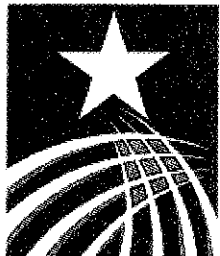


# Getting on Board!

## Tools for Board Development and Assessment



**Getting on Board!**



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Education  
Office of Commonwealth Libraries

This project was supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
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Bureau of Library Development  
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## **Levels of Library Service in Pennsylvania**

### **Who is Responsible for Public Libraries?**

The Office of Commonwealth Libraries is the agency charged with providing leadership for the development, improvement and coordination of library services and systems in the Commonwealth. Within the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Office is directed by the Deputy Secretary of Education and Commissioner for Libraries, who is appointed by the Secretary of Education. The Governor's Advisory Council works with the Deputy Secretary of Education and Commissioner for Libraries to adopt policies related to the work of two Bureaus: the Bureau of the State Library and the Bureau of Library Development.

The Bureau of Library Development provides a direct consulting and continuing education program to all district library centers, local public, school and academic libraries, government officials and state institution libraries covering all phases of library management and operation. It administers a program of state aid to public libraries and promotes sharing of library resources through a variety of cooperative programs affecting libraries statewide. The Bureau coordinates a program of library services to people with disabilities in Pennsylvania. Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds and the Keystone Library Facilities Grant Program are also administered by this Bureau.

To accomplish its goals for public libraries, the Bureau of Library Development works primarily with administration staff of two agencies: district center libraries and systems.

#### **What are District Centers?**

A district center is a strong local library designated to serve as a source of assistance to citizens and local libraries within its district. On the staff is a District Consultant, who provides advisory assistance to local librarians, municipal officials, interested citizens and trustees within the district through periodic visits, district meetings and workshops. The Bureau of Library Development assigns a staff member liaison to work with the District Consultant in each district center to provide services to the local public libraries. The District Consultant helps channel and interpret information from the state in order to improve services to the community. The District Consultant helps the local libraries develop long-range plans for each public library and for the district, and he/she oversees the proper filing of each library's annual report.

#### **What are Library Systems?**

Library systems are groups of libraries that join together for financial support and to improve the level of service provided to all users within the service area. Examples of such services are: coordinated activities to increase financial support for system members; coordinated planning for and evaluation of services; resource sharing among the libraries in the system; in-service training for system library staff and trustees; and services to the localities in the service area that do not have designated local libraries.

The service area for the system is usually one county, but the service area for a district could include many counties.

### **Regions: The Beginning of a New Chapter**

In an attempt to foster more planning and cooperation in a larger geographic level, the Office of Commonwealth Libraries has divided the state into eight regions. The regions use the existing administrative structures of districts and systems to achieve an overall goal of maximizing resources and services in the face of declining local and state funding. This initiative has led to lower collection development costs through consortial purchasing of database licenses and other electronic resources. Regions are also planning continuing education for staff and trustees, using funds provided by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries. It is anticipated that, through regional planning and cooperation, libraries can both achieve modest to significant cost savings and increase services to the public.

### **Different Roles for Trustees and Friends Groups**

Library "Friends" are civic-minded patrons who form support groups that raise library funds, help promote library awareness, and help expand and improve library service. The difference between a Friends group and the Board of Trustees is that only the trustees (not the Friends) have legal fiduciary responsibility and make library policy. Friends often host fund-raising events, but the money they raise can be thought of for library "extras" rather than for essential general operating expenditures. It is up to the trustees to secure adequate funds for general operating and for future growth by soliciting local government officials, businesses and individuals.

### **Fiduciary Responsibilities Concerning the Appropriate Use of Funds and Audits**

Trustees bear ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the library. Legal obligations include securing funds and directing the finances of the library. Responsible oversight for these financial resources is crucial to guarantee a positive financial picture, both now and in the future. Every trustee on the library board must be aware of where the library's resources come from, how to increase them, and how to use the funds to best serve the community.

The entire board must ensure that all financial procedures are legal, transparent and honest. Fiscal integrity entails full compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws. Above what the law requires, the board should impose upon itself the highest standards of fiscal integrity and accountability. For example, all financial decisions are made in an open meeting to ensure that each trustee, the library director, and the general public is aware of them. No board member or family member should benefit from an action of the board without proper disclosure.

Annually, the library submits a report to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries that includes all financial data and required statistics. In addition to the annual report, if the total state aid in the library budget is over \$50,000, an audit (performed according to Generally Accepted Auditing Standards) is required annually. If the state aid is under \$50,000, an audit is required every third year, with a financial review in the intervening years. Regarding audits, the board should focus special attention on auditor independence, transparency, accountability in governance, and full financial disclosure.

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Congratulations on your role as a public library trustee! You understand that public library boards are charged with the strategic, long-term success of their libraries. The honor of serving as a public library trustee comes with responsibility for several areas of public library governance, including advocacy, fund raising, policies, public relations and more. For trustees to be effective, specific skills or core competencies must be exercised.

It is the intent of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries to give you detailed knowledge of what is expected of you and recommendations from peers on how to help your board succeed. When library boards are successful, libraries are successful, and everyone benefits.

Public library trustees should demonstrate the core competencies required to handle their main areas of responsibility:

- Library governance
- Advocacy
- Fund raising
- Policies
- Board as employer
- Public relations

The guidelines in this book were created to reinforce those competencies in a meaningful way. On these pages, you will get advice from experienced trustees that may benefit you at any point during your term. In addition, you will see comments from library staff and patrons who expressed personal appreciation for the important work accomplished by their boards. Please refer to this helpful resource to learn more as you take on your new role or to refresh what you already know.

### **This multimedia toolkit includes:**

- Recommended Orientation Plan for New Trustees
- Summary of Trustee Training DVDs
- Job Description for Trustees
- Library Board Member Agreement
- Trustee Best Practices Grid, Expanded
- Trustee Best Practices Grid
- Code of Ethics
- Self-Assessment Tool for Non-profit Boards
- Library Bill of Rights
- Bylaws Checklist
- Sample Budgets
- Sample Director Interview Questions
- Sample Director Evaluation Form
- "A Year in the Life of a Public Library Trustee"
- Glossary of Terms
- Resources
- Advocacy Plan

*"The fundamental role of a trustee and the full board is to create the future."*

*Michael Kumer  
Executive Director/Associate Dean  
Duquesne Non-profit  
Leadership Institute*

**GET ON BOARD:**

By now, if you are a new trustee, you have met with your library director, watched the overview video, and reviewed some of the supplementary material that has been provided. You should be getting a clearer understanding of how much your efforts contribute to the success of the library and how much they benefit your community in general.

To “get on board” you’ll need to:

- Review the trustee job description
- Understand and practice identified core competencies for library boards of trustees
- Review the bylaws checklist
- Complete the self-assessment checklist
- Review the Trustee Best Practices Grid
- Review and sign the Library Board Member Agreement
- Become familiar with the material in the guidelines and appendix.

Samples of many commonly used documents are in the appendix. Your library director and/or another trustee may help you with any specific questions regarding these documents.

Your materials are presented in a binder so you can continue to update the information by adding documents and customizing it with information from your community library.

*“A library card is your key to the world. It’s your key to books that take you to far-away places. It’s your key to the Internet. It’s your key to life, really it is.”*

*Mark McDonnell, Age 17*





# Your board's mission and vision

## The roles of library trustees and elected officials

As a public library trustee, your primary responsibility is the success of the library, both now and in the future. Trustees have a legal responsibility to successfully maintain a free, public, nonsectarian library for all residents in the library's service area.

Representing the interests of the library, trustees:

- Manage (and have legal authority over) the library's policies, rules, and regulations
- Control all funds
- Plan the library's future and create an action plan
- Advocate and raise funds on behalf of the library
- Accumulate reserve funds for facility enhancements, renovation and construction
- Evaluate the library's performance regularly to ensure objectives are met
- Hire and evaluate the library director
- Contract for cooperative services
- Protect the library from liability
- Prosecute those who steal or damage library property.

Representing the interests of the community, elected officials may:

- Appropriate funds for the library or levy a special library tax
- Appoint members of the library board and fill vacancies
- Hold property on behalf of the library
- Exercise eminent domain on behalf of the library
- Purchase or lease lands and/or buildings for library purposes
- Assist with cooperative purchasing, maintenance, snow removal, health benefits and more.

Expectations of trustees

- Respect the important role libraries play in the life of the community.
- Participate in orientation.
- Attend meetings regularly.
- Devote the time and attention required.
- Share your skills on committees.
- Understand the community and its needs.
- Stay current on library trends and issues.
- Exercise discretion and respect confidentiality outside board meetings.
- Avoid conflicts of interest and put personal agendas aside when making decisions.
- Actively support the implementation of board decisions.
- Advocate for the library with elected officials and in the community.
- Understand your role and how it differs from the role of the library director.
- Have an open mind and respect differing viewpoints.
- Respect diversity.
- Advocate for equitable pay and benefits for library personnel.
- Understand and respect the role of the director.
- Work cooperatively with other board members.
- Focus on a secure future for the library.
- Participate actively in library programs and activities.

*"I think every board meeting, to some degree, is a planning meeting."*

*John Havrilla*

*President, Library System of*

*Lancaster County Board*

*System Liaison, Lancaster Public Library*



***Getting on Board!***

## The responsibilities of trustees

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Responsibilities of trustees usually divide into three categories: legal; policy making and planning; and evaluation.

Legal obligations include securing funds and directing the finances of the library. Trustees must secure funds from a variety of sources, including funds from local government, from corporations, from individuals and from grant sources. Possibly the most important role of the trustee, proactive solicitation of funds ensures a strong, vibrant, healthy library in the present and positive growth for the future.

In many communities, where municipal officials must scrutinize expenditures and justify funding, constant advocacy efforts are necessary to maintain local government funding. Advocacy efforts will include regular presentations at municipal meetings and other, more informal contacts with officials to update them on library services or to ask their advice regarding future growth. These meetings help to develop strong relationships that are essential for successful library development.

The preparation of budgets is an important obligation in the administration of funds. Directing the finances involves determining (along with the library director) how the money is spent. A budget reflects library priorities. For example, if programs are important to the community, money must be set aside in the budget for those programs. As representatives of the people, board members must protect the use of public monies and serve the best interests of the people.

Find more information about your financial obligations in Sections 2 and 3 of these guidelines.

Policy making and planning are also essential to quality library service and require a library trustee's attention. Using the powers granted under the law, library boards create operating and administrative policies, one of which is to select a library director and give that person charge of the day-to-day functioning of the library. Regular evaluation of the library and input from your library director will help you develop new policies or adjust existing policies to continue moving the library in a positive direction.

Well-written policies support the library's goals and objectives, and they provide the framework for the library director to manage daily activities. Management of the policies demands knowledge of the library's mission, vision, plan, functions, and services.

During each board meeting, some time should be set aside to plan for the future and evaluate the group's progress. Trustees will set goals and objectives for library service over a period of time (usually five years). Planning leads to strategic, defined service directions. Evaluation is a necessary step in the planning process. Each year, the board should review its plan to assess progress toward meeting the established goals and objectives and make any changes that are appropriate to the current situation in the library or community.

*"Being a library trustee is really all about creating relationships and connections in the community. A library trustee represents the community to the library but also represents the library to the community."*

*Mary Garm*

*Administrator, Lackawanna County Library System*

## The responsibilities of trustees (cont)

Board members can be held liable for not fulfilling their legal responsibilities. Trustees should be careful to:

- Properly manage the library's money
- Have written policies, rules and regulations, and to abide by them
- Have open meetings, except when an executive session is required
- Thoroughly understand every issue before casting a vote
- Avoid conflicts of interest.

*Pennsylvania trustees have legal rights and responsibilities under the provisions of The Library Code.*

*The major responsibility is to maintain a free, public, nonsectarian library which serves the informational, educational and recreational needs of all the residents of the area for which its governing body is responsible, by providing free access (including free lending and reference services) to an organized and currently useful collection of printed items and other materials and to the services of a staff trained to recognize and provide for those needs. (The Library Code: Article I, Section 102)*

The library board must function as a whole. While presenting a unified team, trustees may simultaneously fulfill individual roles related to advocacy, fund raising, public relations/marketing, and more – all in alignment with the board's vision and plan.

Collectively, the library board is required by law:

- To elect (at minimum) a president, secretary and treasurer from among board members
- To provide for bonding of the treasurer
- To submit an annual report to the funding agency. The report must itemize receipts and expenditures; show the condition of the library; give numbers of volumes, etc. held, lost or withdrawn; and added; give the number of registered borrowers and readers; provide a statement of the circulation of material; and include other information and suggestions as seem desirable. (See The Library Code: Sec. 414)
- To submit a copy of the annual report and required audit or financial review to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries
- To make the accounts of the treasurer available for audit
- To conduct open meetings, except when executive sessions are required.

By law, library trustees receive no salary but may receive reimbursement for necessary expenses.

When 5% of the registered voters so petition, the municipality must submit to referendum the question of issuing bonds for operating funds, purchasing grounds and/or erecting a building.

Rules and regulations of Commonwealth Libraries require certain levels of financial effort in order to qualify for state aid under the provisions of The Library Code. Trustees should make sure their library meets those requirements.

## **Membership, term limits and other opportunities**

Your public library board should be representative of the community it serves. By including representative opinions and varied perspectives, you will help the board make the best possible decisions. And by respecting term limits, you widen the pool of contributors who can bring fresh views and unique skills to the board.

### *Boards should reflect the communities they serve.*

Look around at the board. Is it representative of the community? Does it reflect your community's diversity and varied interests? Does it include members of differing ages, occupations, race, and culture? Creating a well-balanced board takes forethought and strategy, and the result is a strong, cohesive, effective board which represents multiple talents and accurately represents the population it serves.

So how are new trustees invited to participate on the board?

Where two or more municipalities contribute to the support of a local library, each municipality appoints trustees. The supporting municipalities mutually agree to the number serving on the board, as long as the number of members totals seven or nine.

Although political bodies may appoint trustees, it is expected that the trustees will not represent partisan political interests when carrying out their board responsibilities. As trustees, they serve solely in the best interests of the library. As champions for the library, trustees separate their decision-making from external politics except to take into account political realities as they influence the library's prospects.

When municipal officials are responsible for appointing trustees, the current board has the responsibility of communicating to them the skill sets and qualities they seek. A board that has managed its affairs smoothly is respected and well positioned to influence the choice of future trustees.

Qualified individuals will want to join the board if it is known to function so efficiently and professionally that board membership is known to be a satisfying experience. A board that enjoys its work and produces excellent library services will be successful in recruiting.

To identify individuals who are desirable candidates as trustees, some library boards have a governance committee. Some may refer to it as a nominating committee, and others may call it a board development or board strengthening committee. Regardless of its name, everyone agrees that it is one of the most important committees because it encourages positive change. Ideally, this committee will work months in advance to identify the expertise and qualities which would most benefit the library board at that time, then seek individuals with that skill set.



***Getting on Board!***

## Strategic Selection and Recruitment

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Strategic selection and recruitment of new trustees is critical to success. A board vacancy provides the opportunity to expand the board's scope of capabilities. When selecting individuals for your board's vacant seats, you should seek candidates with specific characteristics, such as:

- Belief in the importance of library services and a commitment to library advancement
- Devotion of time and effort to advocate for the library and raise funds to support it
- Visualization of the ideal library for your community
- Commitment to an action plan to realize the library's ideal future
- Development and maintenance of positive relationships with community, municipal and state representatives
- Ongoing education through attendance at district, state and national trustee events, such as the Trustee Institute and other professional meetings
- Participation in District Advisory Council meetings to stay aware of statewide activities and to help direct the cause of district library services for member libraries.

Many trustees report that they did not really understand the responsibilities of a board member, and they may have underestimated the level of commitment that is required and the amount of time they would have to devote to library business.

To avoid this situation, be sure potential trustees know what is expected of them. A potential candidate for a trustee position should be given a written statement of the duties and responsibilities of the office. They should understand your expectation that they will sign an agreement to serve the library for a designated period of time.

One way to familiarize candidates with the board's vision and activities is to ask them to serve on a committee. Recruiting from your Friends group is another good idea.

Board responsibilities are very important to the libraries and communities within the Commonwealth. Therefore, an interested candidate should not accept the position if other commitments prevent full participation. Trustees must be able to attend board meetings without scheduling conflicts.

*"Ideally the trustees come from strength in the community, from many different industries, with knowledge of the movers and shakers in their community and can very effectively advocate for funds coming to the library from industry, from local government, from individuals, from about every source that's out there. That, I really do think, is one of the primary responsibilities of a trustee."*

*C. Ashear Barr*

*Trustee, Centre County Library and  
Historical Museum*

## Desirable Skills For Trustees

Effective boards are composed of committed individuals with a broad range of complementary talents, including skills in:

- Advocacy and lobbying
- Business management
- Construction
- Finance
- Human resources
- Law
- Mediation
- Public relations and marketing
- Public speaking
- Resource development and fundraising
- Technology.

Board expertise may be supplemented through use of consultants, advisory committees or volunteers.

### *How long does a trustee serve?*

When a library board is first established, one-third of the trustees serve for one year, one third serve for two years, and one third serve for three years. New trustees serve for a three-year term. They may serve for a consecutive term, after which they would be expected to leave the board for a minimum of one year. Trustees serve a maximum of seven consecutive years.

People who are appointed to fill the places of individuals whose terms have expired serve for three years. Individuals who are appointed to fill vacancies are appointed for the remainder of the unexpired terms.

To help trustees remain focused and reinforce their commitment, an annual agreement is signed as a reminder of their ongoing obligation to continue to serve the board and the library. This is a good time for individual trustees to assess their effectiveness and for board leadership to identify areas that may need to be addressed.

Trustees who complete their board terms may continue to support their library in a number of ways: volunteering at fundraising events, continuing advocacy efforts, serving on committees, or in other capacities.

### *Consent agenda*

To ensure that meeting time is spent well, make it a priority to discuss critical problems and make action plans to resolve them. A consent agenda (see Appendix) is recommended, because it allows you to focus on progress-oriented actions and major discussion points, rather than small issues, such as choosing a paint color for library shelves.

At times, it is best to use the committee structure to address certain issues or topics and have the committee bring information to the full board. This time-saving model also allows for best use of each trustee's areas of expertise.

If an issue arises which poses a conflict of interest for one or more trustees, it's advised that those trustees leave the room during the discussion and return when the group moves on to the next issue. By giving board members the privacy they need to openly talk about a decision, you avoid uncomfortable and inappropriate situations.

## Planning For Your Community Library's Ideal Future

Because your board is entrusted with your library's future, planning is a critical part of your role. That means identifying your objectives, choosing the strategies that will work best for you, following an action plan to realize your vision, and regularly evaluating your progress to ensure that you are moving in the right direction.

*"You know, libraries are very interesting because people perceive libraries as these frame buildings with books. Libraries are so much more. And people perceive librarians as people who are there to give you books. But librarians do so much more. So, when you have a presence like this in a community, you also have a kind of community center."*

Dr. Douglas Lawrence  
Friend of the Abington Community Library



Planning is a continuous process. For best results, it should be specific to your community's library and include the following:

- A statement of community needs incorporated into the library vision statement
- A statement of the library's mission, which describes the services it will provide to meet community needs
- A statement of the library's goals with the objectives which convert to action
- A timetable for achieving goals, both short and long range
- Details of the services, programs and developments desired
- Data supporting the needs included in the plan: surveys, census data and studies
- A plan-within-a-plan for implementation
- General assignments for the sections of the plan (Example: The plan suggests closer relationships with community groups. The assignment would be to the board and the staff to develop ways to do this.)
- Examination of the budget for ways to begin implementation (Example: Consider shifting some budget amounts from one purpose to another and think of ways to support a new project from the plan.)
- Work with public officials to achieve financial needs
- Development of a flexible public relations and publicity plan to respond as needed
- Reasonable priorities which recognize the capacity of the library and the community.



**Getting on Board!**

## Effective Meetings

The excitement of a board meeting comes from sharing your opinions and listening to what others have to say. Because your board should be representative of the community, there will be varied perspectives that may help the board make the best possible decisions.

Any individual who agrees to serve as a library trustee is also making a commitment to regularly attend board meetings and take part in board activities. When all board members are present and actively participating in the meeting, you have the perfect environment for hearing all points of view and making collective decisions based on that input.

*“I think there are two general areas of criteria that define the perfect trustee. The first one is having an incredible, outrageous passion for the mission of the library itself. They passionately believe in libraries and the power of libraries to have a transformational impact on their communities. The second criteria has to do with leadership qualities. Do the trustees have wisdom? Are they caring individuals? Are they compassionate people? Do they collaborate well with others, not only on the board of directors but with the library director, him or herself as well? And to the extent that they have the superb leadership characteristics combined with their passion for the mission for the library. Those are the two best predictors available to us to look for who is going to serve in an outstanding capacity as a library trustee.”*

*Michael Kumer*

*Executive Director/Associate Dean*

*Duquesne Non-profit Leadership Institute*

### *Required document*

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a library board has an important first step: to develop a written statement to differentiate the function of the library board and that of the library director/staff. More information on this collaborative relationship is detailed in section 5.

Public library boards must also follow – and update when necessary – a set of written bylaws that provide structure and guidance for conducting business. These board-specific rules outline the processes that the board must follow. Bylaws must be clearly written to avoid misinterpretation and confusion. Periodically, bylaws may be amended as necessary. Boards sometimes turn to an attorney to review their bylaws to be sure they are comprehensive and within the bounds of the board’s legally ordained powers.

Please refer to the Bylaws Checklist in the appendix. At the minimum, bylaws should specify:

- Occurrence of regular and special meetings that are open to the public
- Titles, duties, and terms of office for members and board officers
- Requirements for establishing a quorum
- Election procedures
- Procedures for standing and special committees
- Conduct for board meetings (for example, Robert’s Rules of Order)
- Process for amendment of bylaws.



**Getting on Board!**



## **Recommended Documents and Procedures**

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Library boards function best if they have agreed-upon procedures for conducting their business. The following should be managed consistently:

- Dates, times, places for meetings and methods for changing them
- Preparation of the agenda
- Format of minutes and responsibility for recording them and filing as public documents
- Titles and responsibilities of officers
- Relationship of library director to board and director's role in board meetings
- Legal responsibilities and business matters that require review by legal counsel
- List of records that must be retained and how to access them
- Required and supplemental reports
- Outline of budget procedure
- Clarification of financial reports and bills that the board wants to see
- Crisis management plan
- Identification of a spokesperson for the board
- Committee assignments
- Statements detailing relationships between Friends of the Library and the board
- Statements pertaining to relationship between board and staff
- Statements regarding the use and coordination of volunteers.

An effective board provides an ongoing program of trustee education. Ideally, that program should include:

- Time on the board's agenda for the review of programs and services offered by the library so that each board member is aware of these activities
- Time on the agenda for brainstorming and for exploring the backgrounds and talents of the board members (and staff) to identify strengths
- Completion of core training courses, such as those included with this multimedia toolkit
- Attendance at Commonwealth, regional or local Trustee Institutes
- Attendance at conferences that focus on issues related to your library's future success
- Access to and discussion of current state and national professional literature, as well as information and reports provided by the district library center and Commonwealth Libraries
- Visits to other libraries in and out of the state, as well as attendance at board meetings of other library systems or libraries.

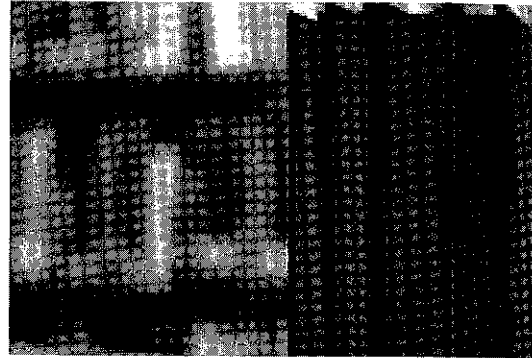
## Recommended Documents and Procedures

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### *Contents of a consent agenda*

Items commonly found on consent agendas include:

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Confirmation of a decision that has been discussed previously
- Chief executive's report
- Committee reports
- Informational materials
- Updated organizational documents
- Routine correspondence.



### *Using a consent agenda*

Meeting time is valuable. It's the time you set aside to review, prioritize, and plan as a group. A consent agenda helps streamline that precious meeting time so you can focus on the topics and issues that matter most. According to BoardSource, a consent agenda is "a bundle of items that is voted on, without discussion, as a package. It differentiates between routine matters not needing explanation and more complex issues needing examination." The consent agenda requires seven steps:

- Set the meeting agenda
- Distribute materials in advance
- Read materials in advance
- Introduce the consent agenda at the meeting
- Remove (if requested) an item from and accept the consent agenda
- Approve the consent agenda
- Document acceptance of the consent agenda.

For more information on consent agendas, visit [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org).

## Board Self-assessment and Evaluation

As was stated in Section 1.3, planning is a continuous process. Evaluation is an important step in that process to ensure that your board is following the plan to meet its objectives. Because situations may change, plans may also need to change. Evaluation allows the board to determine if and when a plan should be adjusted to align with those changes.

A thorough evaluation is recommended annually; interim evaluations may be done for ongoing projects, such as advocacy and public relations plans. A good time for the annual evaluation is January, after the data from the previous year's work is available. You and your fellow trustees may use that information to plan specific activities for the following 12 months.

For practical assessment tools, please refer to the appendix. There you will find a Self-Assessment to Evaluate a Non-profit Board of Directors and the expanded Trustee Development Grid.

*"It is because of the people who have gone before me that my library is as great as it is. So it almost feels like the phrase, "I'm standing on the shoulders of giants," by the people that have come and served before me."*

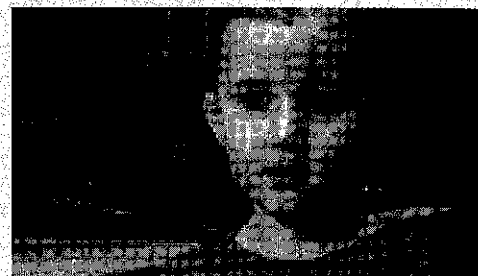
Kevin Service

Trustee, Adamstown Public Library  
Board Member, Library System of  
Lancaster County



*"I love these books and the library, and I like the books here about princesses, fairytales ... and dinosaurs and trains and dogs. They're all here. Thank you, trustees."*

Katy Richards, Age 4



**Getting on Board!**

## Fostering Relationships

Public libraries need advocates as much as the public needs libraries. As a trustee, you are in a unique position to represent your library because you are actively involved as a volunteer, and you are a tax-paying constituent as well. While a library employee may be perceived as self-serving when speaking on behalf of the library or requesting support for it, you will most likely be viewed as a passionate supporter who represents the community at large.

Developing and maintaining relationships with people of all ages and interests in your community means you'll learn more about what your patrons and potential patrons need and want from the library. The information will prove useful when it's time for you and other trustees to add or update policies, make decisions about library services, and plan the library's future.

When you speak positively and speak often about the library, people will come to associate you with it. Many trustees reported that some people who had little to no existing knowledge of what today's library offers have eventually begun approaching the trustees with questions and ideas. Because opportunities constantly present themselves, these conversations may take place in grocery stores, at civic meetings, on the golf course, within the workplace, or around a picnic table. Regardless of where they occur and how long they last, the important thing is to convey a positive message to your listeners about the benefits of your community library.

When the time comes to send letters of request for financial support or rally a group to help lobby for your cause, you will have an interested, engaged group of willing helpers.

*"... almost my entire board attended our district Trustee Institute and we learned something very simple but we think is practical to do. Add a personal note to the letter we send to the community. So, this March, we did a letter writing campaign and my whole board ... added a personal note to their friends, neighbors, family, and relatives. As a result, we got 25 percent return, and we were so delighted and so surprised to see the result."*

Shu Qiu  
Director, Dalton Community Library



**Getting on Board!**

## In The Community

Everywhere you go, you encounter new opportunities to tell others about the positive benefits your library provides to the community ... Internet access, interlibrary book loans, database access, reference librarian services, personal development programs, and so much more.

Be prepared to take advantage of these opportunities by preparing your “elevator speech” or “parking lot speech” in advance. These terms refer to the short time it would take to travel several floors in an elevator or cross a parking lot to your car. It is just enough time to share these important points:

- Your main message (Ex: contribute to your library through volunteerism, attend the upcoming fundraiser, strengthen current advocacy efforts by contacting your legislators, and so on)
- A short anecdote or meaningful fact that supports your main message
- The reason your message is so important (Ex: we’re short on staff because of budget concerns, we’re raising money for a teen activities area, we’re lobbying for additional funding, etc.)
- A call to action (in other words, a specific thing you would like the listener to do).

Such casual conversations can lead to significant future benefit for your library and your community. Your message is so important, in fact, that you should plan to share it regularly with the municipal government as well.

A proven model for success is based on consistent, positive reports to the local officials who may play a role in determining your library’s future. In Section 2.4, you’ll learn more about how to create an effective advocacy plan that others have used with great success.

*“The advice I would give to a new trustee is to develop a professional relationship with the director and staff so that there is mutual respect and understanding. That will provide a greater opportunity to achieve the goals and objectives of the library.”*

Gus Vlassis, Ed.D.  
 Treasurer, Dalton Community Library  
 Board of Trustees  
 Past Chair, Trustee Division,  
 Pennsylvania Library Association



**Getting on Board!**

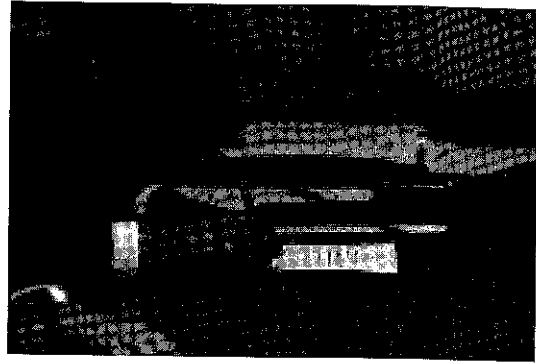
## With State Legislators

Effective advocacy begins with a clear understanding of your library in relation to its needs, services, resources, and vision.

To stay current on issues which may affect your library, you should maintain membership in professional associations, such as the American Library Association (ALA), the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA), and others. As a member, you will receive regular, updated communications about all things related to library advancement. Other organizations, such as Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries (PCBL), also send regular messages to keep members advised on library topics.

Attendance at library-specific conferences is also recommended. There, you can find out what's happening that may impact your library, and you will have the opportunity to meet like-minded people and share ideas. Such networking may be helpful on many levels during your term as a trustee.

Regular communication with state legislators means you will be in a position to share the benefits your library provides to the community and to tell legislators how changes or proposed changes may affect your library.



*“Be early, be brief in your presentation, and stay for the entire meeting. Period.”*

Don Bliss

Board President, Palmyra Public Library



***Getting on Board!***

## Effective Advocacy Plans

An advocacy plan is the intentional and strategic use of political activities including lobbying, educating the public and conducting community research that allows the library to better fulfill its mission. Creating an effective advocacy plan begins with knowledge of library issues such as funding, censorship and Internet use, among others. Implementation of an advocacy plan requires a mindset recognizing that the financial integrity of the library rests with its board of trustees.

Advocacy is an ongoing process, so trustees should develop and maintain relationships with officials who make decisions that may impact your library. Use your connections to share your library's message and the reason your message is so important to the people you serve. Regular, positive communication helps educate others about the services and programs your library offers, and it builds a strong foundation that is helpful when you request support.

It is best to work with your library director to define the goals and strategies you'll use to advocate for your library. Advocacy is everyone's responsibility. As a result, board members should work collaboratively to:

- Outline your library's advocacy goals and objectives, as well as the outcomes you desire. Are you seeking new legislation? Additional funding? Increased public awareness?
- Assess the situation to identify potential sources of support or opposition. Are there organizations with which you can partner to help share your message?
- Identify critical elements of your advocacy plan, such as a steering committee, budget, and volunteer support.
- Develop a communication plan which includes your main message, your target audiences, and your strategies. Include communication tactics, such as letters to

officials, municipal presentations, news releases, fliers, social media messaging, a speaker's bureau, and more.

- Develop a realistic action plan with assigned tasks and deadlines. Recruit others to work with you. This reduces the board's workload, and it may be a good way to identify potential trustees.
- Evaluate your plan regularly, and adjust it as necessary. Legislation, funding, and other factors may change over time. For this reason, it is good to have a flexible plan.
- Document your results to consider when creating future advocacy plans.

At the minimum, your advocacy plan should include monthly visits to your municipal officials. You may want to request time on the meeting agenda to ensure you have some time to speak. Then you – in cooperation with other trustees, Friends, or patrons – should make a brief presentation each month to share positive stories about your library's successes and community contributions. Once a year (usually in September), you may request financial support.

For more ideas on how to advocate for your library, please refer to "A Year in the Life of a Trustee" in the Appendix.



**Getting on Board!**

## Plan For Success

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To summarize, trustees will get the best results if they:

- Set an example by making a meaningful annual personal financial contribution. A meaningful contribution is one that:
  - Is representative of your role as a trustee;
  - Is as large a contribution as your means allow; and
  - Is a financial gift of an amount that sets a positive example for others.
- Coordinate municipal visits with Friends, patrons, and even children, to share their stories about the library's value.
- Devote some time each month to plan and conduct advocacy efforts.
- Connect with decision makers monthly to keep them informed about your library and its benefits, yet request financial support only once a year.
- Thank those whose contributions enable you to serve your community with materials, programs, services and expertise.

*"I think we have to be very strategic about advocacy. I think we need to talk about it at every board meeting. I think we need to have an advocacy plan for the year, just the way we have a strategic plan."*

Janice Trapp

Director, James V. Brown Library





## Fiduciary Responsibilities

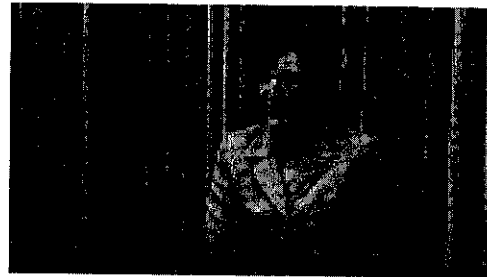
As a trustee, you are part of a board that is fully and legally responsible for the proper ethical management of library funds. That means you oversee the creation of your library's annual budget in alignment with strategic goals, you manage expenditures in good faith, and you regularly work to ensure that the library has sufficient operating and reserve funds. This section will tell you more about your fiduciary expectations, a typical library's sources of funds, and participation in generating additional revenue to supplement the budget.

Board members are entrusted with a number of fiduciary responsibilities, including:

- Preparation of the budget each year in collaboration with the library director
- Management of the approved budget
- Ensuring that funds are spent in an ethical manner
- Using financial report line items that conform to those used in the state annual report
- Excusing yourself from budget-related discussions and decisions which may pose a conflict of interest
- Raising funds for operating costs (if revenue does not cover expenses) and/or reserve funds to supplement operating funds
- Conformance to federal, state and local laws, as well as conformance to your bylaws.

*"... as a trustee you have a really important role to play because you really represent the community in a way that a professional librarian maybe doesn't. An elected official can look at this and say, 'You have a stake in this because that's where your salary comes from.' But as a trustee you can really represent the needs and the interests of the community and you can talk about where the library really makes a difference."*

Mary Garm  
Administrator, Lackawanna County  
Library System



**Getting on Board!**

## Sources of Funding

The two main sources of public library funding are state and local government. Federal contributions account for approximately 1%. Additional funding is derived from municipal governments, corporations, organizations, and individuals. The advocacy recommendations in Section 2 of this binder should have prepared you well to seek municipal funding.

Depending on your library's circumstances, you may receive funding through tax millage, per-capita allocations, or other earmarked funds from various sources.

When funds from those sources are not enough to cover your operating costs or maintain reserve funds, board members are responsible for raising the money that is necessary to continue working toward your ideal community library. As you consider your potential sources for funding, you should investigate opportunities with civic organizations, school districts, corporations, and matching gift programs.



### *Grant programs*

Grants may be requested for specific purposes. Each grant may have different qualifications for eligibility. Two specific grants that are common to public libraries are the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants and the Keystone, Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Grants for Public Library Facilities (commonly known as the Keystone Grants).

### Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) – The Federal Contribution

Federal support for libraries began in 1956 as the Library Services Act, which was designed to provide public library services to rural areas lacking them and to improve the quality of services offered. In 1963, it was renamed the Library Services and Construction Act and was extended to include urban areas. In 1996, it was renamed LSTA, replacing the word “construction” with “technology” to emphasize this growing means of obtaining information.

*“Involvement in fund raising and advocacy are the cornerstone of the success of the library. If not the trustee, then who?”*

Gus Vlassis, Ed.D.  
Treasurer, Dalton Community Library  
Board of Trustees  
Past Chair, Trustee Division, Pennsylvania  
Library Association

## Sources of Funding (cont)

### **Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services Funds**

Through Congressional allocations, funds have been distributed to each state for purposes deemed important in that state. The Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) distributes these funds, based on a population formula, to meet IMLS goals. To receive funds, each state develops an LSTA Five-Year Plan for IMLS approval. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries' Five-Year Plan supports the priorities of LSTA:

- Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;
- Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;
- Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
- Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;
- Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and
- Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

These priorities are the basis upon which competitive grants are awarded and state directed programs are implemented.

Information on how to apply for Pennsylvania's LSTA funds is sent to all libraries annually by the Office of

Commonwealth Libraries. Additional information is available from the district library centers and on the PDE website at [www.education.state.pa.us](http://www.education.state.pa.us).

### **Keystone, Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Grants for Public Library Facilities**

The Pennsylvania General Assembly passed legislation (Act 50) in 1993 to establish the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund. The fund was developed from a state bond issue and continued through a dedicated portion of the realty transfer tax. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries annually issues information about available grants in memoranda sent to all public libraries and municipalities in the Commonwealth.

Grants are provided to municipalities applying in conjunction with public libraries.

Grants available as of June 2009 were:

- Major grants for projects over \$50,000 to assist in the construction of new library buildings, and major renovations or additions to existing buildings
- Mini grants of \$50,000 or less to make public libraries accessible to persons with disabilities and for non-routine maintenance such as replacement of roofs, furnaces, etc.

Grants can provide up to 50% of the costs of eligible projects. This is a matching funds grant program. In 2010, mini grants under \$25,000 were available for immediate facility needs.

*Both LSTA and Keystone grant programs existed at press time and may have changed. Ask your library director for more information.*

## Annual Budget

Your library's annual budget should be developed by the board with input from the library director. Most libraries track finances using QuickBooks® software. It is recommended that your budget line items conform to those used in the state annual report. This eases the process of reporting to the Commonwealth and creating annual reports with common frames of reference. Please refer to the Appendix for sample budgets for libraries of varying size. Note: Because this information is critical to the operation of your library and may need to be accessed by others, all financial materials should remain in the library at all times.

*"Thank you for all of the funding and support that you have given the library and all the books and material so we can learn and read."*

Liam Seymour, Age 11

*"Thank you for this library with all different kinds of books."*

Katy Richards, Age 4

## Create and Follow a Funding Plan

Libraries can always benefit from additional funding. Once your operating costs have been met (hopefully through government sources), you can focus on raising the money needed to supplement or enhance that funding. Additional funding may allow your library to increase its offerings and plan for unexpected events.

*“Funding is always a challenge ... regardless of who it is that you’re going to visit. One of the things that you will always hear from an elected official is that there are more mouths to feed than there is food to give out. So your job really is to try to make a case for why it is that the library deserves those dollars and a good portion of those dollars that they have available to distribute.”*

Mary Garm  
Administrator, Lackawanna  
County Library System

Each board member should have an active role in the creation and implementation of an annual fund development plan. As a board member, you should:

- Show leadership with each board member making a meaningful annual personal financial contribution.
- Understand the relationship between public libraries and funding from local government.
- Create and implement an advocacy plan (please see appendix for a sample advocacy plan).
- Prepare a case statement -- a brief overview of your library’s history, pertinent statistics, and current offerings. Your library director can assist you with this.
- Discuss and document action plans for increasing tax allocations and personal and corporate donations.
- Discuss potential donors and add them to a database.
- Prepare formal documents and letters that will be used for fund development.
- Aim toward increasing your annual appeal letter to four letters per year: in February, May (summer reading club appeal), August (back to school letter) and November the first Friday after Thanksgiving.
- Always add a personal note to each letter. This usually increases your success rate to 20% or more.
- Decide which potential donors might contribute more than the average.
- Decide which board members will make a personal appointment with these donors to present a proposal for a contribution.
- Coordinate with the Friends and help each other with fundraising projects.
- Be sure to say thank you to donors.

## Importance of Policies

Written policies are essential to the successful operation of the library. Library policies are developed by the board to carry out the library's goals and objectives and to provide a guide for the director in the day-to-day operations of that program. Policies should be flexible and not overly rigid, and their language should be clear enough to avoid misinterpretation. They should be reviewed on a regular basis, perhaps by an attorney as well as the board, to see if they remain suitable for current application.

Policies are necessary to:

- Provide a framework that supports the library mission, philosophy and vision
- Support decision making and strategic planning
- Guide the staff in performing their duties and delivery of services
- Establish what services the library will provide and how they will be provided
- Outline procedures
- Ensure all customers are treated fairly and equitably.

A master's degree in library science equips your director to assist you with certain policies. Your library director is very familiar with your community, your patrons, and your library's staff, collections, programs and services. He or she can assist you with policies related to collection development, community room usage, Internet usage, human resources, and more.

When the board adopts or updates a policy, the library director will use it as a guide when planning and managing the daily activities within the library.



*“Trustees should feel very good about the role that they play. Looking around Pennsylvania’s libraries and libraries across the country, you can see that public libraries are doing now more than they ever have, and that’s due to the guidance and the policies that are developed by the boards.”*

Betsy Allen

Former Director, Schlow Centre Regional Library

*“Policies provide the framework for an organization.”*

Betsy Allen

Former Director, Schlow Centre Regional Library



**Getting on Board!**

## Types of Policies

Each library is different, as is the community in which it is located. Therefore, policies should be developed with careful thought given to the specific community which your library serves.

At minimum, libraries require policies related to:

- Mission statement (the foundation of the library is its mission statement)
- Human resources
- Collection development
- Use of facilities
- Operations (hours, fines, etc.)
- Ethics and conflicts of interest
- Collaboration with other libraries at both the county and regional level
- Continuing education for board and staff
- Public relations
- Internet/computer use
- Services to specialized groups (Americans with Disabilities Act).

A negotiated agreement should be signed annually with the district in which your library is located. It is important that all board members read, understand and follow it.

Your library's policies should be available to all boards and staff and to anyone in the community who wishes to see them.

Your director may assist you with developing certain policies. Another valuable source is the American Library Association ([www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)), which provides sample policies for consideration.

*"When it comes to setting policy, a board would be wise to take the counsel or the advice of the director."*

Kevin Service  
Trustee, Adamstown Area Library  
Board Member, Library System of  
Lancaster County

*"I'd like to thank the trustees for their good governance of libraries and how well they can put together policies that are so necessary when working in a public library."*

Kathy Thren  
Director, Adamstown Area Library

*"There's movies, princess books, fairy tales, dinosaurs, trains and other kinds of fun books. They're all here right at our libraries."*

Katy Richards, Age 4

## Scope of Responsibility

The most important decision you will make is choosing your community's library director. Ideally, the board's only employee will have a positive, collaborative relationship with the board. He or she will work daily to fulfill the future vision of your community library.

It is necessary to define and respect the scope of work for both the trustees and your library director. The director, with these guidelines and solid support from the board, is able to assign work and make decisions that support the board and ensure excellent library service.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Board of Trustees</b> <i>Purpose: Guide the library to accomplish amazing things</i>	<b>Library Director</b> <i>Purpose: Support the board's vision by aligning daily activities with it</i>
Fund development (for general operating expenses and a strong financial future for the library)	Strategic planning to ensure a strong financial future for the library; Presentations to local government officials of municipalities for continued, improved allocations; Annual fund drive letter; Solicitations to community leaders and businesses for private and corporate donations, both for the general operating budget and for increasing the endowment; Special events to connect with major donors; Some grant writing.	Is involved with board in strategic planning; Some grant writing.
Fund raising (outside general operating budget)	May assist Friends with their activities; Creates and implements a fundraising strategy as part of the overall strategic plan	Could help Friends with their activities
Policy making	Write, review, and adopt policies, such as: Bylaws; Human resources; Collection development; Community room usage; Patron behavior; Internet usage.	Assists board in policy writing, including: Collection development; Community room usage; Patron behavior; Internet usage; Human resources.



## Scope of Responsibility (cont)

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Board of Trustees</b> <i>Purpose: Guide the library to accomplish amazing things</i>	<b>Library Director</b> <i>Purpose: Support the board's vision by aligning daily activities with it</i>
Planning	Short- and long-term planning for: Mission and vision statements; Funding and financial management; Advocacy activities; Administration and management; Facility; Programs and services; Technology; Marketing and community partnerships; Other areas as needed.	Assists board in planning
Marketing and advocacy efforts	Work collaboratively with director and Friends	Work collaboratively with trustees and Friends
Human resources	Writes job description for director; Hires (and may fire) director; Evaluates and supports exceptional performance of director; Provides frequent (i.e., at least bi-weekly) feedback concerning job performance; Could also evaluate board.	Manages other staff, including writing job descriptions, hiring and evaluating
Everyday library management	N/A	Responsibility includes ordering books, planning programs, managing staff, etc.
Budgeting	Prepares annual budget	Consults with the board on budget preparation; Spends within the budget.



# Hiring of One Employee: The Library Director

Trustees are responsible for hiring, evaluating, encouraging, and supporting their single employee: the library director.

A successful, effective library director should demonstrate:

- Professional knowledge
- An understanding of current library best practices and new, emerging technology
- Technical ability
- Leadership skills
- Community involvement
- Strong communications skills
- Vision.

Directors should have working knowledge of:

- Finance
- Advocacy
- Strategic planning
- Marketing and public relations
- Management
- The community which the library will serve.

Now that you know what qualifications are necessary, you will need to advertise the position and invite qualified candidates to apply. Your local newspaper is a good place to advertise the position. To expand your reach, you may also consider listing the position with the Pennsylvania Library Association and the American Library Association. Statewide listservs and word of mouth are also good ways to spread the word among those who are involved in library services.

### *Interview process*

A good place to begin the hiring process is your system headquarters or district center. Your district consultant may have practical insight on many issues related to the director position. You may want to ask your consultant to work with you to develop interview questions, such as:

What about our organization interests you?

What do you consider to be your major accomplishments in your current job?

What do you feel is the library director's role in developing and supporting technology in the library?

Tell us about the most difficult personnel problem that you have had to deal with. How did you handle it? How was it resolved?

How would you create or identify opportunities for staff development?

What do you feel is the library director's role within the community outside of the walls of the library?

How would you explain to municipal officials why the library needs increased funding?

What experience have you had with long- and short-term budget projections? Please explain.

How would you develop a vision and mission for the future and then communicate that vision?

Have you ever been in a situation of having multiple supervisors or multiple sets of rules and regulations? How did you or would you handle that?

How would you raise the visibility of the library throughout the community?

What can you do for us that someone else can't do?

The interview process will help distinguish candidates who are the best fit for your community library at the time of hiring. Consider what your strongest needs are (creativity, flexibility, fiscal management, advocacy, etc.), and structure some of your interview questions around those skill sets.

## Compensation Packages

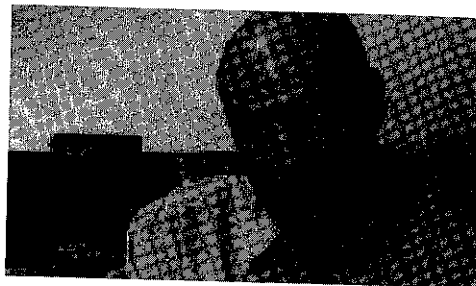
Your community deserves a director who is the kind of leader to move your library forward successfully. You already know that you are seeking a strong candidate who has multiple qualifications across many levels of expertise. Such an individual will be desirable to many employers, including those in the private commercial sector. A person with the talents and skills you require should be compensated fairly. To avoid losing current and prospective candidates, it is important to create a well-rounded compensation package that acknowledges and rewards such varied qualifications.

Tap into the talent of other board members to learn more about the current job market, the candidate pool, and market expectations relative to benefits.



*"We do our best to encourage boards of directors to understand that a board of directors has a single employee and that is the president and CEO—otherwise known more commonly as the library director."*

Michael Kumer  
Executive Director/Associate Dean,  
Duquesne Non-profit Leadership Institute



*"I think that library directors need the same sort of evaluation process that all other staff members receive so that they have the opportunity to articulate what they've done, to set a vision for the future and to be able to have measurable goals that they can use long term."*

Lisa Rives Collens  
District Consultant Librarian for  
Central PA District  
Schlow Centre Region Library

*"The reason you want to have a competitive package for the director of your library is because you're competing not only with other libraries, but you're competing in the open marketplace for talented labor."*

Kevin Service  
Trustee, Adamstown Public Library  
Board Member, Library System of  
Lancaster County

## Professional Development

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Today's fast-paced information world requires that library directors and staff keep informed about the latest trends and services for libraries. In recognition of the important role of professional development, the Library Code includes two standards for continuing education. At a minimum:

- For libraries that receive Quality Aid, the library director "shall annually attend at least eight hours of continuing education programs approved by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries.
- In addition, libraries that receive Incentive for Excellence Aid "must require at least six hours of continuing education every two years for paid staff working at least twenty hours per week, in direct support of the library service."

There are several ways to accomplish this.

1. Encourage your director and staff to join [www.webjunction.org](http://www.webjunction.org). There is no fee to join, and Pennsylvania librarians can take online courses for as little as \$5.00 per course through affiliating with the Pennsylvania pages on WebJunction.
2. Pay for your library director to become a member of the Pennsylvania Library Association. The PaLA offers a variety of continuing education opportunities at a lower cost to members.
3. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries offers limited financial assistance for library staff to attend library or related workshops.

## Evaluation of Your Library Director

So far, you have hired the best director for your community's library, and you have shared your expectations with him or her. By evaluating your director, you are able to continue that conversation in a constructive, motivating way.

As trustees fulfill their legal and policy-making functions, they become aware that evaluation of progress by the library and the librarian is an ongoing process. Evaluation takes place when choosing new programs, assigning budget amounts, granting salary increases, and discussing success and failures.

The most difficult evaluation, and one only the board can do, is the job performance rating. Major criteria include: how well the director has dealt with the staff and the public; how well administrative matters are handled; how well records are kept; how well the library budget has been followed; and how the director's strengths and talents are demonstrated in the library's service. Marketing and library programs are important, and these give the library positive visibility, so these should be included when evaluating a director.

Boards should approve a human resources policy for the director and include a time schedule for an annual review of job performance. The librarian and board should develop an annual plan against which to measure the progress made over the evaluation period.

There is a need for continual evaluation, so you can reinforce areas of strength and identify the areas which may benefit from improvement. Trustees represent the public and need to perform these duties to ensure competence and effectiveness in their libraries.

Please see the Appendix for a sample evaluation form.



*“... the library board does evaluation, but they do evaluation in the context of supporting, encouraging and inspiring the library director.”*

Michael Kumer  
Executive Director/Associate Dean,  
Duquesne Non-profit Leadership Institute

## **Promote Your Library**

Whether or not your library has a dedicated public relations or marketing employee, trustees assume that role when they accept their board position. Opportunities to promote your library happen every day.

By forming and maintaining relationships with decision makers, library patrons, and the general public, you will help position your library for future growth as it continues evolving to meet changing needs.

Libraries need public relations support for a number of reasons:

- Libraries are competing with online information providers, television, gaming, social activities and commercial booksellers for the public's attention.
- Because libraries are well regarded by most people, the library's needs may not be evident. Educating your patrons, potential patrons, decision makers, and elected officials will translate into additional support for your library.
- A strong need exists to increase public awareness about the reliable, academic information and professional resources available through public libraries.

*"There's lots of books, like 33."*

Katy Richards, Age 4



***Getting on Board!***

## Publicize Programs and Services

The benefits of a public library may be obvious even to its youngest patrons. But those benefits are not obvious to everyone. That is why it is so important to promote public libraries and market their programs and services. Trustees are expected to be familiar with their library's offerings and tell others about them.

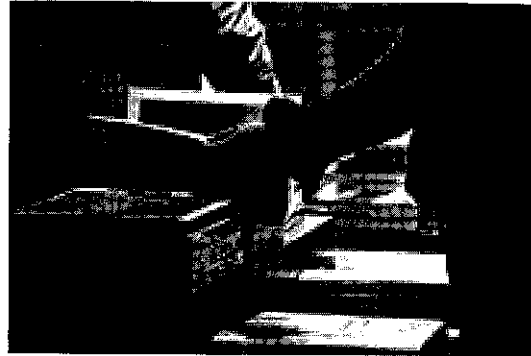
Aside from the obvious benefits of job creation and free access to materials, public libraries provide tangible economic benefits to all who use them. Consider these statistics from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 2008 Public Library annual reports\*:

- The 633 Commonwealth public libraries are under the control of 4,369 trustees and are supported faithfully by 39,857 Friends.
- Commonwealth public libraries expended \$338,597,131 and employed 199,631 staff.
- In 2008, Commonwealth public libraries served 5,663,970 registered borrowers who made almost 49,570,000 total visits to their library.
- During those visits, there were 8,675,906 uses of Internet-connected public computers, and nearly 69,841,000 items were circulated.
- Circulated items saved the public \$1.4 billion in the equivalent purchase price of the book, CD or DVD borrowed.
- For every \$1 invested in public libraries, \$5.50 is returned to the community.

*\*This is the most recent information available at press time. Please see your library director for the most current statistics.*

*"Every library has a PR department and those are the staff and the trustees and the Friends."*

Janice Trapp  
Director, James V. Brown Library



*"To have people talk to people is one of the most effective ways to get people in the door and to have other people get involved in the library."*

Barbara Ellis  
Director of Library Services,  
Hershey Public Library

## Actively Communicate with Stakeholders

Boards which have the greatest success in marketing their library make it a point to have a PR plan for the year and talk about that plan at each board meeting. Your board's plan may address misperceptions, clarify benefits, and strengthen relationships within the community.

New ways of reaching the public – such as social media and text messaging – show your library is keeping pace with technology. Also, it helps to reach those segments of the population who have come to rely on digital communications to stay connected.

Whether it is a digital, written or spoken message, the important thing is that it be heard. You can be sure that your regular patrons are spreading the word, too.

*“It’s just so astounding to me how the library is the only place you can ... go in and borrow books and get them for free and use computers and you have librarians that love to learn and love to help you. Why wouldn’t you go and use that resource? I would definitely encourage anyone who isn’t going to the library to check it out. There are just so many things there, so many things for all ages, and so many programs. Even just walking in and looking around could open someone’s eyes to the benefits of the library.”*

Laura Gardoski, Age 21

Here are some ways you can support your library’s public relations efforts as a trustee:

- Write letters to the editor of your local newspapers; keep the message in line with the advocacy messages you share each month.
- Write a trustee column for your community library’s newsletter.
- Write a blog for your library’s website.
- Enlist others to spread the word about the benefits your library brings to the community.
- Speak at local civic, professional, fraternal and social group meetings to educate members about the benefits of your community library.
- Welcome attendees at programs; briefly tell them more about what your library is doing for them.
- Present certificates of appreciation to Friends and volunteers.
- Donate your time to set up an informational display.
- Represent the library at community events.
- Participate in library fundraisers.
- Tell your library’s story everywhere you go.

Your active participation in promoting your community library will help increase usage; promote the services and programs offered; refresh a potentially dated perception of libraries; generate or strengthen social, emotional, political and financial support for the library; and communicate a strong sense of value related to public libraries.



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## **New Trustee Orientation Plan (Suggested)**

### **Welcome**

You may begin with a “welcome to the board” phone call after the new trustee has accepted his or her position. The purpose of the brief call would be to introduce yourself (if you do not already know one another), welcome the trustee to the board, thank the trustee for contributing his or her time and effort, and offer your support at any time throughout the trustee’s term.

### **Session 1: Overview of Facility, Staff and Services**

Intended to give an overview of the library, its staff, and its services, the initial orientation meeting should be conducted by the board president (or his or her designee) and the library director.

Ideally, the session should include a tour of the facility and introductions to staff and volunteers. During the tour, the board president and library director can talk about the programs and services offered to the community.

This is a good time to provide the new trustee with reference material that will help him or her become more familiar with both the library and board. A comprehensive packet will allow the new trustee to better prepare for upcoming meetings. The packet\* may include:

- Customizable *Getting on Board!* binder
- Brief history of the library
- Your library’s mission statement, major goals, and strategic plan
- Your library board’s bylaws
- Calendar of upcoming board meetings
- List of library board members and their contact information
- Organizational chart for library. If possible, personalize it with pictures of each person
- Minutes of previous year’s library board meetings
- Statistical report for last full year and current year to date
- Current library newsletter and calendar of programming
- Information about the library Friends group, along with a membership form.

*\*Trustee material should be provided on three-hole paper for convenient insertion into their Getting on Board! binder from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries.*

## **Session 2: Budget, Advocacy and Public Relations**

Your new trustee should have a solid understanding of the library's mission, strategic plan, and activities. Now it is time to talk about financial matters, as well as the advocacy and public relations efforts that advance the library's operational and reserve funds. During this second orientation session, you may want to provide the trustee with related information\*, such as:

- List of your community's municipal board members, including the municipal board's meeting schedule
- Information about county library board and county commissioners, including contact information
- Most recent library annual report
- Library's current budget
- Board's current advocacy and public relations plans.

## **Session 3: Operations and Policies**

The final orientation session is designed to educate the new trustee on the daily operations of the library. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of the trustee-managed policies that guide the library director. Helpful materials\* may include:

- Key policies and information about how to access others
- Statistical report for last full year and current year to date (see sample)
- Role, name and contact information for your library's District Consultant.

*\*Trustee material should be provided on three-hole paper for convenient insertion into their Getting on Board! binder from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries.*

## Summary of Trustee Training Videos

### **DVD 1: Orientation**

This video welcomes new trustees and thanks them for the work they will do to advance public libraries throughout the Commonwealth. It provides an overview of *Getting on Board!* previewing the subject matter for each of the videos in the series. Viewers learn more about the roles and responsibilities of a public library trustee and the competencies that are demonstrated by great trustees.

### **DVD 2: Board Basics**

In this video's narrative and interviews, the fundamental role of trustees is explored. That role is to create the ideal library for your community. With that vision in mind, trustees are expected to create and follow an action plan to achieve specific objectives. Public library trustees should set a personal example through financial giving, advocacy, public relations and volunteerism. The board should be representative of the community; it should reflect the varied perspectives within the community as well as diverse skills and expertise. After your term expires, it is desirable for you to continue supporting your community library in another capacity.

### **DVD 3: Hiring and Managing Relationships**

The most important decision a board can make is choosing the right director for its community library. The board's single employee will manage the daily operations of the library in alignment with the board's vision for it. A successful library director will have working knowledge of many aspects of business, including finance, marketing/public relations, advocacy, strategic planning, and more. Combined with the required education in library science for your library's size, those skills deserve a fair, attractive compensation package. Just as the board is expected to provide the library director with measurable goals and the support to achieve them, the board is also expected to provide regular performance feedback and annually evaluate the library director. During the evaluation process, trustees may congratulate the director's areas of strength and identify those that may benefit from improvement.

### **DVD 4: Advocacy and Money Matters**

A well-planned advocacy program will raise awareness – and possibly funding – for your community library. Advocacy and fund raising are the responsibilities of the entire board. Regular communication with elected officials and key decision makers will help maintain positive relationships within the community and generate the best results. During this video, you'll hear success stories from other trustees, as well as some library employees, who have significantly increased local funding for their libraries as a result of ongoing advocacy efforts. With careful planning, regular communication, positive messages, and an annual request for funding, your board may expect positive results.

### **DVD 5: Planning and Meetings**

Each meeting, this video explains, is a planning meeting. It is an opportunity to make plans, take action, evaluate performance, and build excitement. Advance distribution of reports and materials will allow you to dispense with lengthy discussions and use the time for planning. By focusing on major issues and delegating detail-oriented work to committees, your group will have adequate time for discussion and consideration. If an issue arises which may pose a conflict of interest, it is best for the trustee with the conflict to leave the room during discussion and voting. This allows other trustees the privacy to speak openly. As part of your agreement to serve as a public library trustee, you are expected to attend meetings and participate actively. By selectively choosing future trustees, you continue to build a well-rounded board that serves the community and library's best interests.

### **DVD 6: Policies**

Policies are important to the success of the library because they keep people safe and ensure that people are treated with fairness and equity. Each library is different, just as the community in which it is located. Therefore, policies must reflect that community. Boards, too, must reflect the community and must also include individuals who have several areas of expertise. This video suggests reviewing policies regularly and updating them when necessary. The board will adopt the policies that the director will use when planning day-to-day activities.

### **DVD 7: PR and Marketing**

Many people are unaware of the benefits provided by their community library. As someone who is familiar with the library's offerings and who serves on the board, you are expected to tell the library's story at every opportunity. It is wise to prepare short remarks (your "elevator speech") so you can take advantage of situations as they present themselves. Boards that have the greatest success in marketing and PR have made it a point to create and follow a PR plan for each year.

### **DVD 8: Buildings**

Regardless of the library you serve, there will be times when you need to address building-specific issues. In each situation, you must consider your facility's current and future usage, your facility's environmental impact, and available resources to maintain your building in a way that is both functional and appealing to patrons. It is best to consult with your library director when planning changes, because he or she knows the community and its usage best. Together, you can predict trends and work toward an ideal, community-centered future. When discussing renovations, remodeling or building, you should consider short- and long-term savings. Use a consultant when possible to help give you direction as you make these important decisions. All decisions should be made ethically and without conflict of interest.

## **Public Library Board of Trustees Job Description**

As the governing body the Board of Trustees:

Advocates for the library within the community

By ensuring adequate funding

By establishing and supporting planned programs of public relations

By meeting with local officials to communicate library issues

By representing library patrons' concerns and their perspectives

Develops a strategic plan

That guides and articulates the goals and objectives to be achieved

That determines sound decision making and priorities

That measures the quality and effectiveness of services and programs

That reflects contemporary library practices and future trends

Nurtures fiscal responsibility

Through the preparation of a budget

Through scheduled monitoring of that budget and financial progress reports

Through pursued opportunities as in grants, campaign development, other funds

Through communication of fiscal needs with supporting agencies

Through careful investments

Crafts policies that comply with all laws and form a framework of acceptable expected practices, behaviors, and procedures

That support the mission, goals, and objectives of the library

That outline personnel issues

That describe courses of action when there is conflict

That describe facilities use and access

That is adopted, enforced, and updated

Ensures qualified leadership by

Hiring a library director who manages the day-to-day operations

Evaluating the director annually

## **Board Officer Job Descriptions**

All board members are equal. Officers are named for the purposes of expediting the board's work, but even the officers cannot speak for the board without permission. The bylaws should specify the general duties of officers.

### **President (or Chairperson)**

The president presides at meetings of the board and, with the library director, prepares and mails an agenda to members of the board in advance of the meeting. The president serves as discussion leader during the board meeting and encourages all members to participate. The president signs official documents requiring signature and represents the board in public and in an official capacity, as instructed by the board. The president has one vote as a member of the board.

### **Treasurer**

The treasurer's role varies with the size of the library. In small libraries, the treasurer may keep the books, deposit funds, prepare reports and even write checks or vouchers. In larger libraries, the treasurer is a legal officer named to ensure that financial operations are being properly handled. Bylaws should outline the specific job, and the law requires appropriate bonding.

### **Vice President (or Vice Chairperson)**

The vice president presides in the absence of the president and performs any other duties assigned by the board. This position is not required by law.

### **Secretary**

The secretary of the board takes minutes of board meetings and sees that they are mailed with the next agenda. After minutes are approved, the secretary makes a permanent and correct copy part of the board archives. The board determines how minutes are distributed to those other than board members. Minutes are made available for public inspection as soon as they are given to the board. The secretary may also perform other duties assigned by the board.

### **Board committees**

Some responsibilities, such as advocacy and public relations, are to be handled by the entire board. Other responsibilities may be handled by committees which handle details, then report back to the full board. Examples of committees are: human resources, buildings, etc.

Committees do not make decisions for the board, but instead prepare recommendations for the board's decision. Written reports are best and should, whenever possible, be distributed in advance of the board meeting. Because meetings of board committees may come under the Sunshine Law, it is best to follow legal requirements for calling and posting such meetings.

## Library Board Member Agreement (Sample)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that as a member of the Board of Directors/Trustees of the \_\_\_\_\_, I have a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that the organization does the best work possible in pursuit of its goals. I believe in the purpose and the mission of the organization, and I will act responsibly and prudently as its steward.

I understand that as part of my responsibilities as a board member:

1. I will actively assist the board in securing adequate funding for the library's future.
2. I will interpret the library's work and values to the community, represent the library, and act as an advocate for the library.
3. I will never exercise authority as a board member except when acting in a meeting with the full board or as delegated by the board.
4. I will make a personal financial contribution annually at a level that is meaningful to me and participate in fund development activities.
5. I will act in the best interests of the organization and excuse myself from discussions and votes where I or a family member has a conflict of interest.
6. I will keep confidential matters confidential.
7. I will stay informed about what is going on in the organization and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies and board matters.
8. I will recognize the role of the board as a governing body and not a management body and work in good faith with the library director.
9. I will protect community members' freedom to read, view and listen, which might mean setting aside my personal preferences.

If I do not fulfill these commitments, I expect the board president or his/her delegate to take appropriate action.

In turn, the library:

1. will provide me with the minutes, library director's reports, and monthly financial statements so that I can meet the "prudent person" standards of the law
2. will work in good faith with me toward achievement of our goals
3. will offer me opportunities for professional development as a board member
4. will keep the lines of communication open so that I may stay informed.

The library has provided me with an orientation with the library director and the board president (or his/her delegate) to explain to me the history, mission, values, programs, pressing issues, finances, facilities, bylaws, organizational chart, committees, key staff members, etc., and I understand my rights and responsibilities under the library's bylaws and the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Board Member

Date

Board President

Date

Adopted by the Library Board of Directors/Trustees on \_\_\_\_\_.



## **Consent Agenda**

A consent agenda allows meeting participants to focus on the group's highest priorities. The agenda represents a collection of items that are collectively voted on without discussion.

This type of agenda differentiates between routine matters not needing explanation and more complex issues which require discussion and action.

When properly used, the consent agenda follows seven steps:

1. Set the meeting agenda
2. Distribute materials in advance
3. Read materials in advance
4. Introduce the consent agenda at the meeting
5. Remove (if requested) an item from and accept the consent agenda
6. Approve the consent agenda
7. Document acceptance of the consent agenda

## **Traditional Agenda for the Meeting of a Local Library Board (Sample)**

The board's agenda is developed by the board president and the library director, and its content arises from custom and suggestions from board and staff. The agenda and standardized financial reports should be prepared in advance and distributed with related material prior to the meetings.

NOTE: Many boards include a special agenda item for any comment from the audience. Others allow the public to participate as items are considered.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Call to order and recording of attendance. Determination that a quorum exists.  
Minutes of the previous meeting. Call for any corrections or additions. Motion to accept.

### **REPORT OF THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Library progress, activities and issues. Community feedback.

### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

### **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND TRUSTEES' COMMENTS**

If there is an audience, it is a courtesy to call the roll or to have nameplates.

It is not necessary to read the minutes aloud. Corrections should be carefully recorded and read. Actions cannot be changed or any subsequent happenings added.

Problems requiring background information (such as repair estimates, budget shifts or staff requirements) should be explained as part of the agenda.

Trustees should report on their library-related activities, including meetings attended and community contacts made.

### **POLICY PROBLEMS**

This includes operating problems that may require board actions, a shift in policies, new policies or policy interpretation. Library Directors and trustees should be encouraged to evaluate existing policies and to recommend changes and updates.

### **PLANNING**

Committee reports; evaluation of progress on existing plan. May include advocacy and public relations planning.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

This is usually a category for finishing off an item, or completing action. Each item of old business should be listed by "title" and status. Courteous trustees will tell the president what item of business is to be raised.

## Checklist of Bylaw Content (Sample)

### General information

- official name of the organization
- location of the principal office
- statement of purposes
- meeting format
- frequency of meetings
- open meeting and documents policy (Sunshine Law like)
- standard agenda for meeting
- emergency decision making process
- any limitations required for tax exemption
- procedure for amending the bylaws
- procedure for dissolving the organization
- disposition of assets upon dissolution

### Board member information

- qualification for membership
- number (5-7, up to 9 if serving multiple municipalities: see PA Library Code section 411)
- terms of office and term limits (up to 7 years)
- selection process
- process for filling vacancies
- quorum and voting requirements
- powers of the executive committee (if any)
- other standing committees (Such as Governance and Finance)
- circumstances under which trustees may be removed
- conflict of interest statement

### Officers

- duties of officers
- process for selecting or appointing officers
- terms and term limits
- provision for a chief executive (Library Director)
- circumstances under which board officers may be removed

### Fiscal matters

- provision for annual audits
- definition of the fiscal year (recommend calendar year)
- indemnification and insurance for board members

## Best Practices

Where does your board stand with these suggested best practices? We encourage you to work with your district consultant as you improve your library.

The Board enforces term limits for a maximum of 7 consecutive years.

- Board members are informed of term limits when they accept their board position.
- Board members are encouraged to continue serving the library after their term has expired. A list of opportunities is provided to demonstrate the various ways board members can volunteer.
- At the end of their term, board members are thanked for their service.

Board members will be appointed for terms of either 2 or 3 years.

- Board members will be told the length of their term to have a set expectation of their time commitment as a board member.
- Incomplete terms will be completed by another board member, who is to be selected using the same criteria as full-term candidates.
- Boards are best served by staggered terms, allowing the wisdom of more senior board members to balance the experience level of newcomers to the board.

The Board consists of 5-7, up to 9 if serving multiple municipalities

- Boards shall reflect the makeup of the community they serve; reference information, such as census data, may be used to get an accurate description of community demographics.
- Vacant positions shall be filled to maintain board membership at seven or nine members.
- Board members should represent diversity of skills and competencies.
- Boards may use volunteer-based subcommittees, comprised of non-board members, to supplement the board's work.

The Board provides Directors and Officers Liability coverage for all members and the library director.

- Copies of the policy shall be made readily available for reference.
- Library insurance needs should be reviewed at least once every three years by a competent, independent insurance analyst.
- Coverage shall be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted as necessary.

The Board provides orientation training and related materials for each new board member.

- The board president and library director shall work together to orient new board members to the library.
- Orientation shall include detailed information on expectations, responsibilities, fiscal management, policies, advocacy, public relations, and more.
- Orientation materials provided by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries will be used to guide the board president and library director through the process.
- Board members shall be invited to consult the board president or library director as needed; they may do this at any time during their term.

Each board member annually affirms his/her commitment to the library with a signed agreement, which includes a conflict of interest statement.

- Board members shall review and sign an agreement at the beginning of their term, and they shall re-affirm their commitment by signing the agreement each year.
- Board members shall be informed of the need to identify and avoid conflicts of interest. Information regarding conflicts of interest is included in these guidelines.

A board member reports in person to all funding agencies (municipalities, school boards) on a semi-annual basis.

- Board members shall attend local government meetings at least once every six months.
- Board members shall meet with the board president and/or library director prior to the visits in order to receive guidance on presentation topics and supporting materials as needed.
- Board members are expected to make a brief presentation to the governing body, including positive statistics and anecdotes about library services and programs. They are also expected to stay for the duration of the meeting out of respect for the officials.
- Board members may strengthen their relationship with governing bodies by remaining in contact via letters and phone calls in addition to personal meetings.

The Board conducts an annual written performance evaluation of the Board and the library director.

- The board shall review its performance on an annual basis, measuring progress against its strategic plan and specific objectives.
- Board members shall be familiar with federal and state statutes concerning equal opportunity and affirmative action.
- The board may use helpful tools, such as these guidelines, to compare attitudes on board progress. Results may serve as a basis for practical discussion.
- Evaluations include review of strengths and weaknesses; it includes a development plan where appropriate.

The Board adopts a Strategic Plan of at least 3 to 5 years.

- The strategic plan includes SMART objectives: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.
- The library director is involved in creation and review of the strategic plan so he/she can contribute meaningful information about the library and community.
- Board members will devote a significant portion of each regular meeting to planning which supports the strategic plan.

The Board annually reviews, evaluates and updates the Strategic Plan.

- The strategic plan is updated as relevant conditions change.
- The board shall consider the overall statewide plan for library development, as well as the role of its community library in that statewide plan.
- Board members must realize the financial implications of its plans and must ensure that sufficient resources are available to support the strategic plan.
- The strategic plan must be shared with the library director, who oversees the day-to-day operation of the library. The library's daily activities and the strategic plan must be aligned in order to succeed.

The Board meets a minimum of 9 times per year on a published regular schedule.

- The board shall follow a consistent meeting schedule, which is to be determined annually. All board members should have a copy of the meeting schedule.
- Meeting time should be devoted to priorities and planning. Please see the trustee guidelines from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries for more information on how to conduct efficient meetings.
- If a conflict of interest occurs, board members are to excuse themselves from the meeting to promote open discussion and ethically appropriate decision making.

Each board member annually attends no less than 75% of the regular board meetings.

- Board members are expected to arrive on time, participate actively in meetings, and stay for the duration of the meetings.
- Should a board member be unable to meet the minimum attendance requirement, he or she must resign from the board and allow others to contribute on a regular basis.

The Board operates under Bylaws based upon accepted guidelines.

- Board members regularly follow the policies and procedures outlined in the bylaws.
- The bylaws make provisions for:
  - o the time and place for meetings;
  - o the number of trustees and their term lengths;
  - o the fiscal year of the organization;
  - o the process for amendment of the bylaws; and
  - o other procedures as required.

The Board reviews and updates its Bylaws at least every 5 years.

- Board members should be in agreement regarding changes to bylaws.
- Bylaws should reflect current situations and projected future needs.

The Board assures that its meetings and actions are conducted at open meetings in which the public has an opportunity to comment.

- Notice of board meetings shall be posted in the library at least two weeks prior to the meetings.
- Meeting dates should be published in library communications to the public.
- Legal notices shall be handled as appropriate.
- Public comment shall be heard with respect and shall receive a response.

All decisions are made at an open meeting.

- Committee and board work may precede the decision; decisions are made by the entire board. Reports from either should include all information that is relevant to making the decision and may be presented prior to the board making the decision.
- Decisions shall be made with the best interests of the library and community in mind.
- Conflicts of interest shall be identified and avoided during the entire decision-making process.
- Decisions shall be officially recorded and reported to stakeholders as necessary.

Minutes and financial reports are available to the public.

- Board minutes and financial reports shall be made available to the public within two weeks of the respective meeting. This allows the public time to review the information and may affect their option to attend the next meeting.
- Minutes and financial reports shall be provided to the public for review in a friendly, open manner.
- Questions regarding the minutes and financial reports shall be directed to the board president.

Fifty percent of the members of the board have completed at least 5 Core Training Courses.

- A minimum of half the board members should have completed at least five core training courses; material may be shared with other board members as needed.
- It is desirable for the entire board to pursue ongoing continuing education and share new knowledge with others.

The Board actively works to secure adequate funding for the library.

- Boards shall identify all potential sources of income and pursue them appropriately.
- Donor records must be kept in compliance with current regulations of the Internal Revenue Service.
- Board members may seek legal consultation on gift policies and solicitation for non-cash contributions, such as real estate, equipment, and so on.
- The board should have an annual fund development plan with designated tasks for each board member to complete throughout the year. Funding derived from this plan is to be used for non-operating costs.

The Board exercises responsible oversight for the library's financial resources.

- Boards are legally responsible and shall be held accountable for accurate management of all monies held in trust, all disbursement (in amount and in legality), all assets, all liabilities, and all funds held in the name of the library.
- Proper management requires that trustees shall not participate in any board decision or action through which the board member or his family and friends may personally benefit.

The Board adopts and regularly reviews appropriate policies for Personnel; Fiscal Management; Collection Development; Patron Use.

- Board members consult the library director in evaluating and updating policies.
- Board members ensure that policies reflect current and potential issues; keep library users safe; and protect the library.
- Board members are responsible for language which is clear and unlikely to be misinterpreted.
- Board members ensure policies provide guidance to the library director, who manages daily tasks in alignment with board direction.
- Some policies may require review by an attorney.

## **Exemplary Practices**

Fifty percent of the Board members hold a current membership in at least one professional library organization [e.g. PaLA, PCBL, ALA].

- A minimum of half the board members should have completed at least five core training courses; material may be shared with other board members as needed.
- It is desirable for the entire board to pursue ongoing continuing education and share new knowledge with others.

The Board forms a team of board members who will annually visit at least one “comparably sized” library to observe best practices.

- The visit may be planned and scheduled in coordination with the library director.
- Visits to other libraries should include interaction with the library’s director and board president to learn more about each other’s approach to library governance and operations.
- Board members should talk with the library director prior to the visit and should prepare a brief list of questions to ask.
- Board members should share lessons learned with the other board members for maximum benefit to the entire board, the library, and the community they serve.
- Board members should reciprocate by making an invitation for others to visit their library.

The Board develops and implements a formal advocacy plan for presentations to local and state officials.

- The board should have an annual advocacy plan with designated tasks for each board member to complete throughout the year.
- The board should be provided with an annual calendar for local and state officials. The calendar should include detailed information regarding relevant dates, meetings, decisions, etc.
- Board members should plan their remarks in cooperation with the library director.

The Board develops and implements a formalized recruitment plan for securing board members.

- The board shall determine what skills or competencies are needed to manage current and projected issues; potential candidates should possess skills and competencies which complement those of other board members.
- Board recruitment should be an ongoing activity.
- Potential candidates should have a strong understanding of the responsibilities and expectations of the position.

The Board assures that one or more board members annually attends a local or state-sponsored Trustee Institute.

- The board president and library director shall encourage attendance at the Trustee Institute.
- Registration information shall be provided to all board members.
- New information should be shared with the entire board for maximum benefit.



The Board assures that one or more board members annually attend a regional multi-district workshop.

- The board president and library director shall encourage attendance at the multi-district workshop.
- Registration information shall be provided to all board members.
- New information should be shared with the entire board for maximum benefit.

Seventy-five percent of the members of the board have completed at least 9 Core Training Courses.

Fifty percent of the members of the board participate in a State or National Library-related professional conference.

- The board president and library director shall encourage attendance at professional workshops.
- Registration information shall be provided to all board members.
- New information should be shared with the entire board for maximum benefit.

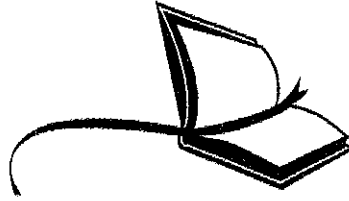
The Board actively works to secure operating and reserve funding for the library to ensure a successful financial future.

- Each board member sets an example by making a meaningful personal contribution to the library. The amount should be suited to the board member's individual situation and represent a meaningful portion of their available financial resources.
- Each board member represents the library at local government meetings at least twice a year.
- At least one board member attends each municipal meeting to share a brief, positive statement about the benefits of the library programs and services offered in the community.
- Each board member participates in fund development by sending personalized letters, scheduling personal appointments with major donors, and investigating multiple potential sources of revenue.
- More information on fund development and advocacy is available in the trustee guidelines provided by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries.

The Board has adopted and implemented a salary administration plan.

- For its single employee, board members shall offer a compensation package that is commensurate with the education, experience and skills they seek in a library director.
- Board members should actively investigate the market rate for salaries for a library director.
- The director's salary should meet or exceed national averages for libraries of similar size.
- The library director's salary and benefits package should be comparable to those for professional positions in organizations of similar size.
- The board is responsible for approving the library director's plan for the staff's job specifications and salary scales; staff shall be supervised by the library director.

Use this development grid to track your success as a board. As you successfully complete each metric (see details in following grid), record your progress by checking the appropriate box. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries encourages all trustees to strive for the basic development metrics and, if possible, to enhance their performance even more by completing the voluntary metrics. When you've completed the grid (basic or voluntary level), please share it with your library director, who can submit it to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries to document your achievements.



# Commonwealth Libraries

*Trustee best practices align with the six areas of core competencies that are required for effective board performance. Basic practices are outlined in items 1 through 21; exemplary practices include items 22-31.*

*The six areas of core competencies are detailed in the Getting on Board! video courses. They are:*

1 – Governance/Administration

4 – Policy Making

2 – Advocacy

5 – Board as Employer

3 – Fund Development

6 – Public Relations

Check Here When Accomplished	Trustee Best Practices	Areas of Core Competencies
	The Board enforces term limits for a maximum of 7 consecutive years.	1
	Board members will be appointed for terms of either 2 or 3 years.	1
	The Board consists of 5-7 members – up to 9 if serving multiple municipalities: see PA Library Code section 411.	1
	The Board provides trustees and officers liability coverage for all members and the library director.	1
	The Board provides orientation training and related materials for each new board member.	1
	Each Board member annually affirms his/her commitment to the library with a signed agreement, which includes a conflict of interest statement.	1
	A Board member reports in person to all funding agencies (municipalities, school boards) on a semi-annual basis.	2, 3, 6
	The Board conducts an annual written performance evaluation of the Board and the library director.	1, 5
	The Board adopts a strategic plan of at least 3 to 5 years.	1
	The Board annually reviews, evaluates and updates the strategic plan.	1
	The Board meets a minimum of 9 times per year on a published regular schedule.	1

Accomplished	<b>Best Practices, Cont.</b>	Areas of Core Competencies
	Each Board member annually attends no less than 75% of the regular Board meetings.	1
	The Board operates under bylaws based upon accepted guidelines.	1
	The Board reviews and updates its bylaws at least every 5 years.	1
	The Board assures that its meetings and actions are conducted at open meetings in which the public has an opportunity to comment.	1, 6
	All decisions are made at an open meeting.	1
	Minutes and financial reports are available to the public.	1
	Fifty percent of the members of the Board have completed at least 5 core training courses.	1
	The Board actively works to secure adequate funding for the library.	1, 2, 3
	The Board exercises responsible oversight for the library's financial resources.	1, 3
	The Board adopts and regularly reviews appropriate policies for personnel, fiscal management, collection development, patron use.	1, 4, 5
<b>Exemplary Practices</b>		
	Fifty percent of the Board members hold a current membership in at least one professional library organization (PaLA, PCBL, ALA).	1
	Annually, the Board will send representatives to visit at least one "comparably sized" library to observe best practices.	2
	The Board develops and implements a formal advocacy plan for presentations to local and state officials.	1, 2, 3, 6
	The Board develops and implements a formalized recruitment plan for securing Board members.	1, 6

Accomplished	<b>Exemplary Practices, Cont.</b>	Areas of Core Competencies
	The Board annually assures that one or more Board members attend a local or state sponsored Trustee Institute.	1
	The Board assures that one or more Board members attend a regional multi-district workshop annually.	1
	Seventy-five percent of the members of the Board have completed at least 9 core training courses.	1
	Fifty percent of the members of the Board participate in a State or National Library-related professional conference.	1
	The Board has adopted and implemented a fund development plan.	1, 3
	The Board has adopted and implemented a salary administration plan.	1, 4, 5

## Code of Ethics for Library Trustees (Sample)

As a member of this board, I will:

- Represent the interests of all people served by this library and not favor special interests.
- Participate in advocacy efforts to protect and advance the library's progress.
- Respect the trust of those who elected or appointed me to the board, and I will respect the trust of those we serve.
- Divulge conflicts of interest and avoid using my board position for my personal advantage or that of my family, friends and significant others.
- Abide by all policies and procedures approved by the board.
- Respect the need for confidentiality.
- Publicly support policies adopted by the board.
- Include the library director in board meetings, planning and decision making as appropriate.
- Abide by the library's public relations and information policies; requests will be referred to the library director.
- Refer patron needs to the library director.
- Attend meetings regularly and participate actively.
- Listen to others with an open mind and show respect for their opinions.
- Speak positively about the library, as well as its staff and volunteers.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Self-Assessment to Evaluate a Non-Profit Board of Directors

Rating system: E = essential; R = recommended; A = addition to strengthen organization

Rating	Description	Met	Needs Work	N/A
	1. The roles of the library board and the library director are defined and respected, with the library director delegated as the manager of the organization and the board focused on policy and planning.			
	2. The board has reviewed the bylaws in the past five years.			
	3. The board members receive regular training and information about their responsibilities.			
	4. The board adequately represents a cross section of the community.			
	5. No board member or family member benefits from an action of the board without proper disclosure.			
	6. Board organization is documented with a description of the board and board committee responsibilities.			
	7. The library board consists of 5-7 members – up to 9 if serving multiple municipalities.			
	8. The board has a process for handling urgent matters between meetings.			
	9. The bylaws of the library conform to accepted guidelines.			
	10. The library director is recruited, selected, employed and annually evaluated by the board. The board provides clearly written expectations and qualifications for the position as well as a reasonable compensation package.			
	11. New board members receive an orientation to the library's mission, bylaws, policies and programs, as well as their roles and responsibilities as board members.			
	12. The members serve without compensation other than possible reimbursement for travel and other actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.			
	13. The board members actively participate in the strategic planning and fund development processes.			
	14. Meetings have a written agenda and materials relating to significant decisions are given to the board members in advance of the meetings.			
	15. The board meets a minimum of nine times per year on a regular, published schedule.			
	16. The board maintains a library board member agreement with a conflict-of-interest statement that is reviewed annually.			
	17. The board has a written policy prohibiting employees and members of employees' immediate families from serving on the board.			

## A Year in the Life of a Trustee

### ALL YEAR

- Evaluate your progress against the strategic plan to ensure you are moving toward your vision of the ideal library for your community.
- Make a list of expertise, skills and qualities that would benefit your board, and begin to consider individuals who may be a good candidate as a future trustee.
- If you haven't already done so, request to be included on distribution lists for messages from your elected officials.

### JANUARY

- Prepare case statement (a brief overview of your library's history, pertinent statistics, and current offerings) for the year.
- Use information from the previous year to perform a board self-assessment.
- Join (or renew membership in) American Library Association, Pennsylvania Library Association, Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries, and other library-related organizations.
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### FEBRUARY

- Update your "elevator speech".
- Write and send an appeal letter with a personal note to your contacts.
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### MARCH

- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### APRIL

- During National Library Week, remember to thank your library director, your staff, and your major donors for the work they do to provide excellent library service to your community.
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### MAY

- Visit another library to network and compare best practices.
- Write and send your second appeal letter with a personal note to your contacts; focus on the summer reading program.
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### JUNE

- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

## **A Year in the Life of a Trustee, Cont.**

### **JULY**

- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### **AUGUST**

- Write and send a third appeal letter with a personal note to your contacts; focus on back-to-school needs.
- Work with your library director to plan your September municipal visit; compile data to demonstrate need for additional funding.
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### **SEPTEMBER**

- Conduct a municipal visit to request additional funding to support your library's services and programs.

### **OCTOBER**

- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.

### **NOVEMBER**

- Pay a personal visit to major donors; express appreciation for past support and appeal for continued financial gifts for the library
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community
- Write and send your fourth appeal letter with a personal note to your contacts; explain how past support has helped advance the library's goals
- Arrange a joint meeting with Friends of the Library to discuss ways your groups can collaborate to further the library's objectives.

### **DECEMBER**

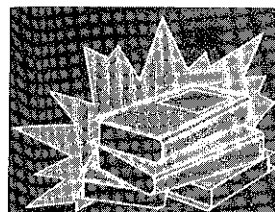
- Participate in developing a public relations and advocacy plan for the upcoming year; accept tasks and deadlines in alignment with the board's goals.
- Conduct a municipal visit to make a brief, positive report about your library's services and programs which benefit the community.



## Sample Budget

This is a sample budget and is intended to provide a structure that best matches reporting requirements for the Commonwealth. A minimum of 12% of your annual budget should be used for collection development; the rest should be allocated as you and your board see fit. Percentages and line items should reflect strategic activities and priorities. For example, if programming is an area of focus for you, you and your board (with input from the library director) may choose to devote a specific line item and dollar amount to the pursuit of that area. The same may be said for advocacy, public relations, and other important activities. Please use this sample budget as a starting point for a conversation about what percentages should apply to each line item in your particular library's budget.

XYZ PUBLIC LIBRARY		
2011 Budget		
		AMOUNT
ANNUAL REPORT ITEM #	RECEIPTS	2011
102	Federal LSTA Grant/ PHEAA	\$ -
103B	State Aid	\$ 15,748.00
104B	Access	\$ -
109	Local Government Income	\$ 54,100.00
110	Revenue from School Dist.	\$ 5,000.00
112	Div/Interest	\$ 5,000.00
113	Merchandise Sold	
114	Fund Drive	\$ 10,500.00
116	Donations	\$ 20,000.00
116A	United Way	\$ 6,000.00
116B	Memorials	\$ 3,000.00
117	Grant Money	\$ 45,000.00
119	Fines	\$ 4,500.00
120	Lost Books	\$ 150.00
121	Copies	\$ 1,500.00
123	Misc.	
124	Fund Raising	\$ 12,200.00
127	Transfer In	\$ 22,000.00
	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 204,698.00</b>
135	Payroll	\$ 118,200.00
135A	Other Payroll Taxes	\$ 3,250.00
179	Cleaning Maint./Mowing	\$ 1,440.00
139	Unemployment Comp	\$ 900.00
139A	Fed Tax Deposit	\$ 18,000.00
149	Children Books	\$ 8,200.00
150	Books	\$ 15,000.00
151	Mag/News Paper	\$ 1,400.00
181	Membership Fees	\$ 800.00
156	Internet	\$ 900.00
157	Library Supplies	\$ 1,600.00
175	Office Supplies	\$ 1,500.00
165	Furniture/Equipment	\$ 1,300.00
167	Computer/Software	\$ 1,200.00
168	Insurance	\$ 3,000.00
168A	Building Maint	\$ 4,000.00
168B	Building Supplies	\$ 600.00
168C	Utilities	\$ 5,000.00
169C	Equipment Maintenance	\$ 1,200.00
174	Postage	\$ 2,800.00
176	Telephone	\$ 900.00
178	Public Relations	\$ 1,500.00
178	Adult/Family Programs	\$ 5,000.00
178A	Summer Reading Program	\$ 800.00
179	Professional Fee	\$ 2,600.00
180	Training & Travel	\$ 1,000.00
182	Audit	\$ 600.00
	Misc	\$ -
195	Fund Raising	\$ 2,000.00
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 204,690.00</b>



# ADVOCATE

## Trustees and Advocacy: Effective Strategies for Advancing Your Library

An advocacy plan is the intentional and strategic use of political activities including lobbying, educating the public and conducting community research that allows the library to better fulfill its mission.

### The Plan

Implementation of an Advocacy Plan requires a mindset recognizing that the financial integrity of the library rests with the politically astute citizens on its Board.

### Start Early

Advocacy needs to begin during the recruitment and orientation process for Board members. Potential Board members need to understand and embrace their responsibility for working within the local, state and federal political arena to position libraries as essential community organizations capable of significant contributions to solving the problems with which elected officials grapple. Board members must be able to connect the library's capacity to deliver its services with stable or increased funding instead of with increased dedication, sacrifice and belt-tightening.

Knowing that Pennsylvania ranks fourth in state funding, 44<sup>th</sup> in local funding and ninth among all states in the amount of money that is self-generated can help defend against suggestions that more grants and fundraisers will solve financial shortfalls.

### Steps to Implementing an Advocacy Plan:

- Establish a **Governmental/Community Affairs Committee** that meets regularly and annually presents to the Board a formal plan for advocacy activities and goals during the year and...
- Budget via the library budget or Friends budget funds to support advocacy events and activities.

*In an environment of increasing competition for public funds organizations that are not invested in political activities are more likely to discontinue services and fail.*

### **Defining Terms**

There is often confusion about what advocacy, lobbying, and political activities the IRS allows nonprofits to conduct. Understanding the terms and legal limits for these types of activities can help nonprofits fully promote their mission.

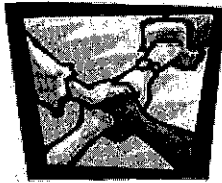
Advocacy involves representing and articulating the mission of the organization to the public. Lobbying consists of activities that try to influence legislation regarding a specific issue. There are two types of lobbying: direct and grassroots. Direct lobbying involves communicating directly with lawmakers. Grassroots lobbying involves indirectly influencing legislation by shaping public opinion. Most nonprofits can conduct some form of lobbying, but it cannot be a substantial part of a 501(c)(3)'s activities. In contrast, 501(c)(4) and (c)(6) organizations are often set up primarily for lobbying.

Public charities cannot get involved in any electoral campaign activity for or against a candidate. The IRS sets penalties for violating these regulations, including possible revocation of an organization's tax-exempt status.

Connect! Winter 2005

Published by the Division of Public and Non-profit Administration,  
School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Memphis.

## Action Steps for the Governmental/Community Affairs Committee



### **A. Convene a joint planning meeting of the Board and the Board of a Friends group if it exists to**

understand the political hierarchy of your community – who are the party committee people, the party leadership?... develop a local political organization chart.

### **B. Conduct a political audit.**

This “6 degrees of separation” exercise should identify who knows who or the organizational chart and how that relationship can connect the library with elected officials, decision makers and donors to political campaigns. Reference Librarians can locate lists of all donors, individuals and Political Action Committees, to local, state and federal candidates with the amounts donated. Knowing who supports a candidate can be as important as knowing the candidate. Develop a “political profile” for each of your elected officials including where they went to school, the organizations to which they belong, their church, professional affiliations, their hobbies. Most of this can come from their official websites.

Assign each Board member with the responsibility of cultivating their connections with those who can influence decision makers and decision makers with whom they have relationships.

Review the committee assignments of all elected officials representing your area which are available via house and senate websites and develop messages about specific library services relating to the charge of these committees so designated Board members can tailor their advocacy comments.

### **C. Adopt an annual advocacy calendar based on a review of local, state and federal elections falling during the**

upcoming year. Plan the spring – April or May – annual formal state legislative event – breakfast, lunch, dinner or reception - that brings together your state elected officials to discuss the state budget impact on libraries, your own library's services as they relate to the legislator's interests and the library's services to their constituents. If the Commissioners are up for re-election sponsor a legislative event for candidates.

The advocacy calendar should include the dates of the annual Republican/Democratic party dinners. Board members and the executive should attend. If possible one or more Board members should consider modest personal contributions to all candidate's campaigns during an election.

The advocacy calendar should include a planned Leadership Awareness Program with no fewer than four regular or special board meetings during the year designated as meetings to which “outside” experts are invited. These can include the Chamber CEO, Superintendent/Board President of local school boards, the County Clerk, municipal managers, newspaper editor/publisher, bank presidents, foundation executives, United Way CEO whether you are funded by them or not, SBDC representatives, Community Engagement Group Chairs. Agendas for these meetings should include brief presentations highlighting library services relating to their areas of concern and opportunities to invite input from guests about promoting awareness of services. Plan a facility tour and make sure Storytime and a senior computer class are going on.

Include a media component in your advocacy plan to use the power of talk radio and the letters to the editor as free advocacy forums. Don't over do it but several times a year call in or be a guest on your local talk radio show or write a letter to the editor about something libraries do

that responds to current community concerns. Involve the community relations representatives for cable and utility companies in your Leadership Awareness Program.

The calendar should also include dates when Board members in person will report to funding bodies and potential funding bodies. Include short video clips of library users commenting on how libraries benefit them and thanking the funders.

### **D. Develop a five-year financial forecast that identifies the funding required to maintain services at existing levels.** This demonstrates to officials that Boards are forward thinking and proactive not reactive and provides a foundation for talking about the library.

All messages need to avoid language about the “needs” of libraries. Libraries are buildings. The needs that must be featured are those of the users and those of the community tied to ways libraries help meet these needs. Use statistics but keep them simple. The most compelling statistic Boards have is the extent of their market penetration. In terms of sheer numbers library membership and the demographic evidence connecting library use to voting is compelling. Pick and choose the statistics comparing you favorably to other organizations.

### **E. Study your studies**

Board members are active in their communities and often participate or are invited to provide input for planning commissions, school boards, United Way needs assessments or other data and opinion gathering efforts undertaken by communities. These provide a forum for piggyback on community research done by others. Use these activities and forums to include the library and its services as meeting needs and as responsive agencies helping to solve problems and places offering officials

opportunities to connect with the largest most diverse taxpayer base using any publicly funded institution. Do your own market research every year. Survey your members about their satisfaction with services, programs and staff. Use the positives as PR, use the deficiencies as demonstrated needs. Pursue grant funds for fuller market research.

**F. Be seen, be heard and assign one committee member to track dates and locations of local field visits of federal Representatives and Senators and make sure Board members/ staff attend each session to discuss LSTA and other programs impacting libraries.**

Know the people in the local and state offices of your elected officials. Establish relationships with them. Assign responsibility to designated committee members.

Attend township and borough annual joint meetings and have a library display. Be ready to tell about the library and its services.

If your local elected officials sponsor a forum or meeting hosting a state committee chair or prominent members of the General Assembly be there even if you invite yourself. Get on the email distribution lists for your state Representative and Senator. Know who the chairs of the Appropriations and Education Committees are. If your member is a member use their influence to advance library funding.

**G. Board members need to belong to PaLA and use its website to get talking points for legislative advocacy** on the state level to create a statewide network of local government so that community affairs committees create a web of influence that can be activated on a statewide level quickly and effectively.

## *Can nonprofits lobby?*

Because nonprofits often work in partnership with government and serve as advocates for a cause or constituency, many organizations have a legitimate interest in the formation of public policy. Nonprofits often speak out in an attempt to influence public perception and government action on specific issues, such as welfare reform, AIDS research, or environmental protection. For some nonprofits, this advocacy role is the most important service they provide.

One important way to affect public policy is to engage in lobbying, or direct contact with legislators in an attempt to influence specific legislation. Private foundations are not permitted to lobby, but charities, social advocacy groups, and trade associations and professional societies are. Congress indicated its support for lobbying when it enacted the 1976 Lobby Law, which makes generous provisions for nonprofit lobbying. The same message came from the Internal Revenue Service, in regulations issued in 1990, that support the spirit and intent of the 1976 legislation. Together, the law and new regulations provide significant leeway for lobbying by charitable organizations.

Charities are allowed to lobby provided the activity is insubstantial in relation to the overall organization, and must report their lobbying expenditures to the IRS. The lobbying activities of social welfare organizations and trade associations are not similarly restricted, although they cannot use funds from government grants or contracts for lobbying activities. Charitable organizations are not allowed to participate in or attempt to influence political campaigns; if they do, they risk losing their tax-exempt status. However, charities may engage in voter education activities during political campaigns, including getting statements from candidates, conducting public forums, giving testimony on party platforms, and providing issue briefings for candidates. Social welfare organizations 501(c)(4) and trade associations 501(c)(6) have much greater latitude in both lobbying and in participating in political campaigns.

*Reprinted from [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org) formerly the National Center for Nonprofit Boards.*

## Suggested Interview Questions

Describe in detail what experience you have in researching, evaluating, and requesting public or private grant monies.

We now know that our budget has been significantly reduced. What fundraising endeavors would you like to implement?

How would you explain to the county commissioners or other government agency why the library needs increased funding?

How would you raise the visibility of the library throughout the community?

What do you feel the library director's role within the community outside of the walls of the library?

Our town is rapidly becoming a culturally diverse community. How do you think the library could reach out to a diverse community and continue to create new library users?

Service to children and young adults is very important to our library. Working along with the children's librarian, how do you think you could contribute to the program's success in the library and the community?

Have you ever done any public or group speaking?

How do you see public libraries integrating into the communities ten years from now?

What can you do for us that someone else can't do?

Tell us about your education, work experience (including supervisory, budget and facility management), special skills (including computer use) and accomplishments that you feel qualify you for this position.

What do you consider to be your major accomplishments in your current job?

We know that our staff is very nervous about a new library director coming in and the changes that will occur. How will you make this transition with them so that they will be more at ease? What will you do on the first day with them?

What techniques do you use to motivate staff?

What is your management style? How would you describe your basic leadership style? Give specific examples of how you practice this.

Tell us about the most difficult personnel problem that you have had to deal with. How did you handle it? How was it resolved?

How would you create or identify opportunities for staff development?

What would you most like to accomplish if you had this job?

What was your most difficult decision in the last six months? What made it difficult?

What are the primary tasks of a public library and who should handle those tasks?

Talk about the role of technology in the public library and how you would incorporate these at our library.

If you were coming to a library with no programs, what programs would you initiate first?

**Sample Evaluation Form for Library Director**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Instructions: Each board member should complete this form and return it to the board president. The summarization and individual responses will be used during the library director's evaluation. Please be specific with your comments, noting both areas of strength and areas for improvement. Thank you.*

*Scale: Excellent (E); Satisfactory (S); Needs Improvement (N); Unknown (U)*

**Public Relations**

Level of patron satisfaction	E	S	N	U
Level of customer service	E	S	N	U
Consistent application of policies related to the public	E	S	N	U
Positive working relationships with municipalities, community groups, schools and organizations are created and maintained	E	S	N	U
Awareness of and response to community needs	E	S	N	U
Use of existing processes to provide feedback to public	E	S	N	U
Ongoing marketing of library services	E	S	N	U

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Organizational Development**

Progress is made toward long-range strategic plans	E	S	N	U
Tactics that support long-range goals are executed with staff and trustees	E	S	N	U
Goals and objectives are regularly evaluated and adjusted as necessary	E	S	N	U
Ensures that library services and materials are suitable to community needs	E	S	N	U
Staff understand long-range plan and their role in it	E	S	N	U
Practical knowledge of industry trends and developments is evident	E	S	N	U
Building and grounds are well maintained	E	S	N	U
Director and staff keep up with technological changes as needed	E	S	N	U

## Organizational Development, Continued

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Administration

Work is effectively assigned and appropriately delegated	E	S	N	U
Job descriptions are clear and current; performance evaluations are conducted regularly and with proper documentation	E	S	N	U
Federal and state regulations, as well as library policies, are effectively communicated and implemented	E	S	N	U
Staff development and continuing education are encouraged	E	S	N	U
Library's reputation and work environment attract and retain talented staff	E	S	N	U

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Financial Management

Library follows sound financial practices with proper control and accounting	E	S	N	U
Budget is prepared with input from staff and trustees	E	S	N	U
Library operates within approved budget guidelines	E	S	N	U
Official records and documents are maintained in compliance with federal, state and local regulations and reporting requirements	E	S	N	U
Positive relationships with government, foundation, corporate and individual donors are created and maintained	E	S	N	U
Funds are disbursed in accordance with budget, contract/grant requirements, and donor designations	E	S	N	U
Additional sources of revenue are consistently developed	E	S	N	U



**Financial Management, Continued**

Comments:

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**Board Relationship**

Appropriate, adequate and timely information is provided to the board	E	S	N	U
Board committees are supported	E	S	N	U
The board is consistently aware of library issues and influences	E	S	N	U

Comments:

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Final, overall comments/things to work on for the coming year: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community the library serves.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

*Adopted June 18, 1948*

*Amended February 2, 1961; June 28, 1967; and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996 by the ALA Council*

## Glossary of Terms

**ALA** - American Library Association, the world's oldest and largest library association. **PLA** (Public Library Association) is a division of ALA.

**Acceptable Use Policy** - An acceptable use policy (AUP; also sometimes acceptable usage policy or Fair Use Policy) is a set of rules applied by the owner/manager of a network or large computer system that restrict the ways in which the network or system may be used.

**Acquisitions** - The process of purchasing library materials and the library department responsible for the acquisition process.

**American with Disabilities Act (ADA)** - Federal law that requires all public buildings funded by tax dollars to meet minimal standards to create accessibility for persons with disabilities.

**Annual reports** - Yearly financial and statistical forms Pennsylvania librarians complete for the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, to report the past year's activities.

**AUN Number** - A nine digit number permanently assigned to a PA library or a library system by the PA Department of Education.

**Authority control** - Authority control of a library catalog is maintained through an authority file that contains the terms used as access points in the catalog. Authority control helps increase the ability of library users to find the information they are seeking

**Automation** - Library automation refers to the use of computers to automate the typical procedures of libraries such as cataloging and circulation.

**Broad-band connectivity** - The term broadband commonly refers to high-speed Internet access that is always on and faster than the traditional dial-up access.

**CIPA** - (Children's Internet Protection Act) -- A federal law governing Internet access in schools and libraries. For public school libraries and public libraries, compliance with CIPA is mandatory to be eligible for e-rate subsidies and for LSTA funding.

**Call number** - A unique number that identifies a material's location in the library. The two most common call number (classification) systems in the United States are the Dewey Decimal and the Library of Congress (LC) Classification Systems. Both systems group books on shelves by subject.

**Capital funds** -- Funds for the acquisition of, or addition to, fixed assets such as buildings that add to increased, useable floor space. Often kept separate from annual operating funds.

Cataloging - The process of describing an item in a library collection and assigning it a classification (call) number. The item is then entered into the online catalog.

Censorship - Suppression of ideas and information to certain persons. In libraries, this usually means restricting public access to books, magazines, Web pages, etc. Librarians, as a group, oppose censorship in favor of intellectual freedom.

Challenge - The request by a patron to have an item removed from library shelves. Challenges are usually handled through an established procedure that is explained in the library's policies.

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) – See CIPA.

Circulation -- The process of lending library materials. Circulation statistics are the number of materials checked out. Each renewal is also reported as a circulation transaction.

Collection Development Policy – This policy guides the collection development process used by library staff. This policy defines the purpose or mission of the library's collection and sources of information about available materials, criteria for selecting materials, criteria for removing materials from the collection (weeding), and how to handle challenges to materials in the collection.

Community analysis - A process for obtaining historical, demographic, economic, cultural or other information about the library's community. This information is collected through census data, surveys, focus groups, analysis of local yellow pages, and surveys. The information is used for evaluating current library programs and services and creating new programs and services to better satisfy community and patron wants and needs.

Confidentiality of patron records – Protecting patrons' privacy and information regarding records of what they read.

Conflict of interest - Situations in which trustees could personally profit or they belong to an organization that could profit from board decisions. Trustees must take measures to ensure this does not occur.

Continuing education – Training required of library staff. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries has requirements for the amount of continuing education needed by library staff.

ILL (Interlibrary Loan) -- Interlibrary loan is a service whereby a user of one library can borrow materials (print, digital or multimedia) or receive photocopies of documents that are owned by another library. Libraries in Pennsylvania adhere to the Pennsylvania Interlibrary Loan Guidelines, 2011.

Database - Information in a defined category that is stored on a computer in a way to enhance searching. A database license is purchased for a specific period of time.

Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) - Classification system used to assign call numbers to library materials so they are grouped by subject on library shelves. The broadest classification system is the following.

000	General Works
100	Philosophy and Psychology
200	Religion
300	Social Science
400	Languages
500	Natural Science
600	Applied science, technology and craftsmanship
700	Fine Arts
800	Literature
900	History

e-Book -- An electronic book (also e-book, ebook, digital book) is a book-length publication in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, and produced on, published through, and readable on computers or other electronic devices.

E-rate funding – Libraries and schools are eligible to apply for discounted telecommunications services through the E-rate program. The program was set up by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ensure that all eligible schools and libraries have affordable access to modern telecommunications and information services.

Endowments - An endowment fund is an investment fund set up by a library in which regular withdrawals from the invested capital are used for ongoing operations or other specified purposes.

Encumbrance - Funds dedicated by purchase order to purchase a specific item.

Executive session - Special session called during board meetings to discuss personnel matters or to discuss other sensitive issues.

FTE - Full time equivalent is the total of the library weekly staff hours, divided by the number of hours in the library's standard work week, but no less than 35 hours. This figure is reported on the public library's annual report.

Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN) - A number issued by the IRS to identify an individual employer (e.g., the library). The library board treasurer should know the library's FEIN number.

Firewall - A combination of software and hardware protecting Web servers (i.e, computers connected to the Web) from tampering by outsiders.

**Freedom to Read Statement** - A statement of seven propositions supporting the publication of a wide variety of views and opposing all attempts by citizens to censor those views because freedom of expression and access to those expressions are necessary for a healthy democracy. The statement was originally adopted by the American Library Association in 1953 and has been updated several times since.

**Integrated Library System (ILS)** -- Integrated library (automation) systems provide libraries with a variety of integrated computerized functions -- Cataloging, Circulation, OPAC, Acquisitions, etc.

**IMLS - Institute of Museum and Library Services** - An independent Federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities. This Federal agency distributes federal LSTA grant monies to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries for statewide initiatives and competitive grants for libraries.

**ISBN - The International Standard Book Number (ISBN)** is a 10-digit number that uniquely identifies books and book-like products published internationally.

**ISP - Internet Service Provider** - A commercial or nonprofit organization providing Internet connections to individuals and organizations.

**In-process material** - Newly acquired items still undergoing cataloging and other preparation for circulation.

**Intellectual Freedom** - A formal definition of intellectual freedom authored by the American Library Association (ALA) describes intellectual freedom as "the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored" (ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom 2007).

**LAN (Local Area Network)** -- A network, usually running in one building, that connects multiple computers to a server computer.

**LC Subject Headings** - Library of Congress Subject Headings are a set of authoritative topical words or phrases used in library card catalogs and online catalogs.

**Library Bill of Rights** - Statement adopted by the American Library Association encouraging librarians and their library boards to adopt policies and practices that treat all citizens equitably, provide materials meeting the needs of all citizens in the library's community and resist efforts to do otherwise.

**LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act)** -- Administered by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Library Services and Technology Act provides funds to State Library Administrative Agencies using a population-based formula. Funds may be used to support statewide initiatives and services; they also may be distributed through subgrant competitions or cooperative agreements to public, academic, research, school, and special libraries. The program has the benefit of building the capacity of states to develop statewide plans for library services and to evaluate those services every five years.

MARC - stands for Machine-Readable Cataloging. It is a standardized format allowing many online catalogs produced by many different companies to understand the same cataloging record.

MLS - The Master of Library Science degree is the commonly accepted graduate degree for library science professionals. The Library Code requires this degree for some library director positions. The American Library Association (ALA) accredits master's programs in library and information studies across the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

MLS librarian - A librarian with a master's degree from a graduate program of library and information studies. For public library certification, one must have attended a school that is accredited by the American Library Association.

OCLC - OCLC is a worldwide library cooperative, owned, governed and sustained by members since 1967, to establish, maintain and operate a computerized library network and to promote the evolution of library use, of libraries themselves and of librarianship, and to provide processes and products for the benefit of library users and libraries. OCLC is commonly used by larger libraries for Interlibrary Loan and for cataloging of library materials.

An Online Public Access Catalog (often abbreviated as OPAC or simply Library Catalog) - An online database of materials held by a library or group of libraries. Users search a library catalog principally to locate books and other material physically located at a library.

PATRIOT Act - This act allows FBI agents to more easily obtain search warrants for immediately confiscating "any tangible thing" in libraries: books, circulation records, computer use records, any papers, computer disks and computers. For more complete information on the impact of the Patriot Act, see <http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/usapatriotlibrary.html>

PaLA (Pennsylvania Library Association) - Founded in 1901, the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) is the state's oldest and most diverse professional library organization serving libraries, library employees, library trustees, and Friends of the Library groups. PaLA represents more than 1,900 personal, institutional, and commercial members affiliated with public, academic, special, and school libraries throughout the Commonwealth. The association provides opportunities for professional growth, leadership development, and continuing education for librarians.

PCBL (Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries) - An organization of advocates that speaks for libraries throughout Pennsylvania. Membership is open to anyone who wants to see strong and well-funded libraries, and the best possible library service for all of Pennsylvania's citizens.

PLA (Public Library Association) - A division of the American Library Association.

POWER Library - is an acronym for Pennsylvania Online World of Electronic Resources. The POWER Library online resource is offered as a service to Pennsylvania's public libraries, school libraries and the State Library. Using a library card, Pennsylvania residents can access the resources (magazine articles, journals and other information) from a home computer by clicking on the POWER Library icon listed on library websites.

Reference collection - A separate collection of books (e.g., encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, directories, etc.) for answering reference questions. These materials usually do not circulate.

Standing order - Book order that automatically supplies a series of materials as they are published.

Technology plan - A plan written by librarians and trustees on the development of technology, primarily computers, in their libraries. Three-year technology plans are required for E-rate funding.

Web2.0 - Interactive web based applications and sites that encourage users to create and add content to them.

WebJunction - An online community for library staff and trustees that provides resources on management, technology and library services. Library staff and trustees can join the Pennsylvania community to take online classes, both free and at a reasonable cost, and can participate in groups and discussions. To to [www.webjunction.org](http://www.webjunction.org) to create a free account and affiliate with Pennsylvania.

Weeding - The process for removing from library collections materials that are misleading, damaged, out-of-date, trivial, irrelevant, and sources easily obtained elsewhere through interlibrary loan.

Young adult (YA) - Young persons ages 11 to 17. This phrase is used to refer to books, and library programs and services targeted at this age group.



*This production was supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.*



*Thanks to our volunteer participants:*

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*Thanks to our volunteer talent:*

Barbara Kotzin, Narrator  
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Spark One Productions  
www.sparkoneproductions.com



*Thanks to our host libraries:*

Abington Community Library

Dalton Community Library

Hershey Public Library

Hoyt Library

Lackawanna County Children's Library

Palmyra Public Library

Schlow Centre Region Library

*Getting on Board! was produced for the Office of Commonwealth Libraries by*

MEGCOMM Productions Inc.  
Wilkes-Barre, PA  
www.megcomm.com



and Kelly Menichiello

in association with

The PR Dept., LLC  
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