

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

I. Introduction

The Rockford Public Library competes with other charitable, cultural, religious, social and educational organizations in its efforts to obtain charitable gifts to support its activities. This policy ensures that the intentions of each donor are respected to the fullest, enable the accurate reporting of gifts, and ensure consistent, equitable relations with donors.

One should recognize that the Rockford Public Library Foundation, a non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization, exists to receive and disburse financial gifts on behalf of the RPL. Trustees and staff are encouraged to direct all charitable financial donations to the Foundation rather than the Library itself. However, situations may occur wherein a donor wishes to make a gift directly to the Library. This document will provide guidelines for these situations.

II. Policy for Gift Acceptance

The Rockford Public Library may elect to accept or decline any gift. The final decision to decline a gift rests with the RPL Board of Trustees. Those gifts that may expose the Library to liability, are incompatible with the Library's mission, or are believed to come from illegal activities, will be declined.

The Library's Development Officer may accept gifts on behalf of the Library. Gifts for restricted purposes (such as children's materials or to benefit a particular branch) require approval by the Library's Executive Director before acceptance. Similarly, gifts that involve naming opportunities (e.g., naming a permanent structure on behalf of a donor) also require the approval of the Executive Director and RPL Board of Trustees.

Charitable gifts to RPL shall be acknowledged by the Library's Development Officer. Acknowledgement consists of a charitable receipt generated by RPL, accompanied by correspondence prepared by development staff. These documents are deemed to be the official acceptance of the gift and its related terms and conditions, as well as official certification of the donation for income tax purposes.

When conditions placed on a gift offer are judged to be administratively difficult or not in accordance with the mission of RPL, the Executive Director may request that the terms of the gift be revised or recommend that the gift be declined. Conditions that require the exclusion of, or discriminate against, any group or class cannot be accepted by RPL. The Development Officer will keep records of conditions placed on any gift accepted by RPL.

All donors of significant gifts should be advised to seek representation by their own competent legal and/or financial counsel in order to avoid allegations or charges of conflict of interest, undue influence or unauthorized practice of law. RPL will not retain these services on behalf of any donor or pay any fees associated with such representation.

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III. Description of Gifts

Outright Gifts

Cash or checks

Outright gifts are those placed at the immediate disposal of RPL and in which the donor retains no interest.

Matching Gifts

Employers may match an employee's gift to RPL. The ratio of the match and the designation of the matching gift are entirely at the discretion of the employer. Donors should be advised that, because the Library is a government institution rather than a non-profit charity, it may be ineligible for some matching gifts.

Outright Gifts of Securities, Real Estate or Life Insurance

Trustees and staff are encouraged to direct these types of gifts to the Rockford Public Library Foundation. If the donor still desires to direct the gift to Rockford Public Library, the Executive Director shall evaluate the gift, determine whether to recommend acceptance, and propose terms of acceptance to the Board.

Sponsorships

Sponsorship refers to a partnership established with an outside organization to provide money to the Library. In return, the Library will typically provide the sponsor with public recognition of this support. Because the Library exchanges a service for these funds (publicity/advertising), these are NOT considered charitable donations.

Planned Giving

Bequests

A bequest is a gift of any amount or form made to RPL in a donor's will. A bequest may provide for a specific dollar amount in cash, specific securities, or specific articles of tangible personal property. Again, Trustees and staff are encouraged to direct bequests to the Rockford Public Library Foundation rather than to the Library itself.

Donors are encouraged to recognize that over the many years following the designation of a gift, the needs, policies and circumstances of RPL can change in unforeseen ways. RPL must have the flexibility to make use of funds in the best interest of its mission and in accord with donor interests and specifications. Thus, donors are advised to describe specific purposes of their gifts as broadly as possible and to avoid detailed limitations and restrictions. Donors

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considering bequests for a specific purpose are encouraged to consult with the Development Officer at RPL.

When money is left to RPL as an unrestricted bequest, it is deposited into the unrestricted fund to be used at the sole discretion of RPL. The bequest intentions of known and prospective donors will be recorded in the Development Office. The department will be responsible for maintaining a confidential record of information about known provisions in wills.

Other Planned Gifts: Charitable Gift Annuities, Charitable Remainder Unitrusts, Charitable Remainder Annuity Trusts and Charitable Lead Trusts.

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