



Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities of Members of the Board of Trustees of The Wild Center

The museum was formed based on the vision and work of a small committed group of enthusiastic volunteers. By the time the museum opened its doors in 2006 over 6000 had contributed time, energy and funds to make the museum a reality. From this broad constituency, a relative handful of individuals have been asked to assume the special responsibility and honor of serving as Museum Trustees. The performance of those asked to serve in this capacity is essential to the continued vitality and strength of the institution. For that reason, individuals who are honored with the designation of “Trustee” must understand clearly the responsibilities of that position.

Members of the Board of Trustees of The Wild Center serve as ultimate fiduciaries of The Wild Center in their oversight of institutional affairs in accordance with the Charter and Bylaws of the museum and as implemented through statements of mission, purpose and institutional plans. In serving in such a critical oversight capacity, Trustees of The Wild Center accept the responsibility to fulfill certain obligations which include the following:

- (1) Individual Trustees must demonstrate a continuing dedication and commitment to the Museum and to the concept and value of the education benefits of a regional science and natural history museum. In this regard, Trustees should strive to uphold and strengthen the Museum’s vision of becoming a leading learning institution serving the entire Adirondack region and maintaining world class quality in all that we do.
- (2) Trustees should accept the responsibility of providing financial support to the Museum through personal contributions to annual giving, to special fund-raising campaigns and to the identification and solicitation of potential additional contributors to the Museum. Trustees are expected to make an annual contribution at a level consistent with the individual capacity of the Trustee to give. The participation of each Trustee in a meaningful way in fund-raising efforts on both an annual and campaign basis enables the Museum to solicit funds from others by using its own Trustees as examples of commitment.
- (3) Trustees are expected to regularly attend and participate in meetings of the Board which are currently held four times each year. Trustees are additionally expected to review and familiarize themselves with materials distributed in preparation for such meetings so that the actions of the Board are based upon an informed and thoughtful consideration of the issues. Trustees accept expenses of Board attendance as personal expenses.

(4) Each Trustee should serve and actively participate in the work on one or more committees of the Board. Committee assignments are made by the President of the Board.

(5) Trustees should participate in other Board functions and activities because such participation strengthens those activities and presents members of the Board with opportunities to familiarize themselves with the scope of all mission based programs and projects.

(6) Trustees should promote The Wild Center favorably to the community, in business and professional situations and, when called upon, to foundations and governmental agencies. The personal contacts made by trustees of the Board can represent invaluable assistance to securing and achieving the goals of the Museum and in assisting its continuing growth and financial stability.

(7) Trustees should commit themselves to serving the Museum as a whole, rather than representing the interests of any particular constituency, to insure that the actions of the Board are taken for the benefit of The Wild Center and not for the benefit of any individual interest or group. Substantive information relating to issues should be referred by individual Trustees to the President of the Board or to the Executive Director.

(8) Trustees should recognize that the Board is a corporate body approving policies and monitoring the implementation of those policies while deferring to the Executive Director and administration of the Museum for the management of daily business.

(9) In carrying out their fiduciary and oversight responsibilities, trustees should be concerned with any situation that could cause even the appearance of a conflict of interest in accord with the current statement on conflicts of interest adopted by the Board. Any potential or actual conflict should be disclosed and handled in accord with that statement by bringing it forward to the President of the Board and the Executive Director. It should be noted that this policy is not intended to preclude any trustee from carrying out official duties as an elected official or employee of a federal, state or local government agency.

(10) Trustees should maintain the confidentiality of meetings or other communications of the Board, which may involve sensitive matters, deferring to the Chairman and President of the Board and the Executive Director to make any public disclosure.

(11) Trustees should take care to assure that they intend to speak and are perceived as speaking only for themselves and not for the Museum or the Board as a whole. Trustees should recognize the Executive Director, sometimes the President of the Board, is generally the public spokesperson for the Museum.

Trustees are elected by the full Board for a term designated by the Governance Committee and stated in the Bylaws. At the direction of the entire Board, the Governance Committee makes an assessment of an individual Trustee for purposes of re-nomination on the basis of Board participation, contributions to the Museum and fulfillment of the responsibilities of Trustees set forth above. These assessments occur at the conclusion of each term of a Trustee. Except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws of the Board, Trustees are eligible for re-nomination provided the Trustee has fulfilled his or her responsibilities and maintains the requisite commitment to the Museum and the Board.

Trusteeship for The Wild Center offers to those who serve as Trustees the rewards of pride in the continuing growth and development of the Museum, knowing they are significantly contributing to the Museum's ability to carry out its mission. Trustees promote to others the importance of how a deep and meaningful understanding of the natural world is essential to our ongoing Adirondack community conversation as we work together to solve current issues. The collective work of the Museum Board of Trustees, Advisory Board and staff ensure we are helping to educate and prepare future Adirondack stewards.

Current as of 7/5/2012