



STEVENS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Community Relations Policy

The Stevens Memorial Library acknowledges that public relations involve every person who has connections with the Library. All Trustees, staff members, and volunteers should recognize that they represent the Library in their contact with the public. Good service supports good public relations.

Further, the Library acknowledges that communications with patrons, community members, governmental organizations, news media, and staff is essential for the welfare of the Library.

Objectives

The objectives of the Library's community relations efforts are:

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

Traditional Media and Promotional Materials

Staff members will be delegated the responsibility of preparing press releases and promotional materials as designated by the Library Director.

The Library will send press releases to both traditional and online media outlets, including but not limited to newspapers, websites, and television stations. Press releases may focus on regular or special programming, library services, Board news, general library information, etc.

Press releases and promotional items will look professional, be accurate, and provide a positive reflection of the Library. All items will be approved by the Director prior to publication.

Contacts initiated by the media will be forwarded to the Director, or in the case of programming, to the staff member in charge of the program.

Special Circumstances

In the event of an emergency, official statements to the public and the media will be made by the Director, or the Chair of the Library Board of Trustees.



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In case of media interest in a controversial, negative, or crisis issue, the Director, Board Chair, or a qualified designee will present a planned, positive, caring, and informed response. The Library 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.

Except for the Chair of the Board, individual Trustees will not speak to the public or media on behalf of the Board unless authorized by the Board to do so.

Outreach

Library employees may engage in further public relations through speaking to local groups, participating in local organizations, visiting classrooms, and conducting tours and informational sessions at the Library.

Social Media

Library-sponsored social media is used to: convey information about library programs and services, raise awareness about Library and community issues, obtain patron feedback, exchange ideas or insights about library trends, reach out to potential new patrons and supporters, and respond to breaking news or publicity.

Only employees designated and authorized by the Library Director can post, delete, edit, or otherwise modify content on Library-sponsored social media. Any such employee with authorization to add or modify social media content is required to follow these general guidelines:

- Make sure all social media postings are accurate, without grammatical errors or factual misrepresentations.
- Maintain privacy, confidentiality, and obtain permission to use other people's content.
- Find ways to engage patrons, including with the use of adding content that supports the Library's mission.
- Make sure all postings provide a positive reflection of the Library; all posts should be constructive and beneficial.

All public relations and promotion activities will be approved by the Library Director or designee(s). Please see also: Town of Ashburnham, Social Media Policy #008.