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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Hugh C. Brakesill*

## Code of Ethics and Expectations Policy for the Blount County Public Library Board of Trustees

**APPLICABLE TO:** Blount County Public Library (BCPL) Board of Trustees (BoT)

### DEFINITIONS:

- **Ethics:** The doctrines of morality or social manners; a system of moral principles; moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conduct of an activity.

**PURPOSE:** To provide guidance and support in the role and requirements of being a Blount County Public Library Board Member, to promote integrity and accountability among the BoT, that ensures library services, collections, and resources are available to all Blount County residents and out of County patrons.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** The Blount County Public Library Board of Trustees (BoT) are expected to act in a manner that will strive to maintain the highest moral standards and professional accountability in the governing of the Library. BoT actions that are based on community input, BCPL administrative expertise, and policies provide an ethical code that promotes the public's confidence and the attainment of library goals. In the capacity of trust granted to them, it is expected that each Trustee serves to enhance the name, service, and core principles of the library services, collections, and resources for the general public.

**PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** No Code of Ethics can provide the absolute last word to address every circumstance, which is why every BoT should make sound judgment to the conduct that will maintain the public's trust. To demonstrate their commitment to the BCPL's mission, some specific examples listed below will help to codify expectations. Said expectations include but are not limited to the following:

### LIBRARY FUNDAMENTALS

- Supporting the mission of a public library in a free society by working to ensure that the public has equal access to information by maintaining a complete and balanced Library collection.

- They should not seek to benefit personally from any business derived from the Library, and should base decisions on the needs of the entire community without regard to personal beliefs, special interests, and partisan political groups.
- Support the public's right to confidentially locate and retrieve information.
- Strive for transparency and accountability in decision-making processes, which include speaking as "one voice" once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed.
- Support to the fullest the efforts of Librarians in resisting the censorship of Library materials by groups or individuals.
- Treat all individuals with fairness, respect, and dignity.

**SUPPORT OF THE LIBRARY'S ADMINISTRATION AND GOALS**

- Working with the Director and other appropriate officials to see that the Library receives adequate funding.
- Maintain effective governance by working with the Director on strategic planning, policy approval, participating in the evaluation of the Library Director, supporting staff through professional development, and directing all public complaints to established channels for initial resolution.

**ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE LIBRARY**

- Actively and regularly attend and participate in board meetings and regional or state/national library activities and programs, serve on committees as necessary, and notify the Director or Board Chair when absent.
- Help to lend your expertise and leadership without making personal statements or promises which could subsequently compromise the board.
- Keep abreast of important developments in Library trends and practices, and comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- Collaborate with other related boards, policy makers, and agencies to improve the BCPL and their services.
- Support library development locally and regionally by participating in programs when possible.
- Say nothing in a board meeting that could be construed to violate anyone's civil rights.

Failure to comply with this Code of Ethics and any other policies which may be specific to the BCPL can erode the public's trust in the library, and the BoT member in question may be asked to submit their resignation. All BoT members shall read and sign this Code of Ethics before assuming their job responsibilities.

**POLICY REVIEW:** This version supersedes all previous versions and will be effective upon BoT approval and signature. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** The BOT Secretary is the point of contact for this policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Blount County does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state-sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d).*