property taxes under prescribed limits.

Additional statutory responsibilities, many of which are delegated to the executive director, include leasing or purchasing land for library buildings; leasing, purchasing or constructing library buildings; purchasing library materials and supplies; supervising the care of library property; accepting gifts; and creating and adopting necessary bylaws, rules, and regulations. Finally, board members perform all other acts necessary for the orderly and efficient management and control of the library.

Representing their constituents, the Board of Trustees responds to local needs and conditions in its decision-making tailoring services and programs to the communities it serves. The Board of Trustees also builds community support for the library and its programs. Board meetings are open, and public input is encouraged.

A board member can expect to put in two to three hours a month carrying out the responsibilities of the MCL Board of Trustees. Also, board members are encouraged to attend professional library meetings once or twice a year and to keep informed on issues important to the future of the library.