



Marilyn O'Rourke  
Mokena Community Public Library Trustee Candidate

1. Describe your interest in serving as a library trustee:

I became a member of the Mokena Friends of the Library shortly after moving to Mokena in 1991. As part of that group, I have served in many roles including president. Currently I serve as its secretary and a member of the book sorting/book sale teams. More recently, I have served as a Trustee on the Board, where I also serve as secretary. Because I feel that a vibrant and well-run library serves such an important role in the community, I want to allocate my time and efforts in support of the library's goals and mission.

2. What qualities do you consider necessary for an effective Trustee, and how do you demonstrate those qualities?

To be an effective Trustee involves becoming informed about the administration and operation of the library. This involves reviewing many documents, e.g. financial reports, revised policies, proposals, contracts, services, etc. At the board meetings, it requires regular attendance and active participation in the decision-making process. It also involves listening to any concerns of patrons and bringing them forward. I work hard to meet these obligations. To increase my skills as a Trustee, I attended the Illinois Library Association Conference in October 2024.

3. Provide examples of current or previous community service and leadership roles.

In addition to the library service described above, I am a member of the Lincoln Way Area Chorale. I served as an elected Board member for that group for two different terms. Currently, I serve as a Facilitator for the Renaissance Academy which provides continuing education for older adults. In my work life, I taught public health nursing at Rush University and served in multiple leadership roles there, e.g. Faculty Senate, Curriculum Committee, Search Committees, etc.

4. What do you see as the Library's role in the community now and in the future?

The library's slogan is that "we are more than just books." This means that the library provides programming that enlightens and increases the skills of participants. It subscribes to data bases and resources that provide 24/7 access to reference material, language skills, academic (non-credit) courses, and much more. It looks at the needs of patrons and strives to meet them, e.g. computers and printers, bicycle repair station, loan of eyeglass readers, WIFI and hot spots, the Library of Things (disc golf, sewing machine, etc.). As Artificial Intelligence becomes more prevalent, the library may play an important role in helping patrons navigate the changes.