

**Ohio Library Council's**  
**Ohio Public Library**  
**Trustees' Handbook**  
**Fourth Edition**

**OLC**  
OHIO  
LIBRARY  
COUNCIL  
ADVOCACY  
EDUCATION  
COLLABORATION

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# INTRODUCTION

*"The level of quality of a library reflects the level of quality of the trustees who are and have been on its board."*

There are two key ingredients needed to be a good library trustee. The first is to respect the role libraries play in the quality of life of any community. The second is unwavering support of the concept of intellectual freedom.

The job of a trustee requires a considerable investment of time. While library trustees bring to their role a wide range of knowledge and experience, the special issues and concerns of libraries require investigation and study.

Attendance at board meetings is vital. It is also necessary to spend adequate time reviewing the background material for the items on the agenda and the monthly financial report.

Board members are usually asked to serve on at least one standing committee and often on an ad hoc committee. Members of the board's finance committee will spend additional time working with the fiscal officer and library director to prepare the annual budget and attend budget hearings.

Trustees should take advantage of the regional and statewide workshops and meetings offered by the Ohio Library Council and other library organizations. This usually entails one or two days per year at the council's annual conference, a day at a regional meeting, and another day at a workshop. The content and frequency of workshops and special regional or statewide meetings will depend on the current status of library issues within the state.

Some trustees may wish to involve themselves in national library issues. The time commitment will vary according to the trustees' interests.

Trustees also are representatives of the library to the community. During times when bond issues or levy campaigns face the local library, trustees may be asked to speak formally for the library. At other times, they will be asked to respond to citizens' concerns about the library. It is impossible to place a time expectation on this task. It is simply a role that the trustees must be willing to shoulder.

While the task of being a library trustee does require a commitment of time and energy, serving on a library board is a rewarding experience. The library is the one institution that serves everyone--young and old, rich and poor, men and women, poorly educated and great scholars. It is a privilege to serve as a library trustee and to be a part of an institution that is so well respected for its service to the community.

*This handbook does not constitute legal advice. Information is for guidance and suggestion only. Always consult your legal counsel for guidance on legal issues.*

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# 1

## Chapter 1 THE OHIO LIBRARY COUNCIL

The Ohio Library Council is the statewide professional organization that represents the interests of Ohio's public libraries, their trustees, Friends, and staffs. Its members support the ideals of a strong and open public library system in Ohio. As a member-driven organization, the OLC encourages its members to provide input and to be actively involved in its programs, services, and activities and recognizes that its success depends upon member involvement.

Seeking diversity of opinion and respecting the varying perspectives of its members is a touchstone of the OLC. It is committed to making Ohio's public libraries the best in the nation by fostering openness to new and creative ideas.

### OLC Membership

Membership in the Ohio Library Council is open to all public libraries in the state of Ohio, their trustees, staff members, and Friends groups. Members of a library Board of Trustees become members of the OLC by virtue of their library's Institutional membership. All trustee members receive and have access to all of the benefits of membership afforded to Individual members as well.

### Benefits of OLC Membership

**Supporting trustees and their libraries.** Trustee members of the OLC support its very aggressive and productive efforts to influence decisions in the state legislature, the Governor's office, and other areas of the state government that impact the public funding of Ohio's libraries and the ability of libraries to serve library users in the community.

State library funding is paramount to the OLC's work on behalf of Ohio's 251 public library systems. This effort includes the OLC staff's work at the Ohio Statehouse on behalf of its members and, more importantly, involving library trustees in communicating the value of library service to their government representatives in Columbus and at home.

**Growing the careers and skills of library staffs.** The world of information science and library management are developing at an ever-increasing pace, and librarians and library staff members need to keep up with the latest advancements and the needs of the local community. The OLC provides access to education activities, at a discounted rate, that may also be of interest to members of Friends organizations, including:

- **Annual Convention & Expo** – where state and national library leaders share ideas on library trends and services.
- **Chapter Conferences** – networking opportunities and programming focused on specific areas of library service held in the various geographic areas of the state.
- **Targeted training and development programs** – focused training on various issues, programs, or library skills areas held throughout the year.

**Keeping members informed.** OLC members receive information that highlights the association's response to challenges that libraries face every day and the latest developments in information science in Ohio and around the country. Member publications include:

- **Access** – a weekly electronic newsletter distributed via broadcast e-mail to library staff members and trustees.
- **Trustee Newsletter** – quarterly publication that features information specifically of interest to public library trustees.

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- **OLC website** – the online portal to the latest news and information, professional development and training information, and countless resources for trustees, directors, and other library personnel ([www.olec.org](http://www.olec.org)).

**Opportunities for involvement and networking.** OLC membership allows trustees to be involved in events that foster networking opportunities with other library trustees from around the state and enable trustees to work collectively to address the challenges of serving library users in each community throughout Ohio.

**Access to services that benefit library trustees and the library.** Library trustees can take advantage of numerous benefits, such as:

- **Initial Legal Consultation** – The OLC provides initial legal consultation on issues impacting the library or library trustees.
- **Insurance programs** – The OLC offers opportunities to acquire workers' compensation insurance, property and casualty insurance, and directors and officers liability coverage from companies that know how to evaluate and adequately insure liabilities.

## **OLC Governance**

The OLC is governed by a Board of Directors composed of three public library employees who have an MLS or MLIS degree, three public library trustees currently serving on library boards, and seven at-large members who are library staff members, trustees or Friends members. Also involved in the governance of the OLC are the members who volunteer to participate in the activities of the association's committees, division action councils, and chapter action councils.

## **OLC Mission Statement**

The Ohio Library Council is the forum in which Ohio's public library community is strengthened through advocacy, education, collaboration, and innovation.

## **Strategic Focus**

The focal points of the OLC's service to its members include:

- Advocate the interests of Ohio's public libraries, with a focused commitment to ensure adequate state funding.
- Develop high-quality public library staff members and trustees through unsurpassed education and training.
- Be the authoritative source of information on issues impacting Ohio's public libraries and enhance members' access to OLC resources.
- Create an OLC organizational structure that is flexible and responsive to members' needs, encourages member engagement, and maximizes organizational effectiveness.

## **Contact Information**

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# 2

## Chapter 2 BOARD ORGANIZATION, OPERATIONS, ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### BOARD ORGANIZATION

Most of Ohio's public libraries are organized under Chapter 3375 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). The sections in this chapter govern the organization and operation of libraries, and establish the role of the library board of trustees. Association libraries, organized as private, nonprofit entities are organized under different sections of the Ohio Revised Code.

The figure below lists the various types of libraries that exist in Ohio, who makes appointments, and the number of libraries in each category.

**Figure 2.1 Library Types**

Types of Libraries	Number of Trustees	Trustees Appointed By	No. of Libraries in Ohio
Association	Varies	According to Charter	19
County	7	Judge of the Court of Common Pleas	3
County District	7	3 by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, 4 by the County Commissioners	52
Municipal	7	Council	20
School District	7	Board of Education	153
Township	3	Township Trustees	4

### Appointment of Trustees

It is important to know that public library trustees in Ohio are appointed, not elected.

Many public library boards have worked out an agreement with their appointing authorities so that current board members have input into the appointment process. In those cases, they offer names of possible candidates when a position is vacant, or about to become vacant. In some instances, the board vacancy is announced, citizens apply for appointment, and candidates are interviewed by current board members and/or the appointing authority.

There is no statutory limitation on the number of terms a library trustee may serve. However, some library boards have adopted policies limiting trustees to one or two terms.

Currently, Ohio has 251 public library boards overseeing 251 separate library systems. As many libraries have branch facilities, the number of library buildings in the state exceeds 700.

### Criteria for Selecting New Trustees

An effective board must be able to advise and make judgments on a variety of subjects, ranging from personnel and public relations to financial and legal matters. Achieving this broad perspective requires that the board have a mix of membership that meets two basic criteria:

1. The board should be representative of the community values the library serves.
2. Board members should have experience or knowledge, which enables them to provide insights when the board is deliberating on various questions that arise.

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Effective boards place great importance on finding the best possible replacements for their membership. If board selection is done well, it will produce a diverse and strong library system for the community. A method for identifying the best potential candidates involves following a simple, three-step process.

1. Identify the criteria that need representation on the board.
2. Evaluate the mix of the present board membership based on these criteria to identify areas of deficiency in the representation.
3. Based on these same criteria, identify potential candidates that will contribute to a successful board.

The various criteria to be considered fall into two general categories. One involves demographic factors, and the other involves experience and background factors. The demographic factors usually include age group, gender, ethnic representation, and location of residency. Background factors include legal, financial, education, public relations, managerial, small business, technology, and personnel experience. Also, participation in other community activities and voluntary boards should be included in the list.

In developing this list of criteria, it is helpful to review the library's strategic or long-range plan. If future plans involve a tax levy or a building project, then it might be advisable to have a board member who has had successful experience involving a levy and/or a public sector construction project.

When recommending candidates, board members should remember that candidates will exercise their professional experience (as a lawyer or an architect, for example) only in an advisory role and that any conflict of interest must be avoided.

### **Working With the Appointing Authority in the Selection of Trustees**

Often times the process for selection of a trustee has been in place for many years and may no longer support the needs of the library board. If this is the case, the appointing authority and the board should meet to discuss a change in the process.

It is a good idea to review this process will in advance of the board selection to avoid surprises.

The library board and the appointing body may want to work out a written document to formalize this procedure.

### **Oath of Office**

The Constitution of the State of Ohio requires that every person "chosen or appointed" to an office in the state must take (1) an oath or affirmation to support the Constitutions of the United States and of Ohio and (2) an oath of office. Public library trustees can combine this requirement into one oath, which would read as follows:

*Do you solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Ohio; and that you will faithfully and impartially discharge your duties as a member of the board of trustees of the [INSERT LIBRARY NAME], in [INSERT NAME OF COUNTY], Ohio to the best of your ability, and in accordance with the laws now in effect and hereinafter to be enacted, during your term of office? (The answer is: "I do.")*

Persons authorized to administer oaths include the following individuals:

1. Notaries public commissioned in Ohio may administer oaths anywhere in the state.
2. Ohio legislators (members of the General Assembly) may also administer oaths anywhere in the state.
3. Judges of any court in Ohio may administer oaths anywhere in the state.
4. Other elected officials may administer oaths to people within the geographical limits of their constituencies.

While the first, second, and third categories are fairly straightforward, the fourth category merits further explanation. In the case of a county district library board member, that individual could be sworn in by any elected official at the county level, such as a county commissioner, county treasurer, county auditor, etc. A mayor of a town within the county, however, could probably not administer oaths to county district library trustees. A school district library presents a more difficult question, given that certain school districts may cross jurisdictional lines. In that case, it is safe to assume that an elected member of the school board could

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administer the school district public library trustee's oath of office. Essentially, the fourth category stands for the proposition that officials elected from the same electoral base that forms the library's area of service may administer oaths to that library's trustees.

It should be noted that **library board members or fiscal officers are not authorized to administer these oaths**, unless they are commissioned as notaries. It is a good idea to have at least one board member and the fiscal officer commissioned as notaries so they can legally administer oaths of office and perform any other duties for the library board that require notarial acts.

## Code of Ethics

The American Library Trustee Association (ALTA) approved a Statement of Ethics in 1985, and it was subsequently adopted by the Ohio Library Council (See Appendix D).

## Trustee Orientation

The library will provide a board orientation, which should include a meeting with the library director and the board president as well as a tour of the library district and the library's facilities. The library should also provide a notebook or handbook that outlines important information about the library.

Trustees should become familiar with several pieces of information regarding the library, including:

- **History of the Library** - The history of the library should give background information about the library and its branches.
- **Library Service District Map** - A map of the library service district should highlight each library service outlet (such outlets might be the main library, a branch, or a bookmobile stop).
- **Library Mission Statement** - A mission statement is a short description of the role of the library within the community. Often it is one or two paragraphs in length.
- **Strategic Plan** - If the library has a strategic or long-range plan, this document will be helpful to new trustees. It gives a new board member a look at the goals and plans for the library and the benefit of input from previous board members.
- **Annual Report** - The library's annual report should provide an overview of the programs and community involvement over the past year as well as an overview of the library's user statistics, circulation, and finances.
- **Board Calendar** - A board calendar will help to schedule regular meetings, committee meetings, annual events, etc. to prevent conflicts with other personal or business appointments.
- **Board Contact List** – The library should provide a list of the current board members and officers with their addresses, telephone numbers, and length of term. It is also helpful to have a short paragraph about each board member to learn what expertise they bring to the board table. If the board has committees, those committee appointments should be noted. Many boards have found that the work can be accomplished easier through committees such as personnel, property, and finance.
- **Library Bylaws** – Trustees should review the board's bylaws in order to be familiar with the procedures of the board.
- **Library Organizational Chart** – Trustees should also be familiar with the library's organizational chart, which will identify the number of people working in the library. The chart will name each position and should list the number of people working in each position. Trustees should have the names, addresses, telephone numbers, job descriptions, and short biographical statements for the director, fiscal officer, and other key staff.
- **Library Budget** - It is important to know the library's current budget and salary schedule, a description of and contracts for any services that the library receives from another agency or organization, and a description of any cooperative relationships that are in place with other libraries or community agencies.
- **Board Minutes** - Trustees will also find it helpful to review the minutes and financial statements of the library during the past year. This will provide a framework for discussions at future board meetings.
- **Library Policies** - Finally, trustees should have a copy of the library policies and be familiar with important policies such as the library's Intellectual Freedom and Internet Access policies.

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# LIBRARY OPERATIONS

## Board Bylaws

Bylaws are the basic operating policies of the board. They establish the procedures by which the board will transact its business. Topics that are generally covered in bylaws include:

1. Statement of purpose;
2. Description of board membership;
3. Tenure of service;
4. Meeting schedule, including time, day of the month, and usual place of meeting;
5. Standing committees;
6. Officers: method of selection, length of term, duties and powers, limitations on terms, plan for rotation;
7. Date and agenda of annual meeting;
8. Definition of quorum;
9. Filling vacancies;
10. Amendments;
11. Method of calling special meetings;
12. Conflicts of interest (adoption of Statement of Ethics); and
13. Indemnification.

Bylaws must be kept up to date and amended when necessary. However, they can be amended only by proper board action. Occasionally, a board will make changes or take actions that do not conform to their own rules. Actions taken without regard to procedures established in the bylaws could be subject to legal challenge.

## Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure assures that meetings are conducted in an orderly and objective fashion so that the majority rules, the minority is heard, and the absentee is protected. If a library board conducts its business in an appropriate and orderly fashion, there should be no problem as to the intent of their decisions. Parliamentary procedure helps to accomplish this goal. It is designed to help, rather than hinder, the orderly conduct of a meeting.

## Robert's Rules of Order

*Robert's Rules of Order* is the parliamentary authority adopted by most boards. All board members should be familiar with their use. There are certain simplifications made for small meetings, those consisting of less than 15 people. For example:

- The person presiding may make motions, participate in discussions, and vote on all questions.
- Informal discussion of a question is permitted without a motion on the floor.
- Some actions may be taken without a motion, if the proposal is clear to all present. This requires the general consent of all present. For example, the minutes may be approved and the meeting may be adjourned without a formal motion.
- Motions to stop or limit debate of the board members are generally not allowed in small groups.
- When a motion is made, the proper sequence to follow is:
  1. Motion is made by member;
  2. Motion is seconded;
  3. Chair restates the motion;
  4. Debate on the motion;

- 
5. Chair restates motion, including any amendments; and
  6. Vote is taken.

The motion as amended and the vote on the motion should be recorded accurately in the minutes, including roll call votes when taken.

## Board Meetings

Under Ohio law, a “meeting” is a prearranged gathering of a majority of the members of a public body to discuss or conduct public business. All meetings of the full board or **subcommittees of the board**, regardless of size, are subject to Ohio’s Open Meetings Law.

There are three types of board meetings:

1. **Regular meetings** are held on a pre-determined schedule, frequently set up in the bylaws. Any trustee can introduce business that is proper for consideration. The notice requirement for a regular meeting is that the library must establish by rule a reasonable method that allows the public to determine the time and place of the regular meetings. Posted notices, notification in local newspapers, and Websites are all acceptable means of notification.
2. **Special meetings** are any meeting that is held at a different time than the regular meetings. They are called for the purpose of discussing one or two items that must be specified when the meeting is scheduled. Notice of the time and place must also be given to each trustee, as specified in the bylaws. Votes can be taken on the specified topics during special meetings. The notice requirement is that the library must establish by rule a reasonable method that allows the public to determine the time, place, and purpose of a special meeting. The rule must require at least 24 hours of advance notification to all media outlets that have requested such notification. Although the notice for a special meeting must state the purpose for the meeting, it may be for “general purposes.” If a library wants to adjourn into executive session (See page 14) during a special meeting, the topic of the executive session should directly relate to some matter specified in the meeting notice.
3. **Emergency meetings** are special meetings that are convened because a situation requires immediate official action. For this type of meeting, the notice requirement is immediate. The library must notify all news media outlets that have requested such notice.

The Open Meetings Law also requires a library to establish a method by which a person may sign up to receive notice of meetings when a particular subject is going to be discussed. The method may require payment of a reasonable fee, and the failure to pay that fee would mean that the person is not entitled to receive the requested notice.

**A reorganization meeting** is a special meeting held at the time and for the purposes specified in the bylaws. ORC 3375.32 requires boards of public libraries, not including association libraries, to meet each January or December of the previous year to elect officers and appoint a fiscal officer. This meeting, which may be part of a regular meeting, usually involves administering the oath of office to new trustees, appointment of standing committees, approval of the annual board calendar, and receiving the annual report from the director and/or the fiscal officer. This meeting might also provide a good opportunity for the board to do a self-evaluation (See Appendix D).

Some boards also hold regular retreats for the purpose of long-range planning. It is best to treat these as special meetings, with the public being given notice and opportunity to attend. This applies even if no decisions or votes are intended to be made at this meeting. The mere presence of a quorum of the board, discussing library business, is enough to present at least the appearance of evasion of the Open Meetings Law, which is also known as the Sunshine Law. All food, lodging, travel, and speaker expenses are legitimate expenses for the library.

## Ohio’s Open Meeting Law

All meetings of the library board and its subcommittees are subject to the Sunshine Law, and therefore all members of the public are entitled to attend the proceedings of these meetings. There is case law that suggests that meetings must be held in a public meeting place and within the geographical jurisdiction of the library. The meeting place must also be accessible to individuals with disabilities in compliance with federal law.

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One-on-one conversations between individual members, either in person, by phone, or through e-mail, do not violate the Open Meetings Law. However, discussions of public business by conference call, group e-mail, or back-to-back meetings (round robin or serial meetings) do appear to violate the Open Meetings Law.

A member of the public is guaranteed the right to attend a public meeting but not the right to be heard at that meeting. A disruptive person waives the right to remain and observe the meeting and may be removed.

## Executive Session

Library boards can go into executive session for one of the following reasons:

1. **Personnel.** To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, or to consider the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual. Courts have determined that this exception may NOT be used unless the matters to be discussed directly affect a specific person or to discuss the creation of a new position.
2. **Property.** To consider the purchase of property, or the sale of property by competitive bid.
3. **Court Action.** A library may discuss pending or imminent court action in executive session, but the library's duly appointed legal counsel must be present.
4. **Collective Bargaining.** To discuss, prepare for, conduct, or review collective bargaining issues.
5. **Confidential Matters.** To discuss matters required to be kept confidential by federal law, federal rules, or state statutes.
6. **Security Arrangements.** To discuss security arrangements and emergency response protocols where the disclosure of that information could be expected to jeopardize the security of the library.

No decision-making can be done in executive session. In executive session, the only vote that can be taken is a motion to adjourn or recess the session.

In order to begin an executive session there must be a motion and second that states the **specific matters to be discussed and who will be in attendance in the session**. The vote on the motion must be done by roll call.

## Legal Counsel

The county prosecutor is the legal counsel for public libraries in Ohio. However, the prosecutor cannot represent the library in cases between library systems in the same county (such as tax distribution disagreements) or when the library is involved in a legal matter against another county agency.

In cases where the county prosecutor cannot serve because he or she is adversely interested in the matter at issue, public libraries are empowered to employ independent legal counsel, although libraries must use their own funds to pay for the representation. In addition, public libraries also are authorized to employ independent legal counsel (again at their own expense) in cases where they believe the library's interests would be better served by private counsel.

## Guidelines for a Good Board Meeting

Have an agenda, which is distributed to board members in advance of the meeting (See Figure 2.2).

Usually the library director will prepare the agenda, in consultation with the board president. The sequence of the agenda should be followed throughout the meeting.

Send out the minutes of the previous meeting and the financial and statistical reports several days before the meeting. Information relating to important matters that will be discussed should be sent to board members in advance. Board members should study the material that is sent to them in advance.

Start the meeting on time. Recognize visitors and inform them if and when there will be an opportunity for their questions and comments. Follow parliamentary procedure and discourage non-business conversation. Limit talking to one person at a time.

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## Figure 2.2 Sample Agenda

### AGENDA

- I. Roll Call
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
- IV. Financial Report
- V. Circulation Report
- VI. Public Comments
- VII. Correspondence Report
- VIII. Director's Report
- IX. Board Committee Reports
- X. Old Business
- XI. New Business
- XII. Adjournment

### Board Calendar

A board calendar can be very useful in establishing the timing of events, special meetings, and decisions over the course of a year. The calendar is compiled by the board president in cooperation with the library director. It typically includes dates for:

- Regular meetings,
- Annual meeting,
- Budget activities,
- Conferences and regional meetings,
- Report deadlines,
- Evaluations,
- Salary recommendations,
- Nominations,
- Newsletters, and
- Special activities or events.

### Board Minutes

A library district is a body politic created by the Ohio General Assembly. The actions of a library board of trustees are matters of public record. The accuracy and completeness of the minutes are very important and are, in effect, legal documents. The actions of the library board should be recorded accurately. The Sunshine Law, ORC 121.22, requires that minutes be "promptly prepared, filed and maintained and made open to public inspection."

The name of the board, the date, time, and place of the meeting, and whether the meeting was regular, special, executive session, or annual should open the minutes. Board members and others in attendance should be noted.

The exact wording of each motion, the name of the person making the motion, and the way it was disposed should be recorded. All resolutions should be numbered and indexed.

When a roll call vote is taken, the vote of each board member should be recorded.

Time of adjournment should close the minutes.

In addition, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in 1996 that the minutes of each meeting must set forth enough of the discussion of the issues before the board to show the rationale behind the action taken.

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Minutes do not become official until they are approved at the next succeeding meeting but drafts of minutes are public record until the minutes are approved by the board. They should be scrutinized carefully and errors should be corrected before the next meeting. After being approved by the board, signed by the president, and attested by the secretary, the minutes are open to inspection by the public at all proper times, for all proper purposes, subject to the limitations that such inspection does not endanger the safety of the records.

Corrections to the minutes may be made at any time, even long after the meeting has occurred and the minutes have been approved. This requires a motion to amend, duly seconded and approved, and noted in the minutes.

### **Executive Session Records**

If an executive session is held, the motion and roll call vote to go into executive session, as well as a brief description of the matters to be discussed, should be noted. Remember, items can only be discussed, not decided, in executive session. Therefore, the minutes should reflect only that a discussion on a certain subject area was held (such as personnel, pending legal action, consideration of the sale or purchase of property). When the board comes out of its executive session, the time of reopening should be noted, and then any motion and/or votes on the matters discussed in session may be made.

## **ROLE OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Providing library services and materials that reflect the community's values and standards is the overriding responsibility of the board.

The library board is accountable to the public to see that the library is operated in an efficient and productive manner. To accomplish this, the board's attention is focused on:

- Establishing policies to provide the direction for all aspects of the library;
- Overseeing the financial operations of the library, including adopting an annual budget, approving the bills, and reviewing the financial documents of the library;
- Planning and evaluating library services;
- Purchasing and maintaining all property owned by the library;
- Appointing the director and the fiscal officer for the library;
- Acting as an advocate for the library in the community as well as in government; and
- Staying informed on issues that impact public libraries.

Each of these topics is covered in separate chapters in this manual.

The library is operated under the administrative guidance of the director who is hired by the board. Hiring of an able administrator is one of the most important duties of the board. The administrator interprets the policies of the board to assure that the needs and expectations of the taxpayers, the patrons, employees, and the budget commission are being met in the best possible way.



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# 3

## Chapter 3 LIBRARY POLICIES

### POLICY SETTING ROLE OF THE BOARD

Establishing policies is one of the primary responsibilities of a member of the board of trustees.

Policies are essential for the orderly operation of the library. They flow from the library's mission statement and reflect the goals and objectives of the library based on community standards.

Policies provide guidelines for the library's administration. They define what should be done, but not how it should be done. Policies are implemented through procedures developed by the staff.

Policies provide a statement to the public about the library's position on important issues. Adopting policies can provide a certain measure of legal protection for the board. Copies of policies should be available to the public as well as to the staff.

Policies can originate from recommendations of board members, director, staff, or from members of the public. They can be discussed and evaluated either directly or through board committees before being adopted. They should be written carefully, recorded, and indexed. Policies should be collected and placed in a single volume separate from the board's minute book.

Policies should be reviewed regularly and changed to meet current conditions. The library's legal counsel should also review its proposed policies and procedures to assure that they do not conflict with the law. The results of policy decisions should be monitored by the board to ensure the intended effect of the policy is, in fact, happening.

### Types of Policies

Library policies fall into four categories:

1. **Public Service policies** deal with those operations involving availability and use of library services and materials.
2. **Library Operational policies** deal with the finances, public relations, board procedures, and organization of the library.
3. **Facility policies** deal with the availability, use, and maintenance of the library's physical plant.
4. **Personnel policies** deal with the hiring, pay, administration, working conditions, and supervision of staff.

Refer to Figure 3.1 for examples of topics that may be covered by each of these types of policies. Additional information about policies can be found in *Creating Policies for Results* by Sandra Nelson and June Garcia and published by the American Library Association.

**Figure 3.1 Examples of Various Types of Policies**

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE POLICIES**

##### **Governance and Organizational Structure**

GOV-1	Organization Chart
GOV-2	Locations/Hours of All Operations
GOV-3	Library Board Bylaws
GOV-4	Library Board Standing Committees

##### **Customer Services**

CUS-1	Customer Service
CUS-2	Customer Behavior
CUS-3	Unattended Children

#### **Circulation Services**

CIR-1	Library Cards for Residents
CIR-2	Library Cards for Nonresidents
CIR-3	Loan Periods and Loan Limits
CIR-4	Renewals
CIR-5	Reserves
CIR-6	Claims Returned or Claims Never Had
CIR-7	Lost or Damaged Materials
CIR-8	Fines and Fees
CIR-9	Borrowing Materials by Staff

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**Information Services**

- INF-1 Priorities for Reference Service
- INF-2 Interlibrary Loan

**Technology Services**

- TEC-1 Internet Use
- TEC-2 Use of Library Personal Computers

**Group Services**

- GSV-1 Programs in the Library
- GSV-2 Co-Sponsored Programs in the Library
- GSV-3 Community Presentations
- GSV-4 Special Events
- GSV-5 Computer Training for the Public

**Management Policies**

- MNG-1 Confidentiality of Library Records
- MNG-2 Statistics
- MNG-3 Petty Cash
- MNG-4 Fundraising and Donations
- MNG-5 Reconsideration of Library Materials
- MNG-6 Building Maintenance
- MNG-7 Emergencies and Disasters
- MNG-8 Meeting Room Use
- MNG-9 Exhibits and Displays
- MNG-10 Bulletin Boards
- MNG-11 Distribution of Nonlibrary Materials
- MNG-12 Inclement Weather and Closing
- MNG-13 Board Ethics
- MNG-14 Staff Ethics
- MNG-15 Public Relations
- MNG-16 Advocacy
- MNG-17 Solicitation on Library Property
- MNG-18 Demonstrations on Library Property
- MNG-19 Circulation of Petitions on Library Property
- MNG-20 Conflict of Interest
- MNG-21 Court Order and Law Enforcement Response

**LIBRARY OPERATIONAL POLICIES****Security**

- SEC-1 Library Property
- SEC-2 Staff Security
- SEC-3 Patron Security

**Financial**

- FIN-1 Investments
- FIN-2 Inventory
- FIN-3 Acceptance of Gifts
- FIN-4 Insurance
- FIN-5 Bonds
- FIN-6 Depository Contracts
- FIN-7 Budget and Appropriations
- FIN-8 Audit Committee
- FIN-9 Credit Card

**Purchasing**

- PUR-1 Purchase Orders
- PUR-2 Approval Responsibility

**Records**

- REC-1 Records Retention
- REC-2 Disposal

**Collection Development**

- COL-1 Authority to Purchase
- COL-2 Responsibility
- COL-3 Selection Criteria
- COL-4 Weeding
- COL-5 Donated Materials

**Intellectual Freedom**

- IF-1 Staff and Board Training
- IF-2 Internet Access
- IF-3 Collection Policy
- IF-4 Challenge Process

**FACILITIES POLICIES**

- FAC-1 Patron Use of Equipment
- FAC-2 Property Management
- FAC-3 Smoking
- FAC-4 Rules of Conduct

**PERSONNEL POLICIES**

- PER-1 Affirmative Action
- PER-2 Job Descriptions
- PER-3 Association Membership Dues
- PER-4 Jury Duty Leave
- PER-5 Sick Leave
- PER-6 Maternity Leave
- PER-7 Military Leave
- PER-8 Education Leave
- PER-9 Bereavement Leave
- PER-10 Insurance Benefits
- PER-11 Significant Partners benefits
- PER-12 Demotions
- PER-13 Nepotism
- PER-14 On-the-Job Conduct
- PER-15 Employee Confidentiality
- PER-16 Overtime and Comp Time
- PER-17 Staff Training and Development
- PER-18 Evaluation of Staff
- PER-19 Probationary Period
- PER-20 Grievance Procedures
- PER-21 Hiring Practices
- PER-22 Promotions
- PER-23 Termination
- PER-24 Holidays
- PER-25 Punctuality and Absences
- PER-26 Salary and Pay Ranges
- PER-27 Retirement and OPERS

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## Organization of Policies

There are a wide variety of approaches to organizing library policies. Library boards should adopt an organizational structure that allows trustees to locate policies quickly as well as modify, add, or delete policies. An example is illustrated below in Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2 Organizational Model for Library Policies**

No.	Category	Subject	Date Issued/Revised

## Policy Development

It is important for the board to establish the process that it will follow to create new policies and review existing policies. Some policies must be established because of state or federal law requirements. For example, state law requires that all public libraries approve an Internet access policy and file it with the Ohio Public Information Network (OPLIN). Sometimes, new technology or management trends require the board to establish a policy. As an example, many libraries are approving a policy regarding an employer's right to examine the information stored on an employee's computer.

The process for policy development should identify who will be responsible for the development of policies and how they will approach policy development. There should also be a standard process for auditing and reviewing existing policies.

## Procedures

Although it is not the responsibility for board members to develop procedures to support board policies, it is important that the board recognize that many of the policies will have accompanying procedures in order for them be to effectively implemented.

## Important Note:

By law, a copy of every public library's Internet access policy is required to be filed with OPLIN.

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# 4 Chapter 4 MANAGING THE MONEY

## FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD

In a library of any size, the budgeting process involves planning the goals of the library and the actions that need to be taken to achieve these goals. Planning should be done for the current fiscal year and for future years as well. The library director, with the input of the fiscal officer and the finance committee, plans the budget expenditures as a reflection of the programs provided to the community. The fiscal officer prepares the budget figures and presents them in the appropriate legal format.

A temporary appropriations budget may be used for the first three months of the library's fiscal year to allow for closing the books and obtaining final figures before preparing the permanent appropriations budget. Temporary appropriations, which consist of the estimates of revenue and expenditure for the library's fiscal year, may be approved at the December board meeting. Permanent appropriations must be in place prior to March 31.

The line items in all budget forms are prescribed by the Ohio Auditor of State's Office in the chart of accounts. All reports are made in a cash based accounting format, except for larger libraries, which are moving toward accrual formats. Some method of producing an accrual balance sheet would be important if a library were considering bonded indebtedness.

Many computerized accounting systems are available and in use in Ohio libraries. The state auditor's office has developed a Uniform Accounting Network for smaller public libraries. When choosing an automated system for accounting, libraries should work closely with the state auditor's office to be sure that all financial reporting requirements are met.

When dealing with public monies, accountability is a primary responsibility. The library board is accountable to ensure, through bonding and scrutiny of reports, that the library director and the fiscal officer use funds for agreed upon library services and in a wise and legally correct manner. The state auditor's office will hold the fiscal officer and the library directly responsible for improper handling of monies and for internal control as well.

The board gives clear direction to the library director and the fiscal officer in the separation of their duties. The library director sets the budget goals and expends the funds within the accounts, which have been approved by the board. The fiscal officer is responsible for reporting on and accounting for the expenditure of funds within the appropriated limits set by the board.

Securing funding for the library is a task for all library trustees. They provide the most effective voice at the state level, where maintaining adequate funding can never be taken for granted, and at the county level where the budget commission decides the amount allocated to individual libraries in the county. Trustees can decide to ask voters for special levies for building projects or for operations. They may be instrumental in eliciting monetary gifts from private donors or foundations.

At state and local levels, libraries must compete for funds. It is important that the board set as its goal the provision of quality library service to its community and sees that funding is obtained to meet that goal.

### Public Library Fund

The Public Library Fund (PLF), which until 2008 was called the Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF), was created by the state legislature in 1985 to replace the intangibles tax, which supported libraries since 1931. The original legislation for the fund provided that the state distribute 6.3% of the state's personal income tax collections to each county on a monthly basis for the support of public libraries. In 1995, the funding level was amended by the legislature to 5.7% of the state's personal income tax collections. In 2008, funding of the PLF was changed to 2.22% of the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF). As the General Assembly has enacted the state's biennial budgets since 2008, the PLF has been reduced to 1.97% of the GRF and then set in permanent law at 1.66% of the GRF.

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However, for the state's 2018-19 fiscal year budget, the PLF was set in temporary law at 1.68% of the GRF. That percentage is 0.02% more than the amount stated in permanent law, and was a result of the strong advocacy work of the OLC and its members.

The distribution of the PLF from the state to each county is based upon a formula devised by the Public Library Financing and Support Committee during the change from intangibles to state income tax. The distribution formula provides for a guaranteed share, based upon the county's percent share of the 1985 intangibles taxes plus Consumer Price Index, and for a share of the excess. Using an equalization ratio, which is based upon each county's share of the statewide population, the amount of income tax over the guaranteed share is distributed to each county. Both shares are calculated by the Ohio Department of Taxation, and the resulting amount is sent by the 10th of each month to the county treasurer. The county treasurer must distribute all funds by the 15th day of each month.

## **The State Tax Commissioner**

The state tax commissioner calculates the estimates of money in the PLF. The first calculation is made on or before July 25 for the following year. The tax commissioner certifies to each county auditor the amount of money estimated for the county's PLF for the next calendar year. This estimate is usually known to libraries prior to the budget hearings in the months of August and September.

In December, the tax commissioner must update the estimates for the following year and certify the revised estimates to each county auditor. In June, the tax commissioner updates the estimates for the current year. In planning budgets, the public library must always be prepared for the estimate of revenues to change.

The December estimate calculates the amount the county was entitled to receive under the distribution formula and the amount actually received. The difference between the two is adjusted for any overpayment or underpayment in the first six months of the next year.

## **The Budget Process**

By state law, the fiscal year for public libraries runs from January 1 through December 31. The budget process begins with a tax-budget request, which is prepared by the library director with assistance from the fiscal officer and lists amounts needed in revenue and expenditures for the fiscal year. Before the budget request is considered at the library board level, the board's finance committee may review it. The library board then approves the document each year prior to May 31. After a public hearing, which is required by law and may be part of a monthly board meeting, the budget request is sent to the library's taxing authority. The taxing authority has the power to approve but not to change, reduce, or increase the request. The document is submitted before July 20 to the county budget commission, which is composed of the auditor, prosecutor, and treasurer.

Ohio Revised Code Sec. 5705.32 reads "the commission shall base the amount for distribution on the needs of such library...." The budget commission may hold a hearing to determine library needs. The determination of the budget commission must be made prior to September 1, and notice is given to libraries of the budget determination or allocation.

When counties have more than one public library, either the budget commission or the libraries may take the initiative to transfer the allocation decision to a formula. The Ohio Library Council can advise library boards on the types of formulas in use and the means of creating and accepting a formula for use in the county.

After the budget commission gives the notice of allocation, libraries that are dissatisfied with the allocation may appeal the decision to the Ohio Board of Tax Appeals under procedures outlined in ORC Sec. 5705.37.

## **Required Financial Reports**

The Ohio Auditor of State requires a monthly financial report from the fiscal officer to the board. This report should include a reconciliation of bank balances to the fund balances, a cash position report, a report that compares estimated and actual receipts and expenditures for each fund, and an investment record that reports current investments held by the library.

The fiscal officer prepares an annual financial report for the state auditor. By law, the "Notice of Availability" of this report is published as a legal advertisement in the library's local newspaper by March 31 of each year.

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## The Library Audit

Public libraries welcome audits as an opportunity to reassure taxpayers that the library is operating honestly, efficiently, and within the laws of the State of Ohio.

The Ohio Auditor of State's office audits public libraries on a one- or two- year cycle, depending on whether the library has received federal funds. The state auditor's office has strongly encouraged libraries to create audit committees. The audit may in some cases include audits of library support groups as well. A library board may contract with a private auditing firm to have what is called an "outside" audit. An outside auditor will sometimes be suggested by the local state auditor's office. Audits done by a private firm must be submitted to the state auditor's office for final approval. Library boards should explore the costs of outside audits versus the costs for a state auditor's office audit.

A post audit conference is held when the auditor's work is completed, but prior to the finalizing of the audit report. It is important that at least one library trustee attend the post-audit conference. The auditor will review the report, answer questions, and make recommendations for improving financial operations. Any citations or findings for recovery are discussed at this time. If the library feels that any aspect of the audit needs to be challenged, a letter can be sent to the state auditor's office before the final approval of the audit is given.

The state auditor's office publishes the audit report on their Website. This release may occur before the library receives the final audit report.

## Investment of Funds

An investment program is intended to maximize interest earnings through the use of appropriate financial instruments; in other words, investments allowed by law with almost no exposure to loss or principal. The board is required to apply ordinary business judgment and consider the facts and circumstances of each investment. The following types of investments are allowed:

- U.S. government-guaranteed treasury bills, notes, bonds, and other obligations. Stripped principle or interest obligations are not permitted.
- Bonds, notes, and other obligations issued by any federal government agency or instrumentality.
- Interim deposits in eligible institutions applying for interim monies, as provided in ORC Sec. 135.
- Bonds or other obligations of the State of Ohio.
- No-load money market mutual funds consisting exclusively of otherwise eligible obligations if purchased from eligible institutions as set forth in ORC Sec. 135.03.
- Repurchase agreements purchased through eligible institutions in ORC Sec. 135.03, and provided that certain highly technical restrictions are followed.
- The Ohio Subdivisions Fund, which is also known as the State Treasury Reserve of Ohio (STAR Ohio).

Restrictions on investments are noted in the *Ohio Public Library Accounting Handbook* and in ORC 135.

The law requires that the library board of trustees adopt an investment policy and file it with the Ohio Auditor of State. Among other things, this investment policy must require that all brokers, dealers, and other financial institutions that transact investment business with the library or give advice regarding investments shall have first received, read, and comprehended the policy and have agreed to comply with it. If a library does not adopt and file an investment policy, then the library can invest only in STAR Ohio or in interim deposits.

## Limit on the Maturity of Investments

All investments must mature within five years of the settlement date unless an investment is matched to a specific obligation of the library.

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## Prohibited Investments

Although libraries are permitted to invest in only the investments listed above, the law specifically prohibits a number of types of investments. Prohibited investments include:

- Any type of derivative investment;
- Any repurchase agreement where the library agrees to sell securities it owns to a purchaser and agrees to unconditionally repurchase those securities (in other words, where the other person ends up holding the securities for a time);
- Any investment that is purchased without a reasonable expectation that it will be held until maturity;
- Any investment in a fund established by another subdivision if that fund was established for the purpose of investing public monies of other subdivisions (this does not apply to STAR Ohio);
- Any "leveraged" investments (using current assets as collateral to purchase other assets); and
- Any type of contract to sell securities not yet acquired entered into in order to purchase other securities for speculation.

## Education Requirements for the Fiscal Officer

The law requires that all fiscal officers (as well as any other staff person whose duties, according to the library's investment policy, include making investment decisions) complete continuing education course work as established by the Ohio Treasurer of State's Center for Public Investment Management. If these continuing education requirements are not met, then the only investments that are permitted are in interim deposits and STAR Ohio, provided a training-waiver has been granted.

## STAR Ohio

STAR Ohio is a state-based investment fund available to all public/governmental agencies, offering security, high interest rates, electronic deposit, and ready liquidity. For more details, contact the state treasurer's office.

## Other Sources of Funding

Libraries may decide that to supplement the funding provided by the state, the community would support a levy or bond issue.

A bond issue is used for capital improvements to the library. The library borrows money based on the amount of the bond. The money from the sale of the bonds is paid to library at one time, and the library uses that money for construction projects. The library then must pay the bond off over the period of time stipulated in the bond issue from the proceeds of the bond issue.

A levy is a property tax that is collected each year for the life of the approved levy. Money from the levy can be used for either construction or operation, but the purpose of the levy will dictate how the levy proceeds can be used. Proceeds of levies for current expenses can be used for operations; proceeds of levies for permanent improvements can be used for construction. More detailed information about bonds and levies is available in the OLC's *Ballot Handbook*.

Grants are another source of funding that come in many different packages: governmental, private foundations, corporate, and individual. Depending on the nature of the need for additional funds, the board should review these options on a fairly regular basis. Setting aside one meeting in the first quarter of each year to review the variety of grants may be one approach to keeping these sources in front of the board.

Specific information on grants through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) is available from the State Library of Ohio, which administers this federally funded project. A State Library representative would be an ideal resource person for libraries seeking these grants; the director of the local regional library system (SWON, NORWELD, NEO-RLS, SERLS) can also provide information on this program.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is another source of federal funding.

Foundations, both private and corporate, are an excellent source of additional revenue. The office of the Foundation Center in Cleveland can provide additional information (<http://fdncenter.org/cleveland>). Regional

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branches of the Foundation Center have been established at other public and academic libraries around the state.

Writing grants has become a full-time activity for many library staff members. Before becoming involved in grant seeking, take time to speak to trustees and staff from other libraries that have implemented successful grants. Generally grants will not make up any gaps in operating funds. Grants tend to be project-oriented and do not substitute for securing adequate PLF and/or levy funding. Also, some grants are not worth pursuing. The time required to get the funds may not be compensated by the amount awarded, or the project funded is so far from the library's basic mission as to be a depletion of funds for that mission.

## **Library Foundations**

The board may wish to establish its own foundation to broaden its financial base. A library foundation is a tax-exempt corporation that acts as a vehicle for gifts, nongovernmental revenue, bequests, and other sources of money intended for the use of the library. The OLC and the State Library of Ohio can refer interested trustees to those libraries that have formed successful foundations or development corporations. The reasons for creating such a vehicle include having a means of raising and spending special funds for the library outside of the governmental accounting system; to enjoy more favorable investment opportunities; to have a method to secure bequests and donations; to be able to spend funds for library expenses that may not be permissible, such as staff recognition awards or dinners; to have sources for cash purchases from individuals; and/or to take advantage of fundraising activities not possible under public funding, such as book publishing and purchase of goods for resale at a profit. Boards must be careful to coordinate the roles and functions of their Friends groups and their foundations.



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# 5 Chapter 5 LIBRARY STAFFING

## BOARD RESPONSIBILITY IN PERSONNEL MATTERS

ORC 3375.40 (G) provides that the library board hires the library director and the fiscal officer. These hiring decisions are usually the most important decisions made by a library board. The hiring process should not be a casual one and should involve the entire board.

Board involvement in personnel decisions concerning other staff should be limited. The board or its personnel committee should be consulted concerning changes in status (hiring, suspension, termination) of other staff, but the initiative for such changes properly rests with the director. The board should establish a due process procedure involving board members in the hearing of employee appeals on personnel matters.

### The Library Director

The strong role that the library director plays in determining a library's success makes the selection of a director the most crucial of all board decisions.

Nothing can make the experience of being a library trustee any more pleasant than having an excellent working relationship with the library's director. Nothing can make a trustee's role any more difficult than having a friction-laden relationship with a director.

If only one board member has an ax to grind with the director, it can be a distraction for the remainder of the board and the director. If two board members are constantly at odds with the director, it is a problem that the board should deal with before the problem grows.

But if three members of a seven-member board are frequently finding fault with the director, it can be disastrous for the library and its patrons. Too much time will be wasted on the squabbles between the opposing factions. The library, its reputation, and the board as an entity will be there longer than individual board members and the director.

The relationship between trustees and a director is usually one of ongoing teamwork. To ensure that such teamwork continues, it is important that both trustees and directors know what is expected of them. For the director, that knowledge begins when he or she is interviewed for the job.

There are several important steps for boards to take in order to avoid friction between the board and the director. A thorough director search process helps to ensure the placement of a director who will fit well with the library and the community. The search process should not be rushed. Board members should examine the past experience of the candidates, have a clear understanding about the skill sets they are seeking in a new director, include key staff in the search whenever possible, and strongly consider the candidate's commitment to the community. Many boards use experienced search services to assist them in locating a new director. The OLC as well as other private consultants or firms offer director search services.

The second important step in ensuring a successful ongoing working relationship between the board and the director is to implement an annual evaluation process. This provides an opportunity for the board and the director to establish clear goals and objectives and a fundamental understanding of expectations. Boards change over time, and their expectations may also change. Directors need to hear clear messages from their boards. There are a variety of evaluation tools available to library boards (See Appendix C).

Communication is the key to effective relationships between trustees and directors. In addition to attendance at monthly board meetings, the director may benefit from regular meetings with the board president and board committees. The initial sessions with a new director should focus on developing a mutual understanding of the role of the director and the policy function of the trustees.

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## Director's Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the director are many and varied. They include implementing board policies, recommending policies to the board, recommending the creation or deletion of staff positions to the board, working with the board to prepare an annual budget, and keeping the board informed.

Other duties include:

- Lobbying at local and state levels for adequate library funding;
- Managing the library's human resources (hiring staff to fill established positions, firing or disciplining staff, promoting staff);
- Suggesting and carrying out plans for library services;
- Preparing reports;
- Maintaining a public relations program;
- Relating to public officials and to the community;
- Knowing relevant laws;
- Supporting library legislation;
- Directing the selections of all library materials;
- Affiliating with professional associations; and
- Remaining current with professional knowledge.

The board should update periodically a detailed job description for the director so that both parties have a clear understanding of the director's responsibilities (See Appendix A for a sample job description).

## Director's Expectations of the Board

The library director has the right to expect the following of the board:

- Solid support of the director's administration of board policies, including an intellectual freedom policy;
- Authority to operate the library;
- No direct involvement of trustees in personnel disagreements until such issues have been taken through proper channels, such as a grievance procedure;
- An atmosphere of respect and cordiality; and
- A regular performance evaluation.

## Board Expectations of the Director

The board has the right to expect the following of the library director:

- The best possible job performance;
- A readiness to encourage trustee education and participation in library activities on the local, state, and national levels;
- An understanding of the importance of staff development, and a willingness to impart to staff the concept that each individual staff member represents the library when dealing with the user; and
- An atmosphere of respect and cordiality.

## Hiring a Director

Since selection of a library director is the single most important decision of a board, the search process must begin by reassessing the library's performance strategy and philosophy in order to identify the skills, abilities, and predispositions that it is seeking in a director. If done well, the selection process will be time consuming. If done poorly, it will be disastrous for the future of the library.

The full board should be involved in the many crucial decisions made during the search process.

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## Advertising for a Director

It is extremely important that all advertisements for a new director accurately describe the responsibilities and requirements of the position without promising more than the library can deliver. Use the director's position description to highlight important challenges the new director will face and the skill sets needed to accomplish those challenges. Be sure to include information on the size of the library and a description of the community.

As in any profession, there is a thriving grapevine through which news travels quickly, if not always efficiently. However, this is not the best way to advertise an open position. There are a number of valuable resources and publications that list job openings at public libraries in Ohio and throughout the country.

The OLC offers a statewide job hotline – the JOBLLine. Libraries can post the open director's position on JOBLLine by [contacting](#) the OLC. Potential applicants can view the JOBLLine on the OLC Website ([www.olc.org](http://www.olc.org)). Several other state and regional library associations maintain telephone hotlines for position openings in their service areas. *American Libraries* prints a list of these hotlines in each issue.

The State Library of Ohio maintains a Web page (<http://winslo.state.oh.us/publib/libempl.html>) with links to various resources that list library job openings. Library boards should also consider advertising in newspapers throughout the library's region of the state.

## Interviewing the Selected Candidates

Interviewing a candidate is a particularly critical phase of the selection process. Research has shown that, even with experienced interviewers, the unstructured interview process usually does not result in a better selection decision. Interviewers frequently make superficial and premature judgments, often based on extraneous criteria. In contrast, it has been found that so-called structured interviewing does improve the selection process. Some key elements in the structured interviewing and selection process are:

- Base the selection criteria on the library's plans and needs.
- Write structured interview questions that relate to the selection criteria and that will be asked of all interviewees.
- At least some of the questions should deal with the candidate's actual experiences (not just hypothetical situations), such as "tell us about your worst experience in dealing with a staff problem."
- A portion of each interview should be unstructured, allowing exploration of information on the candidate's resume and answering the candidate's questions.
- All the interviewers should meet as a group and methodically review the information collected from each candidate, then make an assessment of each candidate's interview performance.
- Trustees must be extremely careful not to ask inappropriate questions in areas protected by law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Interviews serve important functions other than aiding the board in ranking the candidates. Use the interview to sell the candidate on the library and the position. Be realistic about the job's rewards and its demands so that candidates who would not fit can remove themselves from consideration.

## Interviews as the Primary Means for Selecting a Director

When making the final selection decision, it is common for the interview assessment to have an unreasonably large impact. Use all the information collected on the candidate, including that from the application and from the references, to make a final decision. Indications from a situation as artificial as an interview can be seriously misleading.

Make sure the references are checked thoroughly. Check beyond the listed references. Look for expected references that may not be listed, such as the board president of the library where the candidate is employed currently. Make it a point to contact the current board president.

## Director Contract/Letter of Agreement

Some libraries have established contracts with their directors, in part because this has become an increasingly litigious society. Although contracts do provide a certain level of clear understanding of expectations, they can also provide a false sense of security. Ohio Revised Code establishes the director as

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an at-will employee. They are fiduciary to the board, and even with a contract, the board is at liberty to dismiss a director at its pleasure.

The library board should extend a Letter of Agreement to newly hired directors, which specifies the obligations that each side has toward the other. Further, it may prompt the board and the director to engage in actions, such as an annual evaluation of the director, that are highly valuable to both parties but possess a measure of potential discomfort that often leads to them being conveniently avoided.

The Letter of Agreement should include information on the agreed to starting salary, benefits, starting date, and other employment issues including the director evaluation process. The OLC has available a standard Letter of Agreement (see Appendix A).

## **The Fiscal Officer**

The fiscal officer is the chief financial officer for the library. Ohio Revised Code Sec. 3375.32 provides for the appointment of the fiscal officer by the board and specifies the bonding requirement for this position. Other sections, which deal with the fiscal officer's responsibilities, include ORC 3375.36 through 3375.39.

In general, the fiscal officer's responsibilities will include the following:

- Receiving and depositing all funds;
- Paying out money;
- Cash management, including investing;
- Keeping financial records;
- Maintaining payroll, fringe benefits, and retirement system records;
- Preparing monthly and annual financial reports;
- Providing reports as required by federal, state, and local agencies;
- Knowing the statutory requirements relating to libraries;
- Attending all board meetings; and
- Providing the board and the director with information as needed.

The responsibilities accruing to the fiscal officer are great in number, complexity, and magnitude. The fiscal officer is the one person legally responsible for safeguarding the public monies entrusted to the library. In addition, he/she is usually the individual most directly involved in receiving and disbursing funds on a day-to-day basis. In small and medium libraries, the fiscal officer is often the only financial employee and is therefore working on his/her own. It is useful for the board, fiscal officer, and director to have a written job description for this position.

Appropriate educational or work experience, knowledge of public funds accounting, and skills in problem solving and communication are obvious items to include in the board's requirements for the fiscal officer. The person who serves as fiscal officer must have integrity. It is also important for the fiscal officer to understand the goals and mission of the library. Although he/she will not be working directly with patrons or library materials, the fiscal officer is an integral part of the team providing library service to the community. Dedication to this greater vision is as requisite as being able to write a receipt or post a purchase order.

A sample job description has been included in this handbook (See Appendix B). Further information on the fiscal officer's duties is available in the *Ohio Public Library Fiscal Officer Handbook*.

## **Selecting a Fiscal Officer**

The Ohio Revised Code places accountability for library funds solely on the fiscal officer's shoulders. Since the board directly hires the fiscal officer, this employee is in a position different from all other employees, who are hired and supervised by the library director.

A number of boards appoint the director as fiscal officer. In the largest libraries, often a business manager and his staff perform the duties ascribed to the fiscal officer. The board may see this as an appropriate way to give the director total administrative responsibility for the library and avoid some of the administrative problems that occur with a separate fiscal officer who is not fiduciary to the director. If the board does appoint

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the director as fiscal officer, it is important that the board maintain a strong finance committee of the board to provide detail oversight of the library's finances. Stifling the information flow and the discussion of financial matters, however inadvertent, can be a real handicap to a board.

In some smaller libraries, budget and personnel constraints may mean that the director also serves as fiscal officer. This is another situation in which the board gets information from only one source. Because the director/fiscal officer may handle funds directly, there is also the potential for theft. The state auditor's office can also provide suggestions on how to improve internal controls within the constraints on the library.

### **The Relationship Between the Director and the Fiscal Officer**

For the library's success as well as their own, the director and fiscal officer must work as a team in pursuit of the library's goals. The relationship between the two should be one of respect for the professional skills of each other and of mutual trust in dealing with complex library responsibilities. Lines of authority and areas of responsibility must be clearly stated. The director is the chief administrative officer of the library and, as such, is responsible for the overall management of the library, its personnel, collection, and services. To carry out the library's program of services, the director needs information from the fiscal officer on the present and projected financial position of the library. In turn, the fiscal officer needs information in the form of purchase orders, payroll data, etc. from the director in order to perform his or her job.

The board must make it clear to both parties that their cooperation is imperative to the success of the library. Actions by either to hinder the work of the other or disrupt the smooth functioning of the library should be condemned. There should be an understanding that recommendations for the overall operation of the library are the director's responsibility. The fiscal officer should use his or her direct link with the board only when fiscal matters are concerned.

### **The Deputy Fiscal Officer**

The appointment of a deputy fiscal officer is authorized by ORC 3375.36. While the legislation reads that a deputy fiscal officer may "receive and disburse library funds," in reality this person may perform all duties of the fiscal officer. Appointing a deputy fiscal officer is sound fiscal and management policy. This person may perform few duties on a day-to-day basis, or he/she may be a staff member in the accounting department with regular job responsibilities. In either case, the board will have a person in place if the fiscal officer becomes ill or is otherwise unavailable. The deputy fiscal officer is responsible to the fiscal officer, but is also a direct employee of the board.

In a small or medium-sized library, the director, or less frequently a board member, serves as deputy fiscal officer. This situation has all the potential problems enumerated in the section on Selecting a Fiscal Officer. However, this is usually not a concern since the deputy fiscal officer is appointed primarily as a safety measure rather than as an active employee.

### **Consultants**

There are times when a board requires special expertise, such as in the areas of wage administration, planning for buildings or library automation, or for general organizational planning and development. Consultant studies should be regarded as insurance in library issues that are very technical or specialized, legally complicated, politically or emotionally volatile, or that involve long-term impact or large investments. Just as a board makes use of legal counsel, it should not hesitate to call on appropriate consulting help in non-legal areas. The OLC provides consulting services in a number of areas. Some of this assistance is without charge, and some services have a fee. Assistance is also available free of charge from the State Library's staff consultants and can be sought from community members and businesses which possess the needed expertise. If hiring is required, board involvement is generally greater than for the hiring of staff. When selecting paid consultants, board members must avoid cronyism and any appearance of conflict of interest.

### **Appropriate Expenses the Board May Approve for Staff and Trustees**

Library boards, using the broad powers set forth in ORC 3375.40, can write policy for reimbursement of staff and library board expenses for attendance at meetings, conferences and workshops (ORC 3375.40 [M]), mileage, registration fees, and tuition reimbursement.

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Applicants for employment may be paid for any reasonable expenses incurred while appearing for a personal interview (ORC 3375.40 [G]).

For employees, the library board may procure and pay all or part of the cost of group life, hospitalization, surgical, major medical, disability benefit, dental care, eye care, hearing aids, or prescription drug insurance, or a combination of insurance coverage from duly licensed state corporations (ORC 3375.40 [L]).

The dependents and spouses of employees may be covered by hospitalization, surgical, major medical, dental care, eye care, hearing aids, and prescription drug insurance. Disability benefits also may be provided for spouses.

The library may pay dues for staff and for individual trustees in library associations (ORC 3375.40 [M]).

**Please Note: Tax law is changing rapidly in this area. Check with legal counsel or insurance professionals when reviewing library policies in this area.**

## **WAGES AND BENEFITS**

Wages and benefits represent the major expense in a library. These costs vary from 40% to 70% of the total operating expenses. Libraries are extremely labor-intensive operations, requiring a variety of skill and educational levels. Also, they have a significant impact on the quality of library staff by the effect they have on employment, turnover, and morale.

### **Salary Plan**

Without a well-constructed and managed salary plan, a library is potentially vulnerable to a lawsuit. The same laws that apply to business, such as the Wage-Hour Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the various civil rights and equal employment opportunity statutes, apply to libraries. The fact that libraries are a government agency or a nonprofit corporation offers no exemption from these laws.

### **Factors Affecting Wage Levels and Benefits**

Several factors come into play when developing a salary plan:

- The skill level required for the positions to be filled, including educational background, personal attributes, and experience;
- The content of the job to be done, including the difficulty of decisions to be made, the span of control, the amount of supervision required, and the amount and type of responsibility assigned;
- The impact (the degree of positive or negative effect) this individual can have on the overall operation;
- The local job market, including the availability of people with the necessary skills and the general wage level for people with comparable skills in the community; and
- The library's budget and its ability to support adequate wage costs.

### **Problems in Wage Administration**

Wage administration is a necessary part of the library director and library board's responsibilities. There are several important concerns that should be considered regarding wage administration:

- Trustee knowledge of personnel and wage administration may be limited. A reluctance to seek outside expertise could cause problems in the long run.
- Director knowledge of wage administration may also be limited. Wage administration is not emphasized in most MLS programs and is often learned by experience.
- Paying for the wrong reasons is a common problem. Trustees attempt to use a carrot-and-stick approach with the staff to potentially buy allegiance. There is also the temptation to reward favorites.
- Paying for longevity may be laudable, but it can lead to problems. Wages should be based on job requirement; longevity can be recognized through fringe benefits.
- Inadequate funding can also lead to wage and administration problems. Paying people fairly can be difficult if a library does not have sufficient funds for rent, utilities, and books.

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## Elements of a Well-Crafted Salary Plan

A salary plan should include a wage policy, which gives the philosophical underpinnings of how salaries are determined; a salary schedule that establishes salary ranges and steps for increases within each range; and current and appropriate job descriptions and classifications.

## Wording of a Wage Policy

The wording of a wage policy depends on what the board is trying to accomplish. Below are two examples of wage policies.

"The [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] will pay wages and benefits that are representative of those paid in this community for similar types of work."

"The [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] Board will pay wages that will attract competent people, that are within the constraints of the library's budget, and that do not exceed [INSERT FIGURE]% of the total operating budget per year."

Please note that a clear delineation must be made when discussing personnel costs. When these parameters are set, state clearly whether the library board is including only the hourly wage, or is also including Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) or Social Security, insurance, and the cost of other benefits. The cost of benefits can add 15% to 25% to the hourly wage.

## Developing Job Descriptions and Classifications

The State Library of Ohio provides links to sample job descriptions on their website (<http://winslo.state.oh.us/publib/job.html>). Also, consider contacting the personnel department of a local industry to see if they can provide examples. There are professional consultants who specialize in doing library personnel studies. Other sources of information include the local Chamber of Commerce and other libraries in similar types of communities.

## Setting Salary Ranges and Salary Schedules

Salary ranges are determined by the pay survey analysis of comparable jobs, the state salary survey, the library's wage policy, and the library budget. It is also important to establish salary steps, which are salary levels within an individual range. Some library boards lay out specified steps, while others use guidelines, within which directors may set individual salaries.

Some libraries have many steps with only a small difference in salary between each step (1% to 2%), while other libraries have fewer steps with a larger jump between them (4% to 7%). One way to make this determination is to consider how long it takes to master the job. Part of the justification for step increases is that the more an employee knows about a position, the greater his or her worth to the institution.

## Adjusting the Salary Schedule

The salary schedule lists the various salary ranges and the steps within each range. As part of its budget process, the board establishes a wage adjustment for the following year. This adjustment may be related to the cost of living or it may be an arbitrary adjustment based on budget restraints. A percentage of increase is set and is then applied to each step on the salary schedule.

Ordinarily, individuals who are still on the progressive steps would receive their step increase and the adjustment. Some libraries tie step increases to performance evaluations or other criteria. Trustees and administrators should be aware of the inherently subjective nature of these systems and be careful to make adjustments in procedures as necessary.

Please note two points of caution. First, the adjustment should be reviewed when the budget resolution is adopted in December and changed if more current fiscal information is available. Second, a cost of living adjustment can create a problem if the adjustment does not match the actual change in the cost of living. When this happens, a compensating adjustment can be made in the following year. Information on the current cost of living figures can be obtained by calling the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index hot line at (216) 522-3852.

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## Staff Members at the Top of Their Salary Ranges

Staff members who have reached the top of their salary ranges should receive only the basic wage adjustment, which is approved by the board. Remember, there is a maximum amount that any job is worth. Longevity on the job does not increase a job's value. Longevity is rewarded by such fringe benefits as increased vacation time, retirement benefits, and accrued sick leave. Giving a bonus at certain intervals can provide another longevity recognition. Such bonuses would not affect the top rate for the job involved.

## Wages of Employees Who Change Jobs

When an employee is promoted to a position in a higher range, the salary should be increased to the minimum rate for the higher class. In the case of overlapping ranges, the promoted employee should be increased to the step immediately above their present salary.

## Reviewing the Salary Plan with Staff

YES! As employees of public institutions, wages are a matter of public record, and employees have a right to be informed about all aspects of their remuneration package. Communication of the salary plan represents an excellent opportunity for motivation of employees and it eliminates rumors and misunderstandings.

## Reviewing the Salary Plan with Potential Employees

There are several advantages to reviewing the salary plan with potential employees. It helps the interviewees to determine their income potential on the job for which they are applying, which could be a factor in their acceptance of the job. Also, it helps to create a good impression about the administration of the library. When hiring a new employee, he or she could be started at a higher step within that job range.

## Providing Benefits to Library Employees

The local job market has some effect on the benefits to be provided. Benefits established in other local governmental entities and school systems also provide a guide for the library. Most libraries have a two-tier policy on vacation days—one for professional employees and one for non-management and support personnel. Often the professional employees start with 20 or 22 vacation days. In addition to OPERS, many libraries provide life, health, dental, and eye care insurance, and some provide special holidays.

Because of the rapidly increasing cost of health care, some businesses are offering a "cafeteria" style benefit plan. Under such a plan, the board would set a dollar amount that each employee would receive to pay for benefits of their choice. The dollar amount might vary according to their length of service. Employees could then decide how to allocate their benefit dollars.

Most libraries offer staff fine-free privileges as a fringe benefit. Some libraries extend this privilege to board members. **Please note: This is a rapidly changing area of law. Please consult with legal counsel or professionals in this area before making changes in the current benefits package.**

## Grievance Procedures in a Library

Staff perceptions of unfair and arbitrary treatment can lead to decreased performance on the job, loss of valued personnel, charges of discrimination and other legal action, and a desire to unionize. In fact, management style is often cited as the number one reason employees unionize. The reason for instituting a practicable grievance procedure is that it encourages informal, non-legal solutions for these problems. A good grievance procedure can fulfill the invaluable function of alerting the board and director to problems with personnel procedures or supervisory practices while they are still at an early stage and more easily correctable. By providing a grievance procedure, the board also can ensure that the library's management is on notice that unfair treatment should be avoided and must be corrected when it does occur.

Whatever its role in a grievance procedure, the board must receive reports on the nature of all grievances and ensure that inappropriate supervisory practices are changed. The board should also review underlying policies related to the grievance. In other words, the board should look beyond the individual cases and search for the broader message being delivered by the grievance.



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The key to a successful grievance procedure is its use; that is, employees use it when they have worrisome complaints. In order to be used with any frequency, a grievance procedure must be perceived as offering a good chance of a fair decision and a timely decision, with protection from recrimination. In addition, its use must not require great time or expertise on the part of the grievant. There is no one grievance procedure that works well everywhere. Choices must be made to design a procedure that is appropriate for the particular library. One nearly universal characteristic of a good grievance procedure is multiple steps, whereby the complaint works its way up the various levels of library management. If not settled to the complainant's satisfaction at one level, it proceeds to the next.

### **The Board as the Library's Final Court of Appeal in a Grievance**

The most important decision the board must make concerning a grievance procedure is the nature of the final appeal step. The aim is to find a decision-maker who can take an unbiased view of the grievance and who is knowledgeable about workplace justice. In some small libraries, it may be appropriate for the board or the board president to hear the final appeal, if the board can distance itself sufficiently from the director and other library managers. Other options are a panel of selected library staff members and managers and, probably the best option, the use of an outside arbitrator.

The use of an expert arbitrator, such as those listed by the American Arbitration Association, assures the highest probability of an unbiased decision that will be based on long-established principles of fairness. An important, related question is whether the board is willing to accept the arbitrator's decision as binding on the library. Most arbitration decisions are considered binding; however, the board could establish the principle of "advisory arbitration," whereby the board reserves the right to reject the arbitrator's decision. No matter what the final step in the grievance procedure is, the grievant must be afforded a chance to present his or her case fully and be given some aid in preparing and presenting the case.

The board should realize that management often would have reservations about establishing a neutral grievance procedure, since it is likely to be the subject of complaints. Therefore, the responsibility for keeping the institution's best interests in mind and initiating and maintaining an effective grievance procedure rests principally with the board. The board should work with management to implement an effective grievance procedure as part of an overall review of the personnel policy.

### **Collective Bargaining in Libraries**

The Ohio Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act, as administered by the State Employee Relations Board (SERB), governs labor-management relations in nearly all Ohio public libraries. (Association libraries are covered under federal law, which differs in a few respects from the above act.) The basics of the act are:

- Employees are guaranteed the right to representation by a union, if the majority of employees so choose.
- Employer and union have a duty to bargain in good faith, attempting to reach an agreement that will bind both parties.
- Both the employer and the union are regulated by a set of prohibited practices referred to as Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs).

In the event the board and the union cannot reach an agreement and have not established an alternative impasse procedure, the steps of mediation and fact-finding are invoked. A more complete explanation of the act may be found in articles such as those listed in the bibliography at the end of this chapter.

Being union free should not be an obsession – a state to be maintained at all costs. Unionization in and of itself does not reduce the library's ability to serve the community. On the other hand, good human resource management practices will both improve library effectiveness and make union organizing less likely. The key elements of such practices are consistently fair treatment of staff, open two-way communication, use of librarians' professional expertise, competitive wages, fringe benefits, and proper working conditions.

### **Staff Associations**

For many years, library staffs have formed associations within their institutions. The original purpose of these associations was to plan special events for the staff, such as holiday parties, providing flowers for sick colleagues, and other social matters.

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When the public employee collective bargaining law was passed, staff associations were given the opportunity to become the bargaining units for their members. These groups usually are not affiliated with larger unions or with organizations such as the AFL-CIO. The members of the staff association must vote on whether or not to become a bargaining unit before this can happen.

## Board Responses to an Organizing Drive

The likelihood of an organizing effort is greater when employees perceive the following:

- Strong sources of conflict;
- An inability on the library's part to provide effective and fair conflict resolution; or
- The occurrence of a triggering event, such as unfair treatment of a respected peer.

It is important to recognize that library employees do not unionize exclusively or even primarily in the hope of receiving higher economic rewards. The desire for fair treatment and, among librarians, a voice in the functions of the library, can be powerful motives.

If the majority of employees provide evidence of a desire to unionize, the board should consider whether the presence of a union would lead to more or less effective and efficient library service. While most board members' first reaction will be that the answer to this question is clear-cut in favor of opposing a union, more careful analysis and board discussion is usually in order. Typically, a union will be seen as constraining managerial action and adding to financial costs. Contrary arguments are that union employees in general have been found to be more productive and that a union can help in building broad community support for increased library funding. In deciding whether to oppose an organization campaign, the board may wish to consider the nature and history of the proposed bargaining representative.

## Board Limitations During Union Organization

**Please note: The suggestions listed below are general in nature and are not intended to replace legal counsel. This is an area of law in constant flux. When faced with an organizing campaign, no handbook can replace competent legal counsel.**

If a decision is made to oppose an organizing effort, legal counsel (the county prosecutor's staff or private counsel) should advise the library board concerning acceptable tactics. A number of actions generally constitute unfair labor practices and must be avoided:

- Treating any employee unfavorably on the basis of his/her support for the union;
- Interrogating employees about the organizing campaign, who supports the union, and how they personally will vote;
- Engaging in surveillance, such as attending union meetings or spying on union discussions;
- Circulating an anti-union petition; and
- Questioning job applicants about past or present union membership.

In general, the library can make neither promises nor threats of action that are contingent on employees' support or opposition to a union. During a union organizing campaign, it cannot grant improvements in wages, benefits, or working conditions that would not have occurred without the organizing effort.

On the other hand, board members and administration may express views and provide factual information opposing the union, such as:

- Holding meetings of employees at which management's opinions concerning the union are presented, as long as these meetings are not coercive or threatening in nature;
- Telling employees about the drawbacks of unionization; and
- Presenting information on the union's past performance concerning dues and their use and the wage increases it has negotiated.

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## **Board Members on the Negotiating Team**

In libraries that have a union, the board should play a strong role in negotiations for a new labor-management contract. More critically, the board should be aware of the relationship between the negotiations and the library's direction and strategy. Understanding the factors responsible for the particular library's successful service to the public and any upcoming plans for improved library service is essential to intelligent negotiations. The board must monitor the relationship of these factors to items being negotiated. It is also critical that the board convey to the negotiating team the type of relationship it desires with the union.

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of coordination between the board and the negotiating team. Public sector negotiations are often characterized by multilateral bargaining, whereby the negotiations extend beyond union and management negotiating teams to the library board, other public boards, and the public at large. If board members are successfully lobbied by the union outside the direct negotiations team, the library management and negotiating team will have little bargaining credibility. The board should use the contacts it has already developed with other important political bodies prior to negotiations to counterbalance any lobbying pressure brought by these bodies during negotiations.

One way to achieve coordination is to have board members sit on the negotiating team. However, it may be advantageous to the strength of the library's bargaining position to keep board members, and even the director, off the team. By doing so, items that are tentatively agreed to by the bargaining team can be subjected to further analysis. By their indirect role, the board and director retain strong power in the negotiations.

Some public library boards entrust all negotiations to a labor attorney or other consultant. Boards that lack experience with labor negotiations in the public sector can benefit greatly from a consultant's experience and expertise. Still, allowing a consultant to dominate the negotiations can result in mistakes concerning items wherein the consultant lacks knowledge of the library's philosophy and plans. It is also possible for a consultant to harm a good relationship between union members and management. The consultant can be the negotiating team's main spokesperson, but management members should be prominent in the discussions and the board should not follow blindly the consultant's advice.

## **Favorable Labor-Management Relationships Benefit the Library**

The effects of adversarial relationships between union and management are well known.

Creative and effective solutions to certain types of library problems are more likely to come from hard discussions involving stakeholders such as a union than by the unilateral decisions of the board. For example, the formation of special committees on health and safety or equal employment opportunity can lead to positive and accepted action, while allowing the union to have a better grasp of the constraints facing the board and management. In fact, there are many current examples of successful joint union-management employee involvement efforts.

By informing union officials at an early stage about plans for any change in the library's procedures or services, support can be solicited and advice on implementation sought. Staff members' commitment to change will then be greater and covert resistance to the change minimized. For example, Howard Levy reported in an article in *Ohio Libraries* that mutual cooperation between union and management allowed the main library of the Cleveland Public Library to successfully offer Sunday hours of service.

Many experts in negotiations espouse a win-win problem-solving approach. There are several books by Roger Fisher or William Ury of the Harvard Negotiations Project that offer examples. This approach can lead to more effective negotiations with a union on a day-to-day basis and when a contract is being negotiated, but it requires a mature relationship between labor and management. The spread of labor-management cooperation in Ohio has brought with it the availability of government-sponsored resources for improving relationships with labor. The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, for example, supports a "Relationships by Objectives" program, designed to change the nature of a labor-management relationship.

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## Chapter 6 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EVALUATION

### THE PLANNING PROCESS

Ohio's public library trustees should be aware of the benefits of strategic or long-range planning. Strategic planning can help the library assess the effectiveness of current services and better understand the needs of the community. Once established, a strategic plan provides a "road map" that can help trustees measure the library's progress toward specific goals and guide decisions about the allocation of the library's resources. Strategic plans focus on specific service responses and guide the library in its day-to-day work. Larger projects, such as capital improvements, should be preceded by a feasibility study (See Appendix E) to determine the existing and potential impacts, the specific needs, a cost analysis, and coordination with other libraries in the area. Planning should be done with consultants, architects, staff, citizen committees, and/or concerned agencies.

A viable plan for growth and change should include the following:

- Analysis of community needs that includes input from community leaders;
- Assessment of the effectiveness of the library in meeting those needs;
- Evaluation of the library based on the *Standards for Public Library Service in Ohio*;
- Determination of the role of the library in the community;
- Provision for the library's future growth and change; and
- Provision for ongoing evaluation.

### The Board's Role in Long-Range Planning

The trustees have the role of ensuring that the library has a long-range plan and should work with the director to provide support of and resources for the planning process. There are many approaches to strategic planning. A current popular model is provided by Sandra Nelson in the Public Library Association's (PLA) *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach*. Trustees should work with the director in reviewing various approaches to planning, selecting the approach that best meets the library's needs and financial capacities. Trustees should be aware of related expenses of strategic planning that include but may not be limited to staff time, consultant fees, staff training, and printing and distribution of the plan. Independent consultants as well as consultants from the OLC and the State Library of Ohio are available to assist the library with strategic planning.

### Steps in the Planning Process

The very first step for the board is to make the decision to plan. Through discussion with the library director, the board should determine the most effective planning method to use, determine whether or not it wants to hire an external consultant to assist with the process, set a timeline during which the planning will take place, and agree upon steps in the process.

The second step is to involve library stakeholders in the planning process. If planning is to be successful, there should be participation from the staff, from the groups the library serves, and from groups which have an influence on library operations (members of the board of education, county commissioners, or other taxing authority, education, community service agencies, the media, etc.). Everyone involved should be oriented both to the planning process and the unique roles each group plays in developing the plan before the actual work begins.

Before calling its first planning meeting, the library director and staff should gather relevant data on both the library and the community so that all involved in planning can review it and make informed decisions. The data gathered should be shared in advance of the first planning meeting.

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Library data might include:

- Circulation statistics that reflect use of both print and electronic resources;
- Reference transactions;
- User statistics from the library's website;
- Program attendance, perhaps subdivided by adult and juvenile programs;
- Registered borrowers as a percentage of the population of the service area;
- Volumes in the collection and volumes added in each year; and
- Use, or lack thereof, of various library services and collections.

Community data might include:

- Recent census figures that reflect population trends in the community;
- Information on the community's economic base including recent growth or decline, median family income, and unemployment numbers;
- Educational levels of residents; and
- Other libraries and information organizations in the area.

Once data is gathered, planning meetings can begin. During these meetings, participants should discuss community needs in order to help the library board and staff better understand how the library can best position itself and use its current resources to meet those needs as well as determine the need for additional resources. Discussion might focus on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats the library faces as it delivers services to its community. One set of guidelines for evaluating the performance of the library is contained in *Standards for Public Library Service in Ohio*. These standards have been approved by the OLC and State Library of Ohio boards, and were developed by a joint committee of library trustees and staff.

Taking into account the data gathered and the input of the community, the next step is to write the plan itself. Most plans include the following elements:

- A mission or vision statement that succinctly defines the library's role and purpose in the community;
- Clearly articulated goals the library hopes to achieve in the next three years;
- Measurable objectives that help the library monitor progress toward its goals;
- A list of activities and projects that will support the library's goals and objectives; and
- A process for assimilation and distribution of the plans to all who are involved or who have a vested interest in the library.

When the plan has been written, the board should review it, make any appropriate modifications, and accept the plan by formal vote.

## **Plan Implementation**

Strategic planning provides an opportunity for a governmental agency to appear forward-looking and intelligently managed. This is not an opportunity the board should underplay. Get all the political and public relations value from adopting the plan. Copies of the plan should be distributed to:

- Everyone involved in the planning process;
- Every trustee (include in each trustee's notebook of the board's bylaws, minutes, and financial reports).
- Every supervisor in the library;
- Every library outlet including branches and bookmobile, if applicable;
- Every elected official involved in the community's taxing authority;
- Every county commissioner;
- All media outlets serving the local community; and
- The State Library of Ohio, which collects and circulates copies of strategic plans adopted by boards around the state.

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## **The Ongoing Plan**

Writing and adopting the plan is only the first step. At least once a year, the board should review the goals and objectives it has laid out and see how reality matches the plan. Is the director carrying out the plan to the board's satisfaction? Are the trustees providing the resources and support the director and staff need to do their jobs?

This is a constant reminder to the board that the plan is being used. This leads into the second part of this chapter, evaluation.

## **EVALUATION OF THE DIRECTOR AND BOARD**

The task of evaluating the library staff is rightly the responsibility of the library director, delegated to his/her administrative and supervisory staff. But who evaluates the director?

The library board is appointed by various officials, depending on the type of library. But who tells the board if it is doing a decent job? In both cases, the evaluation function is the responsibility of the board itself. No one else is qualified to tell the director or the board whether it is meeting expectations.

### **Importance of Evaluating the Director**

There are several reasons why evaluation of the director is vital to the library's success.

- It determines how well the library is being managed.
- It provides the director with an appraisal of the board's view of the job he/she is doing.
- It serves to communicate the board's expectations and the director's perceptions of accomplishments and concerns.
- It contributes to improving or maintaining the effectiveness of the director.
- It helps to avoid complacency by the director.

### **Common Reasons Boards Avoid Evaluating the Director**

- Because previous performance has been satisfactory over a long period, trustees feel that an evaluation is unnecessary.
- Trustees may be inexperienced in evaluating work performance.
- Trustees are uncomfortable judging others.
- Trustees are uncomfortable about confronting the director about weaknesses.
- Trustees are not willing to take the time to develop or implement an effective evaluation process.
- The board itself is not functioning well.
- Some directors are reluctant to be evaluated, especially if they feel insecure, and the board fails to force the issue.
- Trustees are willing to accept (and pay for) inadequate performance. Conversely, some boards are unwilling to pay additional salary to a director who is doing extremely well.

### **Potential Problems in Evaluating the Director**

- Some trustees are unwilling to be actively involved in the process.
  - There is a lack of well-defined procedures, forms, and rating definitions. (The format must be suited to the board.)
  - There is a wide difference of opinion among the trustees regarding the director's performance.
  - Some trustees are reluctant to make a critical rating in order to avoid controversy, resulting in a failure to fulfill responsibilities.
  - Some trustees are unwilling to deal frankly with the director.
  - There is an inability/unwillingness by the director to accept the evaluation in a positive manner.
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## Evaluating the Director

Most evaluations take one of three directions:

1. **Evaluate personality traits** – In this concept, the evaluator compares the director's personality traits to the expectations of the position. For example, traits such as "accepts direction," "responds well to criticism," "shows initiative" or "tactful" are listed, and, in some applications, given a numerical score. However, this is not the most viable method of evaluation. It is open to a wide range of interpretation and is likely to be too subjective.
2. **Compare performance to qualification standard** - Another method of evaluation is to compare the director's performance to a qualification standard, preferably the objectives laid out in the board-approved planning document.

For example, suppose the board has set an objective of increasing children's circulation by 10% in a given year. In reality, the circulation has increased 7% or 9% or even 11%. The objective, the result, and any extenuating circumstances are noted on the evaluation form. Perhaps the children's librarian resigned midway through the year, or the children's collection received a windfall of new books. These factors affect the results and may be outside the director's control.

For this evaluation system to work, the board must have a negotiated agreement with the director that this process will be followed. The objective must be realistic, obtainable, and relate to real improvement in library operations. The positive side of this is that it is a fairly non-threatening method of evaluation. The director should know before the board just how well she or he will do in a given period, since he/she had access to the statistics.

3. **Compare performance to job description** - Yet a third method of evaluation is to compare the director's job description to his or her performance. Is this person doing the things for which he/she was hired, as set out in the job description? If so, to what degree? As an example, suppose the job description specifies that the director is responsible for preparing and managing the budget. Some questions that the board might reasonably ask include:
  - Is all the necessary paperwork completed in a timely manner for presentation to the board and the taxing authority?
  - Does the budget cover all necessary and anticipated expenses, or is the director asking for fund transfers at practically every board meeting?
  - Are sufficient contingency funds allocated for unanticipated occurrences?
  - Are budget projections based on sound data and information?
  - Are funds effectively allocated?

For every responsibility listed in the job description, relevant and probing questions can be developed. Questions can vary from year to year, but should always pertain to criteria, which can be measured and identified (See Appendix C).

## Performing the Director's Evaluation

The board should annually develop and define the criteria in consultation with the director to avoid any surprises. The criteria should be laid out ahead of time, and board members should not use the evaluation meeting as a chance to blindside the director with criticisms they have not mentioned during the rest of the year.

Prior to the board evaluation, the director should provide a self-evaluation to the board as a documentation of his/her accomplishments. Each trustee should complete the evaluation form independently before the meeting with the director, forming his/her own opinions before discussing the issues with the other trustees.

Before meeting with the director, the board, in executive session (See Chapter 2), should compare notes and develop a consensus on how it as a group rates the director on each criteria. This consensus on each point should then be conveyed to the director by one spokesperson for the board, with the other trustees present. Individual board members may be asked by the spokesperson or the director to elaborate on a specific item. The spokesperson should wrap up with a summary of the evaluation.

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The individual scoring by the trustees should remain confidential to the board and not be discussed with the director. If necessary, this should be done in executive session. The evaluation session should be conducted in a businesslike manner. This should not be the time for casual conversation or extraneous discussion. The evaluation should be presented in a positive manner.

Most people do not enjoy criticizing or being criticized, and many others feel just as uncomfortable handling praise. However, the reward of having open communications between the board and the director, in which both sides understand and accept the other's expectations, far outweighs the momentary discomfort of the participants.

For a bit more discomfort, the board should turn the spotlight on itself.

### **Evaluation of the Library Board**

No one can evaluate the effectiveness of a board except that board itself. Boards of trustees in Ohio answer to no one except the public, and to the public only indirectly. Boards can adopt bad habits, ignore good rules, and get into a rut, and who is in a position to tell them to stop? The director is not really in a position to tell the trustees who hold her or his profession in their hands that they are getting sloppy. The state auditor looks at results but not process. The taxing authority and the officials who appoint trustees have many other responsibilities and do not have the time to evaluate the performance of library trustees. So it is up to the board to take a good long look at itself on a regular basis (See Appendix D for examples).



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# A

## Appendix A.1 SAMPLE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>JOB DESCRIPTION:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE TO:</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES:</b>	Administers the activities, services, and staff of the [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] according to the policies, bylaws, and directives established by the board of trustees and the laws of the state. Also represents the library in both the public and professional communities.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY TO THE BOARD:</b>	Recommends policies and advises the board on operational, staffing, and facilities changes, and on fiscal matters. Carries out the directives and policies of the board. Provides data on operations and submits reports on the progress of activities. Assists in the orientation and education of board members. Maintains confidentiality of board matters. In consultation with the board president, develops agenda for board meetings.
<b>FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:</b>	In concert with the fiscal officer, develops and recommends an annual budget and administers expenditures of funds within budget constraints.
<b>ADMINISTRATION OF FACILITIES:</b>	Assures that the physical facilities, grounds, and equipment are properly maintained, updated, and safe for use. Evaluates and develops plans for achieving the effective allocation and utilization of building space to meet the changing library needs. Negotiates contracts with vendors for required services.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY FOR STAFF:</b>	Determines staffing requirements and hires the personnel necessary to meet those needs. Assures that the personnel is properly trained and promotes individual development. Establishes an organizational arrangement, which assures effective communications and delegation of work and responsibilities. Assures that there is an effective and fair evaluation of all personnel and that proper records are maintained. Informs the board of disciplinary and probable dismissal actions. Administers wage and benefits according to policies established by the board. Provides responsive leadership and fairly represents the staff to the board.
<b>ADMINISTRATION OF COLLECTION:</b>	Assures that the service materials selected meet the needs of the patrons and represent a judicious expenditure of funds. Assures that service materials are properly cataloged and shelved and easily available to patrons. Assures that there is an effective weeding program to maintain the collection

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within the capacity of the facilities.

Develops plans and implements a program for automating the cataloging and circulation processes in the library.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS  
ACTIVITIES:**

Maintains contacts with city and schools to assure that good relationships and communications are maintained.

Through the use of in-house publications and newspapers, keeps the public informed about library services and activities.

Assures that good communications and relationships are maintained with the library's neighbors.

Represents the library through participation in professional library organizations such as OLC and regional library organizations.

**PLANNING  
RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Develops and recommends an annual operational plan and a long-range plan when requested by the board.

*Sample provided by the Wright Memorial Library (Oakwood, Ohio).*



## Appendix A.2 SAMPLE DIRECTOR LETTER OF AGREEMENT

### Re: Employment Offer

On behalf of XXXX County Public Library, I am pleased to offer you the position of Director of XXXX County Public Library. Enclosed is a copy of the job description for the Director position.

As agreed, we will consider your starting date of employment to be XXXX, 2004. Your starting salary will be \$XXXX annually. You will be eligible for periodic performance reviews that, dependent upon your work performance, may lead to increases in your compensation.

This employment offer is contingent upon the completion of a reference and background check prior to your start date.

You will also be entitled to the following benefits, subject to the general employment policies of the XXXX County Public Library:

- Paid Holidays: XX paid holidays per year.
- Health Insurance: XX% of premium for family coverage; coverage available immediate
- Paid Vacation: X weeks per year
- Life Insurance: \$XXXX Group Term Life
- Paid Sick Days: accrued at XX hours per month (you may transfer your certified balance)
- Paid Professional Organization Membership: The Library will pay for the Director's membership in the American Library Association and the Ohio Library Council. With prior approval from the Library Board, the Library may, in its discretion, pay for the Director's membership in additional professional organizations.
- Retirement Plan: Ohio Public Employees' Retirement System. Employees pays XX %.

The Library will pay to you a one-time lump sum of \$XXXX for the relocation of your personal belongings to XXXX County.

We greatly look forward to having you join the library as our Director. We recognize that you retain the option, as does the Library, of ending your employment with the Library at anytime, with or without notice and with or without cause. As such, your employment with the Library is at-will, and neither this letter nor any other oral or written representations may be considered a contract for any specific period of time.

Please fax your signed acceptance to XXXX

Sincerely,

XXXX, President  
Board of Trustees  
XXXX County Public Library

Offer Acceptance: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

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# A

## Appendix A.3 SELECTING A LIBRARY DIRECTOR

### On Selecting a Director: Process and Promise

By Margo Crist

*Library Journal*, May 1, 1987. Reprinted with permission of *Library Journal* and the author.

Choosing a director for Boston Public Library became a model for a successful selection process.

“The most important vote to be cast for the library and the city itself may well be the selection by this board of a new director.” These words were uttered by Kevin Moloney, president of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Public Library, as the board undertook a national search to replace retiring director Philip J. McNiff. That sentiment must sound familiar to any board that undertakes selection of a new person to lead its library into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In a very real sense the director is responsible for the ultimate success and future of the library since the day-to-day administration makes or breaks the library organization and its services. Ideally, the direction is a partnership of board and director but one partner owes his/her role and presence to the other. This selection process is critical and, if done well, time consuming, but if done poorly, disastrous.

### Questions for the Board

A range of questions present themselves to the board faced with selecting a new director. How can we be sure of a pool of good candidates? How can we involve members of the public in the selection process, or should we? What are our legal requirements and ramifications? How should we handle interviews? Where should we begin? The selection process in Boston lends itself as a useful model for answering those and other questions. What follows are the preparation steps, the roles of participants in the selection, the monitoring required of such a process, and the goals and results for a successful selection process.

### Role of an Advisor

There is nothing essential or magic about using an advisor, but the premises for that role in Boston are instructive. The advisor and board president began by, up front, clarifying roles. The latter was looking for someone with knowledge about BPL (this advisor worked there 9 1/2 years) but who could also bring a more objective, outsider view to the process. It was mutually understood that the advisor had no role in the selection decision other than providing information at each step. Views and biases of the advisor were constantly subject to refinement and rejection since all proposals, from content of job description through interview questions to written evaluation of candidates, were open to review by others.

Why have an advisor? That person coordinates and monitors the process while identifying decisions and referring them for appropriate action. The advisor also should be the one who provides information about requirements in meeting legal guidelines for such things as the job description, postings, interviews, contents of interview questions, and deliberation in public meetings. An awareness of local and federal requirements must be built into the selection process.

From the trustees' points of view came the following observations: “[The] advisor took the pain out of the process”; “The key to making everything work so smoothly, however, was the helping hand of our advisor who guided the process along without interjecting any personal biases.”

### Trustees Set the Tone

Some basic errors seem to be common in the director selection process at its earliest stages. Notices of vacancy are often sent out before a determination has been made regarding priorities and goals for the library itself and for the new director. Some boards allow the director to define these after the fact of hiring. It also frequently becomes the source of friction and differences between board and director of priorities turnout to be strongly at variance.

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Rarely is the library in quite the same place as the last time a director was hired. The precise goals or priorities of the library need reviewing and redefinition and the board is the group to undertake the review, with appropriate participation from others. This review should be the very first step in preparing for selection of a director.

For the BPL search, this review of priorities was undertaken in four separate board meetings, which were open to the public. At the meetings, public and staff participation was encouraged. The trustees reviewed and discussed a set of proposed “Issues and Directions for the Boston Public Library,” prepared by their advisor to develop a sense of the priorities of the board and the relative importance of the issues. Issues covered naturally divided into categories, including “direct service issues,” “internal support of direct services,” “development issues,” and “roles of Boston Public Library beyond Boston.

### **Deciding on Qualifications**

The choices and relative weights given by the trustees in the discussion were then incorporated into a revised job description for the director. A set of questions to be answered concerning minimum qualifications was also developed: What should be the minimum library and administrative experience required? Will an MLS be required? What about salary level and residency requirements? Must the candidate have public library experience? How about experience with automation, unions, community service? The results were incorporated into the final job description.

More than ten hours of meeting time were given to this discussion, analysis, and consensus building. Five busy people gave substantial effort and attention at the height of the vacation season! In retrospect, individual trustees offered these views of the results of those summer sessions:

Constructing the selection process forced us as trustees to determine in advance what we would end up with. The job description became our basic document—an objective measure against which candidates would be compared.

The search developed into a real learning process for us as trustees. We worked together and got to know each other in a way unique to public volunteer boards. From a technical point of view, I think we all developed a better appreciation of the importance of collection management and the appreciation of new technologies, but, more importantly, we began to see the role of trustees as one of an advocate for the public library system.

Development of the process was like a crash course for us in getting a broadened view of libraries and of the BPL.

The investment of the board of trustees is essential at this point if they are the ones who make the selection, and it must be clear who chooses the director. They set the ground rules for the search. They also must establish a time line and determine the steps in the selection process.

### **Developing a Pool of Candidates**

How can a board guarantee for itself the best pool of candidates? There are no guarantees, but the best pool probably develops from a combination of wide publicity, creation of strong interest within the professional library community, and director recruitment. In Boston the decision was made to provide for a national search with vacancy announcement ads in the appropriate library periodicals, other publications such as the *New York Times*, and local newspapers serving minority populations in various parts of the country.

Interest within the professional library community was generated by the job description sent, with a letter requesting nominations, to all members of the Urban Libraries Council, the Association of Research Libraries (BPL is one of two public library members), all state library agencies, and all ALA-accredited library schools.

A search for a director should include those who are actively looking, but also needs to entice outstanding potential candidates who are not actively seeking another job. The final step was follow-up calls to receive nominations and to recruit aggressively those whose names were suggested.

Special attention still must be given in the library director recruitment process to enticing and encouraging candidates from among women and minorities. These two groups must be persuaded that the entire process is designed to give them fair consideration in the selection decision. Again from a trustee: “Our process was successful in persuading people to become candidates. It sent a message that turned around people’s view of BPL and what our selection process was.”

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## **Community Involvement**

Many libraries will face the same dilemma as the Boston trustees in being part of a diverse community that wanted a role in the selection process. Is it wise to provide the role? Does it safeguard the decision for those who must be responsible for the final choice?

The Boston experience says “yes.” A 15-member screening committee selected by the trustees included representatives of various neighborhoods in the city, notably through officers from three branch Friends groups; institutions and individuals who depended on the research library, such as an archivist from the Kennedy Library; librarians from academic, special, and school settings, such as the dean of the library school at Simmons College and the Librarian at the French Library in Boston; and members of the library staff.

There was a risk in bringing together such a diverse group to participate in selection, but their role was handled successfully, in part because the trustees had already spelled out the priorities and areas of concern, which the screening committee would address.

The other factor in their success was that the 15 individuals were exceptional. They were carefully chosen because of their investment in the library, their good judgment, and their willingness to address the overall issues rather than their special interests. Their participation guaranteed the inclusion of community issues and a range of points of view. Their combined commitment of over 1200 hours to the process along with careful deliberation and consensus building also guaranteed to the trustees a suitable pool of final candidates.

### **Interviews: The Final Seven**

The screening committee reviewed resumes and held meetings to narrow a field of 64 applicants down to 16 interviewees. There was no target for representation in this group of 16, but it is worth noting that six of them were women and three were minorities.

A set of interview questions, selected from those proposed by the advisor who served as chair of the screening committee and those proposed by members of the committee, had to be finalized as the uniform set of questions to be asked each candidate. This uniformity is a significant legal requirement, which was observed by the trustees in their questions as well.

Questions selected by the screening committee probed candidates’ skills in areas from how to build support with constituencies of an urban public library to views on preservation of research library collections; from how to handle a staff union when many grievances are pending to what the new technologies would offer to the future of the Boston Public Library. Emphasis was placed on candidates’ actual experience rather than theory and the entire committee took part in posing follow-up questions to basic responses.

An hour-and-a-half was allocated to each interview, followed by written individual comments and committee discussion. Periodic general discussions helped the committee assess each candidate as more candidates were seen. A final lengthy discussion resulted in a group of seven candidates whose names were submitted to the trustees in a joint, closed session. To this point all names and discussion had been considered confidential.

It had been understood by and was part of instructions to the screening committee that it should “provide the trustees with a list of those candidates recommended by the screening committee for further consideration.” The committee was also charged with the responsibility to “prepare evaluations of all candidates interviewed and strengths and weaknesses observed by the committee for presentation to the trustees.” The charge also included a sentence essential in the ongoing effort to be clear about roles and extent of responsibility: “The board of trustees does not seek from the committee the ranking or numerical rating of applicants and reserves to itself the task of selecting a final short list of candidates and final interviewing and selection.”

The trustees accepted the seven names from the screening committee as its list of final candidates and proceeded to its own interview stage. In looking at the role of the screening committee, an individual trustee has this to say:

The way in which such a large and diverse committee was able to come together, establish goals and objectives, and develop a consensus was a testament to the level of community involvement. An additional benefit of the process is that we now have in place the basis of an ongoing, committed region-wide group of library advocates.

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The transition from the screening committee to the board phase was greatly enhanced by the presence of two trustees at all interviewing by the screening committee. It is crucial that the trustees not be too removed from the screening stage, that they have the sense of the investment and careful judgment exercised by a screening group. A selection process can easily go awry if deliberations of advisory groups are cavalierly treated. Although the board that makes the selection decision certainly maintains the right to alter recommendations they receive, such action calls into question the time and effort given by the advisory group and should, therefore, be done with great care and for overwhelming cause.

### **The Trustees Must Decide**

Using the final list that has been developed, the board empowered to make the choice — in this case, the board of trustees—must conduct its own set of interviews. BPL’s interviews were two-and-a-half to three hours long and were based on a uniform set of questions asked by the trustees.

Because of additional time, the trustees were able to probe in more depth the candidates’ views and experience relative to BPL’s various roles, management of staff, impact of new technologies, and community involvement by the library and its director. This is also the stage at which reference checks were undertaken by the advisor. Past performance was viewed as an important indicator of future effectiveness.

This did not exclude “taking a chance” on someone, but references were viewed as a way to validate the assessment of a candidate’s potential.

A final public meeting of the board of trustees held on February 21, 1985 was the culmination of the selection. After receiving reference information and conducting their own intensive interviews, the trustees met for final deliberation and a vote. (Arthur Curley, then employed as deputy director of the Research Libraries of the New York Public Library, was selected.)

### **Monitoring the Process**

No process is self-propelled; it must be driven and it must be monitored. Each local situation will be different, but it is vital that someone be responsible for tracking the progress and the integrity of the process itself. In this search, this role fell jointly to the advisor and the president of the board of trustees.

In concrete terms, the role means developing options for ways to proceed and presenting them to the appropriate group (trustees or screening committee) for decisions. In this case it also meant much time spent in the “what if” exercise: What if there are not enough candidates? What if the screening committee does not work well together? What if the trustees do not agree on a final choice?

There are a range of sensitive issues in any process and one way to be sure the process is not waylaid by them is to foresee them and sort out ways to address them. The person who assumes this role must have authority sufficient to direct the process and see that decisions and adjustments are made to guarantee the maintenance of the timeline and the success of the process in reaching its goals.

### **Did this Selection Process Work?**

The steps followed in the Boston selection process from the point of public posting of the position to the final choice covered a period of five months and represented the ultimate test of any process — does it work?

Do the priorities and issues posed by the job description test out in interviews? Can the participants in the process (e.g., the screening committee) use such a document and directions from the trustees to make screening choices and determine a small number of candidates for final board decisions? Is consensus possible among such a diverse group?

The trustees seem clear in their assessments of the process. One trustee observed that “Through the process, the overriding need for a person of vision and energy became more apparent. Technical skills are essential but the director of the BPL, which is an institution rich in history and potential, must be able to lead and inspire staff and public as well.”

Her expectations for the process itself were “more than fulfilled. I went into the process with two basic goals: 1) an open, fair, and professional process and 2) the selection of the most qualified candidate as director. Not only did we achieve these two ends, but in the process we also developed a strong working relationship among board members and library activists and a much broader perspective on the potential the BPL holds for the public good.”

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Another trustee suggested that the planning and the process itself helped reinforce the board's view of its independence and integrity in making a decision not influenced by outside pressure. She indicated that her "sense of the qualities desired in the new director never changed. The process validated that set of qualities. The person selected is the right choice in my opinion."

The president of the board of trustee offers: "The newness of our board to our role as trustees made it very important that we send a signal that things will be different. This board takes seriously its advocacy role for libraries. The process helped us send the right messages to the library community. It also, especially in the interviewing stage, helped us get a new, broader view of libraries and their role."

### **The Bottom Line**

The bottom line for any process is its results, and no process should exist for itself. Results here are clearly most focused on the selection. Time will be the best indicator of success, but early response from trustees, staff, library community, and the public indicate confidence in this new director and hope for the future of the Boston Public Library.

There were a few other results desired by the advisor, which she told the trustees early in the process. They also appear to be realized.

For example, this search process began in the midst of mixed "press" about BPL and the political environment of the library. The openness and integrity of the search have changed in a significant way the views across the country of Boston and what its library is about.

Priorities for future roles and directions of the BPL were set in advance so that selection of a director could lead quickly to a partnership for that agenda. The partnership is developing.

Finally, the library community within Massachusetts needed signals of willingness to work cooperatively for future library development in that state. Those signals *have* been sent and greater cooperation is beginning.

Margo Crist, formerly Regional Administrator, Central Massachusetts Regional Library System, Worcester, is now Assistant Director for Planning and Administration, Boston Public Library. She served as advisor to the Board of Trustees of BPL in 1984-1985, during their search for a new director.

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## Securing a New Library Director

### Revised Edition

By Andrew Geddes and James A. Hess

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*The employment of a competent director is the most important single responsibility of a library board. In approaching the task of selection, trustees should make use of their accumulated experience, do their homework, and chart a course, which will assure them of the best possible change for success. The following guidelines should be helpful to a board in its efforts to secure the right administrator.*

### Preliminary Assessment

*Before thinking about a new director, a board should take a hard look at the current status of the library. This might well begin with an exit interview with the present director. What does this session reveal that needs immediate attention? Are the personnel policies adequate? Will the transition be smooth? Are changes indicated? If so, now is the time to make the necessary decisions.*

At this time of self-examination, the board may be wise to address itself to such fundamental questions as: What is the role of this library in the community today? Have library needs changed in the community? Has our library kept pace? What do we want in our next director? *Will this person be willing and able to implement the board's goals and objectives for the library?* What does the community want?

### Homework Before You Advertise

After this preliminary assessment, the board should take several steps, which will enable it to meet candidates for the directorship with confidence.

1. *Develop or obtain an existing up-to-date description of the community.* Along with geographic and demographic information, this should include facts about the economy, government, education, recreation, and cultural activity. It should make note of any important trends or changes underway.
2. *Prepare or obtain an up-to-date description of the public library program in the community and its relationship to other library programs in the area.* For the public library, this should include a history of the institution, its board composition, its articles of incorporation and bylaws, together with facts on staffing, collection, programs, and budget. For the schools, information should be provided on the number and location of each, the kinds of library service offered, methods of staffing, collections, and how they are housed. For the colleges and universities and for special libraries, the same kinds of information will be needed as for schools. A summary of existing cooperation among all of the types of libraries listed should be added.
3. *Write or update a detailed job description of the position.* Include data on specific duties, salary, fringe benefits, hours, civil service requirements, period of probation, etc. (You may need professional guidance on this one.)
4. *Review civil service regulations, which might affect your library.* Answer the following questions:
  - a. Is the director's position included?
  - b. If so, what are the civil service requirements?
  - c. Has a board member met with civil service personnel to learn necessary procedure?
  - d. What forms must be completed?
  - e. Must one follow civil service regulations absolutely?
  - f. How does the board get a civil service list to canvass?
  - g. What are the board's prerogatives?
5. *Create or adopt a standard reference form.* This will be sent with a return-addressed, stamped envelope to former employers and others whose names are given as references on applications. If at all possible, visit or at least telephone and talk to one or more references in person.
6. *Agree upon a fairly standard series of questions to be posed to each candidate.* This will insure that each candidate is asked to respond to the same questions and therefore the same basis for

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evaluation will exist; and that the interview proceeds smoothly without nonproductive lulls. (Some of the topics which might be dealt with in interviews are: What are the candidate's goals? How interested is the person in your position and on what terms? What questions does the candidate have for the board? What are this individual's strengths? What should be the relationship between the library director and the board?)

7. *Make up a standardized evaluation sheet.* Then, during interviews, the interviewing committee can be evaluating the same characteristics — within a flexible interview format, of course.
8. *Consider whether outside assistance should be secured to assist in interview sessions.* This might be a library consultant, a member of the system staff if your library is part of a system, one or more other librarians from the community, librarians within your own library, or a member of a lay groups such as Friends of the Library. Initial screening may be done by one or more of these groups, but final screening by the board or a subcommittee of it is essential to the process. Consider the participation of a delegated staff member in the search process up to but not including the voting decision.
9. *Decide whether the director will be offered a contract, a schedule, or an open-ended agreement.*
10. *Make provision for costs of interviews and moving.* What expenses will the board reimburse for those coming for interviews? What costs of relocation will the board pay? Inform all candidates invited for interviews of the board's policy on these expenses.
11. *Take a good look at your present staff.* Now that you know what you want and are ready for interviews, one of them might be eligible. However, don't select such a person just because he or she is on the scene. You are looking for the best person for the job, who may or may not be one of your own. If the assistant librarian or another staff member is expecting to be offered the job, explore possible reactions if the local person is not hired.
12. *Give consideration to eligible persons from nearby libraries.* Nevertheless, keep in mind your continuing relations with people from those libraries that might resent what they would describe as raiding. If your screening produces a candidate on the local scene, proceed with the interview process.

## **How to Advertise**

To let the library world know of your need as well as the opportunities involved in directing your library, you should now compose a carefully worded ad for insertion in selected publications. It is also good personnel practice to reach as many potential candidates as possible. The ad should include details as to salary, library school degree, years of experience required, location, and some attractive features of your position. Blind ads may greatly reduce the response you receive. Ask for resumes and set a deadline for receiving them.

Be sure to designate one person to receive applications. This is usually the president or secretary of the library board.

When your ad is ready, you will need to decide where it is most likely to produce results and arrange for its placement. The following are some of the publications and services which are regularly used for this type of advertisement: the *New York Times* and/or the metropolitan newspaper that serves your area, *Library Journal*, *Library Bulletin*, *American Libraries*, *LJ/SLJ Hotline*, library school placement offices, National Registry for Librarians, state association and state library publications, or telephone joblines. A word of caution, however: except for the *New York Times*, a long lead time is needed for copy — especially for professional periodicals.

In addition, use word-of-mouth advertising among friends and colleagues to spread the news of this available position. This method often works well and quickly, but should not be relied upon exclusively.

As applications are received, those not meeting established qualifications should be screened out and the applicants so notified. References should now be checked for the others, using the reference form adopted earlier. However, receipt of all applications should be acknowledged promptly. As soon as the board feels that it has in hand applications from likely prospects, it is ready to interview.

## **Interview**

First, hold an interview planning meeting of your total board at which decisions should be made on the following:

- 
1. The number of applicants to be interviewed (usually no more than three to five). Interview expense may influence this decision. However, it is wise to spend the necessary amount to look at a good array of candidates.
  2. The order of preference for interview.
  3. The sending of letters to candidates scheduling the interviews.
  4. The *one* person who will be responsible for conducting interviews, with others assisting. (The interview team should be held to a reasonable size, e.g., three to five, in the case of large boards.)
  5. The appropriate setting for interviews.
  6. The arrangements for accommodations for out-of-town candidates who might need them.
  7. The tour of the library and community for each candidate (which may be handled by a group other than the interview team).

As scheduled, the interview team now conducts the interviews, encouraging maximum exchange of information. Allow time between interviews in order to complete evaluation sheets while impressions of the candidate and his/her reactions are fresh in the minds of interview team members.

After interviews are completed, select the best potential director through discussion and by ranking candidates based on interviews and evaluation sheets. Phone to offer the position. Follow up with a confirming letter or contract, which includes details of the appointment and reporting date. Include a second copy for the director's signature and return.

By ranking the acceptable candidates, the board will save itself time if the first choice declines the offer or is unavailable for other reasons. The board chairperson can then quickly proceed to contact the second choice. Write to the unsuccessful candidates, thanking them and informing them of your decision only after an acceptance has been received.

### **Before the Director Arrives**

There are a number of courtesies which should be extended during the period between job acceptance and the reporting date. These can set the tone for a mutually satisfactory board- director relationship. If the new director has a family, it is important to recognize the traumatic impact of a move, particularly upon teenage children and an employed spouse. A board member, library staff person, or someone well qualified from the community should have the specific task of assisting the family's relocation. Providing for a weekend visit if financially feasible and sending information about housing, schools, and the community in general will be tasks to be undertaken. A subscription to the local newspaper may be valuable in acclimating the new director and family.

It is not unusual for libraries to participate in a variety of ways in defraying the expenses of a move. Again, a specific person should represent the library, so that there will be no misunderstanding about what items of expense are covered and what sums are available.

### **Upon Arrival**

It is most important that knowledgeable trustees or staff members be on hand to meet and welcome the new director. News releases and photographic coverage should be arranged as soon as possible.

Personal introductions to appropriate community personnel should be scheduled promptly, including the opportunity to meet local government officials. A good method of expediting this process is a formal or informal open house or reception hosted by the board.

### **After the Director is on the Job**

Good personnel practice calls for a predetermined probationary period if this is not already included in civil service procedures. This will usually be either six months or one year. Early in this period, some short- and long-term goals for the current director's administration should be set by the director and approved by the board.

During probation, your director's performance in the achievement of these goals should be carefully evaluated. The following are some questions the board might use in its evaluation:

- 
1. Is your director an effective administrator organizing own work and that of staff?
  2. Does he/she show initiative, creativity, follow-through?
  3. Are deadlines being met, goals achieved?
  4. Is director tactful?
  5. Does board feel library program is effectively being promoted?
  6. What are director's relations with board? With staff?

For evaluation, trustees should write statements concerning director's strengths and weaknesses. The board should then discuss his/her performance in executive session and with the director. A decision to retain or dismiss should be made during the probationary period and the director promptly informed.

*The board's responsibility for evaluation of the director does not end at the conclusion of the probationary period. The responsibility continues, and formal and informal evaluations should be done periodically. Satisfactions and dissatisfactions should be recorded and discussed with the director. Problems should be documented as a basis for future decision. Reward good performance: raise in salary, public recognition, and moral support are a few examples of ways to do this. However, if performance is in doubt, annual increases should not be given automatically just because they are on the schedule. The board should never retain a director if a majority of board members are convinced no improvement is possible.*

### **Summary**

1. Establish guidelines for position you seek to fill.
2. Put together an attractive package of salary and fringe benefits to interest the person you want.
3. Screen applicants carefully (including reference checks), with professional assistance when possible.
4. Agree on goals and objectives director is to achieve.
5. Evaluate performance.
6. Decide to retain or let go during probationary period.
7. Continue evaluation of performance on a periodic and meaningful basis.
8. Reward satisfactory performance, or when necessary improvement is not possible, discontinue employment.

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Mr. Geddes is director, Nassau Library System, Uniondale, New York; Mr. Hess is a trustee of the Public Library of East Brunswick, New Jersey. "Securing a New Library Director" appeared first in *Public Library Trustee*, no. 55, May 1974 (rev. 1979). Another article on the same subject is "Recruiting the Chief Librarian," by Frederick Wezeman, *Illinois Libraries* 56:216-19 (March 1974).

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# B

## Appendix B.1 FISCAL OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** Fiscal Officer

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** Board of Trustees

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Experience in public finance administration with previous college or work experience in accounting, business, or public administration, or any equivalent combination of experience, which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:** Knowledge of governmental bookkeeping, accounting, and computer operations. Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions. Ability to plan, schedule, and organize work. Prepares meaningful, concise, and accurate reports. Communicates effectively in written and oral forms. Has interpersonal skills, including the ability to work with the board, the director, and co-workers. Ability to work as a team member in achieving the library's mission in the community. Personal and professional integrity.

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:** Summary: Serves as the financial officer for the [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations, the directives of the auditor of the State of Ohio, and the policies and decisions of the [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] board of trustees.

- Attends all regular meetings of the board of trustees and other meetings as required.
- Writes board meeting minutes when requested and maintains minute book.
- Works with the director to prepare and mail board meeting information, including agenda, minutes, financial reports, etc. in a timely manner.
- Prepares a monthly financial report for presentation at board meetings and, at the end of the fiscal year, prepares and presents an annual financial report.
- Prepares financial analyses at the board's request.
- Reviews contracts, business practices, and accounting procedures and makes recommendations to the board.
- Prepares special correspondence that is outside the purview of the board secretary.
- Keeps the financial records of library funds in accordance with Chapter 117-4 of the Ohio Administrative Code, which lists the requirements of the auditor of the state of Ohio.
- Keeps the accounts of funds upon such forms as are prescribed and approved by the Ohio Bureau of Inspections and Supervision of Public Affairs.
- Trains, supervises, and reviews the work of the deputy fiscal officer.

- 
- Ensures that all financial records are maintained accurately.
  - Receives and deposits all library funds in approved depositories.
  - Manages the investment of active and interim funds at the board's direction.
  - Pays out money by a check signed by the fiscal officer or deputy fiscal officer and one of the following board officers: president, vice president, or secretary.
  - Processes all payroll, fringe benefit, and retirement system payments in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code and applicable federal, state, and local regulations.
  - Maintains a permanent file of payroll, fringe benefit, and retirement system records as mandated by law and good business practice.
  - Prepares and files all fiscal and payroll reports to federal, state, and local authorities in a timely manner.
  - Works with the director in preparation of the annual appropriations resolution and the proposed budget.
  - Works with the director as a member of the administrative team to provide information and counsel on the present and projected financial condition of the library.
  - Advises the director on the formation of library fiscal policy, as appropriate.
  - Implements accounting system changes.
  - Knows the library statutory requirements and powers as authorized in the Ohio Revised Code, the opinions of the Ohio Attorney General, and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
  - Performs additional duties as assigned by the board of trustees.



# Appendix C.1 DIRECTOR EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR DIRECTOR EVALUATION

1. Determine the CRITERIA to be evaluated.
2. Assign a CRITERIA WEIGHT to each criterion based on the relative importance of that criterion to the overall operation. For example, the more important criteria might be given a value of 5, and criteria of lesser importance are weighted 2, 3, or 4.
3. Establish a PERFORMANCE RATING SCALE applied to each criteria, in this case, 1 to 5, where 1 represents poor performance and 5 an outstanding performance.
4. Figure the MAXIMUM POINTS for each criteria by multiplying the CRITERIA WEIGHT by 5 (the top score).
5. The director's performance is given in the RATING column.
6. Multiply the RATING by the CRITERIA WEIGHT to obtain the POINTS for the director's score in this criteria.
7. The TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE is found by adding up all the numbers in the POINTS column.
8. Divide the total in the points column by the total in the maximum points column to find the percentage score.
9. Use a table such as the following to give overall evaluation:

90% - 100%	Outstanding performance
80% - 89%	Excellent performance
70% - 79%	Satisfactory performance
60% - 69%	Poor performance; needs significant improvement
50% - 59%	Weak performance, dismissal warning. Evaluate again in six months.
0% - 49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Consider dismissal unless there is immediate improvement.



# Appendix C.2 DIRECTOR EVALUATION FORM (BLANK)

Director Evaluation for \_\_\_\_\_ (Year)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

CRITERIA	RESULTS/ COMMENTS	WEIGHT	CRITERIA	RATING	MAXIMUM POINTS
----------	----------------------	--------	----------	--------	-------------------

**TRAITS**

- |                                      |  |   |  |  |    |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|----|
| • Meets deadlines on board requests  |  | 2 |  |  | 10 |
| • Uses tact in dealing with patrons  |  | 5 |  |  | 25 |
| • Prepares clear and concise reports |  | 3 |  |  | 15 |

**CRITERIA BASED ON JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Responsibility:		5			25
Preparing and managing budget					
Staff work completed in time?					
Budget covers all items?					
Adequate contingency fund?					
Projections based on sound data?					
Funds effectively allocated?					
Minimal mid-course adjustments?					

Responsibility:		4			20
Implementation of board decisions					
Implemented on a timely basis?					
Supported board decisions?					

**CRITERIA BASED ON PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

Increase children’s circulation by 10%		3			15
Implement a formal evaluation program for staff		5			25
Start Sunday hours		5			25

**TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE** **160**

**% EVALUATION SCORE OF MAXIMUM SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_ %

**OTHER COMMENTS:**

\*Criteria weight scale: 1=low, 5=high. Rating scale: 1=low, 5=high.  
Points equals weight multiplied by rating. Maximum points equals weight multiplied by highest rating value.

**SIGNATURES:**  
**BOARD PRESIDENT** \_\_\_\_\_ **DIRECTOR** \_\_\_\_\_





# Appendix C.3 DIRECTOR EVALUATION FORM (COMPLETED)

Director Evaluation for \_\_\_\_\_ (Year)

Date\_\_\_\_\_

CRITERIA	RESULTS/ COMMENTS	WEIGHT	CRITERIA	RATING	MAXIMUM POINTS
<b>TRAITS</b>					
Meets deadlines on board requests	Met all but one.	2	4	8	10
Uses tact in dealing with patrons	Received 3 comments; showed improvements.	5	3	15	25
Prepares clear and concise reports	Good improvement.	3	4	12	15
<b>CRITERIA BASED ON JOB DESCRIPTIONS</b>					
Responsibility:		5	4	20	25
Preparing and managing budget					
Staff work completed in time?	Yes				
Budget covers all items?	Yes				
Adequate contingency fund?	Set too high				
Projections based on sound data?	Yes				
Funds effectively allocated?	Book budget too low				
Minimal mid-course adjustments?	Only adjusted wages				
Responsibility:		4	4	16	20
Implementation of board decisions					
Implemented on a timely basis?	Slow starting weeding				
Supported board decisions?	Yes				
<b>CRITERIA BASED ON PLANNING OBJECTIVES</b>					
Increase children's circulation by 10%	Actual increase 10%	3	4	12	15
Implement a formal evaluation program for staff	Half of staff has been completed	5	3	15	25
Start Sunday hours	Started in March	5	3	15	25
<b>TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE</b>				<b>113</b>	<b>160</b>

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**% EVALUATION SCORE OF MAXIMUM SCORE:**

**76.8%**

**OTHER COMMENTS:** Did a very good job in starting Sunday hours and in improving written communication. Needs further improvement in dealing with patrons. Needs to put further emphasis on staff evaluation.

\*Criteria weight scale: 1=low, 5=high. Rating scale: 1=low, 5=high.  
Points equals weight multiplied by rating. Maximum points equals weight multiplied by highest rating value.

**SIGNATURES:**

**BOARD PRESIDENT** \_\_\_\_\_ **DIRECTOR** \_\_\_\_\_

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# D Appendix D.1 TRUSTEE SELF-EVALUATION

Criteria by various surveyors of public library situations indicate that a common factor in the good or poor status of a library is the board's constant interest in: (a) what the public is getting for its money; (b) what the staff is paid for its talent; (c) whether the library is moving ahead or standing still in its total circulation, its adult nonfiction circulation, its children's services, and the volume and the quality of its reference services; (d) the degree to which the library is looked upon by the community and by individual citizens as a constant daily impetus to constructive thinking and activity and to good citizenship, measurable in part by the attention given to the library in local or nearby newspapers; and (e) the community's concern with knowledge, which the board has a basic responsibility to promote.

## A SAMPLE TRUSTEESHIP TEST

Trustees who wish to undertake some self-evaluation of their effectiveness might find the following brief test a useful exercise.

**Instructions:** Circle the appropriate number; total score; see ratings at the end of the test.

1. HAVE YOU ATTENDED EVERY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING SINCE BECOMING A TRUSTEE?  
Every meeting – 6      Missed a few – 2      Miss occasionally – 1
2. HOW MANY LIBRARY WORKSHOPS HAVE YOU ATTENDED IN THE LAST YEAR?  
Six or more – 6      Three to five – 3      One or two – 1      None – 0
3. HOW MANY NON-LIBRARY MEETINGS HAVE YOU ATTENDED AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR LIBRARY IN YOUR COMMUNITY IN THE LAST YEAR?  
Six or more – 6      Three to five – 3      One or two – 1      None - 0
4. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU VISITED YOUR LIBRARY AND TALKED WITH STAFF OTHER THAN THE DIRECTOR IN THE LAST 60 DAYS?  
Three or more – 5      Twice – 2      Once – 1      No visits – 0
5. HOW MANY OTHER LIBRARIES HAVE YOU VISITED IN THE LAST YEAR?  
Five or more – 6      One to four – 3      None – 0
6. HAVE YOU REVIEWED THE LIBRARY'S OBJECTIVES IN THE LAST YEAR?  
Yes – 1      No – 0
7. HAVE YOU TAKEN STEPS IN THE PAST YEAR TO INCREASE LIBRARY REVENUES?  
Yes – 1      No – 0
8. HAVE YOU ENCOURAGED EXPANDING LIBRARY SERVICES?  
Yes – 1      No – 0
9. HAVE YOU BEEN ENGAGED IN PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES FOR THE LIBRARY IN THE PAST YEAR?  
Yes – 1      No – 0
10. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH *LIBRARY LAWS OF OHIO*?  
Yes – 1      No – 0

*continued...*

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**RATINGS:**

34 to 25: EXCELLENT - If you have time, consider joining and helping state or national trustee associations.

24 to 15: VERY GOOD - Can you help others?

14 to 10: GOOD - Good beginning.

9 to 5: POOR - Consider resigning or take more interest.

0 to 4: UNACCEPTABLE - You should resign from the board.



## Appendix D.2 BOARD EVALUATION

### HOW GOOD IS OUR LIBRARY BOARD?

Rate your board on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding) on each question.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Does your board act as a policy-making group?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. In determining policies, does your board take the director's recommendations into consideration?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Are your board policies summarized in written form separate from board minutes?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Has your board adopted written policies on materials selection?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Has your board adopted written personnel policies, including vacation, sick leave, parental leave, etc.?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Are your board policies kept up-to-date by adding newly adopted policies to your policy manual?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Have you adopted bylaws for your board?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Are your board meetings held regularly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Does your board membership include a true cross section of the community, representing business people, blue- and white-collar workers, homemakers, etc.?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Does your board recommend the appointment of new members rather than perpetuating the same members for continuing terms?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Do all trustees attend board meetings regularly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Does your board prepare an annual report to your taxing authority, explaining goals, objectives, and needs?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Do your bylaws limit the terms for officers to assure rotation in office?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Do your board members think and vote independently rather than being influence in their decisions by one or two dominant trustees?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Does every board member participate in meetings by taking part in discussions and by contributing ideas?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Does your board president encourage and give members an opportunity to express themselves freely on policies without any indication of bias on the subject?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Does your board, as a whole, show a progressive attitude by considering new ideas rather than continuing in the same manner as has always been done in the past?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Has your board visited other libraries to get ideas?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Is your board aware of the services your library could offer if it were properly supported and staffed?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Has your board adopted a written, long-range plan for the improvement of its services?

\_\_\_\_\_ OUR SCORE. Is this how well we want to do?

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# D Appendix D.3 TRUSTEE OATHS

## THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS TO LIBRARY TRUSTEES

The Constitution of the State of Ohio requires that every person "chosen or appointed" to an office in the state must take (1) an oath or affirmation to support the Constitutions of the United States and of Ohio; and (2) an oath of office. Public library trustees can combine this requirement into one oath, which would read as follows:

"Do you solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the state of Ohio; and that you will faithfully and impartially discharge your duties as a member of the board of trustees of the \_\_\_\_\_ Library, \_\_\_\_\_ County, Ohio to the best of your ability, and in accordance with the laws now in effect and hereinafter to be enacted, during your term of office? (The answer is: "I do.")"

Persons authorized to administer oaths include the following individuals:

1. Notaries public commissioned in Ohio may administer oaths anywhere in the state.
2. Ohio legislators (members of the General Assembly) may also administer oaths anywhere in the state.
3. Judges of any court in Ohio may administer oaths anywhere in the state.
4. Other elected officials may administer oaths to people within the geographical limits of their constituencies.

While the first, second, and third categories are fairly straightforward, the fourth category merits further explanation. In the case of a county district library board member, that individual could be sworn in by any elected official at the county level, such as a county commissioner, county treasurer, county auditor, etc. A mayor of a town within the county, however, could probably not administer oaths to county district library trustees. A school district library presents a more difficult question, given that certain school districts may cross jurisdictional lines. In that case, it may safely be assumed that an elected member of the school board could administer the school district public library trustee's oath of office. Essentially, the fourth category stands for the proposition that officials elected from the same electoral base that forms the library's area of service may administer oaths to that library's trustees.

It should be noted that contrary to suggestions in prior editions of the *Ohio Public Library Trustees' Handbook*, **library board members or officers of library boards are probably not authorized to administer these oaths**, because they do not fall into one of the four categories listed above. From a practical perspective, the solution to this problem is simple: encourage board members, and certainly the officer of the board, to become notaries. Once those individuals are commissioned as notaries, they can administer legally oaths of office and perform any other duties for the library board that require notarial acts.



# Appendix D.4 BOARD OF TRUSTEE BYLAWS

## SAMPLE BYLAWS

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES [INSERT LIBRARY NAME]

#### I. NAME AND LOCATION

The name of the library shall be "[INSERT LIBRARY NAME]." Where and when appropriate in the publications of the library it shall be indicated that the Library District is the [INSERT COUNTY, MUNICIPALITY, AND/OR SCHOOL DISTRICT].

The main library shall be located at [INSERT ADDRESS] in the City of [INSERT CITY].

#### II. OBJECTIVES

The [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] serves its communities as an information agency to support both the formal and informal learning requirements and recreational needs of its customers. The library extends its services to all residents of the state of Ohio on equal terms.

#### III. MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Board of Trustees are, by law, appointed by the [INSERT NAME OF APPOINTING AUTHORITY] for a term of [INSERT NUMBER] years. It is the Board's preference that no member serve for a second full term. Unexpired terms shall be filled by the [INSERT NAME OF APPOINTING AUTHORITY].

#### IV. POLICIES

The Board of Trustees shall have all of the powers granted to it by law and shall, in open meeting, determine and establish, in accordance with law, the basic policies of the library with respect to (a) the appropriation and budgeting of funds; (b) the establishment and maintenance of libraries and library services; (c) the acquisition, improvement, maintenance, insurance, use, and disposition of properties; (d) the hiring, compensation, and responsibilities of, and the personnel practices concerning, librarians and other employees; (e) the selection, collection, lending, and disposition of books and other library materials; and (f) the acceptance of gifts. The policies so determined and established by the Board shall remain in effect until changed or rescinded by further action of the Board and shall be administered by the library staff. The Director shall cause a compilation of all operating policies established by the Board to be prepared and kept up to date and to be distributed to the members of the Board and to appropriate members of the library staff and to be kept available to the public generally.

#### V. OFFICERS

##### **A. Election**

At the regular meeting in January of each year, the Board shall select from its membership a President, Vice President, and a Secretary who shall serve for a term of one year. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the President, who will present a slate of officers at the January meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. At the same meeting, the Board shall elect and fix the compensation of a Fiscal Officer who may be a member of the Board of Trustees and who shall serve for a term of one year. A deputy Fiscal Officer, who may be a member of the Board of Trustees, shall also be elected to serve for one year. Each of said officers shall have such powers and duties as are prescribed by the Revised Code of Ohio or by these Bylaws or by special action of the Board from time to time to the extent that these Bylaws or said actions are consistent with the law of Ohio.

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## **B. Fiscal Officer**

The Fiscal Officer shall be the treasurer of the library funds. Before assuming the duties, a bond shall be executed in an amount and with a surety to be approved by the Board, payable to the Board and conditioned for the faithful performance of the official duties required by the Fiscal Officer. All moneys received by the Fiscal Officer for library purposes shall be immediately placed in a depository designated by the Board. The Fiscal Officer shall keep an account of the funds credited to the Board upon such forms as are prescribed and approved by the Ohio Bureau of Inspection and Supervision of Public Offices and shall render a statement to the Board monthly showing the revenues and receipts from whatever sources derived, the disbursements and the purposes for such disbursements, and the assets and liabilities of the Board, and the relation of the several items of the foregoing to the budget. At the end of each fiscal year, the Fiscal Officer shall submit to the Board a complete financial statement showing the receipts and expenditures in detail for the entire fiscal year. In the absence or unavailability of the Fiscal Officer, the Deputy Fiscal Officer shall act for and perform the functions of the Fiscal Officer for which duties the Deputy Fiscal Officer shall have executed a bond in an amount and with a surety in the same amount as that required of the Fiscal Officer.

## **C. President**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, shall, in consultation with the Director and committee chairs, determine the agenda for each meeting and shall, with the consent of the Board, determine the order of business thereat. The President shall, with the Secretary, sign the minutes of each meeting of the Board. The President shall appoint all committees and committee chairs with the consent of the Board and shall serve as an ex-officio member of each committee. The President shall execute on behalf of the Board, and when approved by it, all such instruments of conveyance, assignment, transfer, contract, indebtedness, or lease as, in order to be effective, must be executed by an officer or member of the Board other than or in addition to the Fiscal Officer, and all written reports, applications, and statements which law or governmental regulations require to be executed and filed on behalf of the Board by an officer or member of the Board other than or in addition to the Fiscal Officer or Director.

## **D. Vice President**

In the absence or unavailability of the President or the President's declination to act, the Vice President shall have all the powers and duties of the President, except as otherwise provided bylaw.

## **E. Secretary**

The Secretary shall prepare and sign the minutes of the meetings of the Board and certificates evidencing resolutions or actions of the Board and, when required, shall attest to the signatures and authority of the President, Vice President, Fiscal Officer or Director and co-sign instruments and writings executed by any of them. The Fiscal Officer shall be responsible for the safekeeping and preservation of the minutes and official records of the Board.

## **F. Checks**

All checks paying out funds of the library shall be signed by the Fiscal Officer or Deputy Fiscal Officer of the Board and by the President or Vice President or Secretary of the Board.

## **VI. COMMITTEES**

### **A. Standing and Special Committees**

The standing committees of the Board shall be: (a) Executive; (b) Planning and External Relations; and (c) Operations. There shall be, in addition, such special committees as the Board shall from time to time determine to be advisable. The President of the Board shall be an ex-officio member of each committee, and the chair of each committee shall be a member of the Board appointed by the President with the consent of the Board. Each committee shall have such other members, if any, as the Board shall from time to time determine, which members shall be appointed as the Board shall provide and need not be members of the Board.



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Except by the express approval or action of the Board, no committee shall have (a) more than three members of the Board, not including the President of the Board, or (b) authority to make any decision upon any matter, business or policy, within the power or responsibility of the Board itself. Any report or recommendation of a committee to the Board shall be deemed advisory only, and no member of the Board, whether or not a member of the committee, shall be bound or controlled by any action, report, or recommendation of a committee.

All meetings of the Planning and External Relations Committee and the Operations Committee, because there exists the potential for a quorum of the full Board to be present, shall have written notice posted and distributed in accordance with Article VIII, Section A(2) of these Bylaws.

It is recommended that no Trustee serve more than five (5) years on the same standing committee.

#### **B. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the effective operation of the Board of Trustees; directing and coordinating the work of the Planning and External Relations Committee and the Operations Committee, and making appointments to them; setting trustee performance standards; designing and conducting the recruitment, interview process and orientation of new trustees, and at least annually negotiating performance targets with the Director and evaluating the Director's performance. It is chaired by the President and consists of the chairs of the Planning and External Relations Committee and the Operations Committee.

#### **C. Planning and External Relations Committee**

The Planning and External Relations Committee is responsible for working closely with the Director and management staff in designing a planning process that fully meets the needs of the library; adopting the annual planning calendar; overseeing implementation of the annual planning process; preparing, reviewing and publicizing statements of the library's values, vision and mission, as well as the strategic directions, plans, and services of the library; reviewing the planning documentation for the library's tax budget and annual appropriations and recommending action to the full Board; and reviewing grant applications.

#### **D. Operations Committee**

The Operations Committee is responsible for working closely with the Director and management staff in designing a process for monitoring and assessing library performance — both fiscal and programmatic; overseeing the performance monitoring process and reporting program and fiscal performance to the full Board; reviewing audit reports, working with the Director and management staff on corrective actions, and keeping the Board briefed on progress; overseeing the personnel activities of the library; overseeing the buildings and grounds activities; and reviewing requests for proposals and participating in the awarding of contracts.

### **VII. DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

#### **A. Director**

The Board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the Director who shall be the chief administrator and the librarian of the library. The Director shall have full charge of the administration and operations of the library in accordance with the objectives and policies adopted by the Board and under the direction and review of the Board. The Director shall be held responsible for the care of all buildings and equipment, for public relations, for the employment and direction of the library staff, for the selection, acquisition and disposition of books and non-book materials within the annual appropriations adopted by the Board and subject to the general policies from time to time adopted by the Board. The Director shall keep the Board informed as to the program needs, plant needs, the desirable expenditures of library funds, and any special achievements or problems requiring action by or approval of the Board. The Director shall present at each meeting a report concerning the work of the library and submit for consideration with recommendations all matters requiring action by the Board, and, to that end, shall consult with the President and chairs of the standing committees as to the agenda for each meeting of the Board. The Director shall attend all Board meetings except those executive sessions at which the Director's appointment or salary is to be discussed or decided.

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The Director shall serve at the discretion of the Board. His or her employment shall be governed by the *Personnel Policy Manual* of the Board of Trustees.

**B. Deputy Director**

The Board shall approve the appointment and fix the compensation of the Deputy Director who shall be the assistant to the Director and shall be responsible for such duties as may be delegated by the Director in accordance with the policies established by the Board. In the absence or unavailability of the Director, the Deputy Director shall act for and perform the functions of the Director.

**C. Evaluation**

On an annual basis, the Board of Trustees shall evaluate the job performance of the Director. The Director will evaluate the performance of the Deputy Director and recommend to the Board a salary consideration.

**VIII. MEETINGS**

**A. Time and Notice**

*Regular meetings* of the Board shall be held at [INSERT LOCATION AND TIME] on the [INSERT DAY] of those months established each year at the Board's annual meeting, or at such other time or place as shall be agreed upon by the Board. *Special meetings* of the Board may be called at any time by vote of the Board or by the President or Vice President. The *annual meeting* of the Board shall be held on the fourth Monday in January and shall be the regular meeting of the Board that month. At this meeting, the Board shall elect officers and fiscal officers and the oath of office shall be taken by the newly appointed Board member, the Fiscal Officer and the Deputy Fiscal Officer.

Written notice of each meeting of the Board, together with an agenda or statement of the purposes of the meeting, shall be mailed by the Fiscal Officer or the Secretary of the Board to each member of the Board, at the address designated by the member, at least one (1) week before a regular meeting and two (2) days before a special meeting provided that any member of the Board may waive notice to himself either by his attendance at the meeting at the time for which it is called or by a signed written waiver of the notice.

Posted Notice - The Director shall cause a written notice of the time and place of each Board meeting and standing committee meeting to be posted on a prominent bulletin board in each of the four libraries at least 24 hours before the meeting, except in the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action where the notice shall be posted promptly after the meeting is called. Each posted notice of a special meeting of the Board shall state the purpose or purposes of the meeting. Whenever the place or time of a Board meeting is changed at the same or a different place, the Director shall cause a written notice of the change or adjournment, including the new time and place of the meeting, to be promptly placed on the same bulletin boards. No notice of a meeting so posted shall be removed until the meeting is either concluded or canceled.

Requests for Notice to News Media

- (a) Any news medium may request and receive advance notification of any special meeting or meetings of the Board by filing with the Director a written request for such notice, indicating whether notice is desired of all special meetings or of which kind or kinds of special meetings, and including the name of the requesting medium, the address to which notices are to be sent, and the name and the telephone number of the person (and alternate, if any) to whose attention the written notification may be given either during or outside of business hours. By like filing with the Director, the news medium may cancel or from time to time modify its filed request, or the names, addresses, and telephone numbers thereon.
- (b) The Director shall maintain and keep up-to-date a file or list of all news media requests filed under (a) above, and shall cause a written notice of the time, place and purpose of each special meeting to be mailed or delivered to the news medium as requested at such time and in such manner as will reasonably provide for its receipts at least 24 hours before the meeting, except that in the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action, the officer of the Board calling the

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meeting shall give notice of the same to the requesting news media in such manner and as immediately as the conditions of the meeting shall reasonably permit.

Notice to Other Persons - Any person who wants to obtain reasonable advance notification of Board meetings at which any specific type of public business is scheduled to be discussed may file with the Director a written request stating the person's name, address and telephone number or numbers at which the person can be reached during or outside business hours and stating the specific type of public business the discussion of which is the person's concern together with a stamped, self-addressed envelope or envelopes in which the requested notice can be mailed. Any such persons may likewise file with the Director a modification or cancellation of such a request. It shall be the duty of the Director to comply with each such request by mailing to the person in the filed, stamped, self-addressed envelope advance notice of each Board meeting of the type stated in the request and such mailing shall be made immediately when the time and place of the meeting are fixed by the Board or the officer calling the meeting. If the type of business with which the requesting person is concerned shall be included in the agenda of the meeting, the mailed notice of the meeting shall include the agenda of that part or the agenda, which is known at the time the mailed notice, is sent.

Executive Session - The board may hold an executive session only after a majority of a quorum of the board determines, by a roll call vote, to hold such a session and only at a regular or special meeting. The purpose(s) for holding such an executive session shall be as specified in Section 121.22(G), as amended, of the Ohio Revised Code and the purpose(s) shall be included in the motion to hold the session.

Committee Meetings - Meetings of standing committees, because of their potential of having a quorum of the full Board present, shall be open to the public in accordance with Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code, and notice of the time, place and purpose of the meeting shall be posted and given as in the case of a special meeting of the Board.

#### Certification

- (a) Any notification provided herein to be given by the Director or a Trustee may be given by any person acting in behalf of or under the authority of the Fiscal Officer.
- (b) The Director shall maintain a record of the date, manner, and time, if pertinent under these Bylaws, of all notices and notifications given or attempted to be given under these Bylaws, and of those persons or entities to whom such notifications were given or unsuccessfully attempted to be given, and copies of proofs of publication of any notification or notices published thereunder.
- (c) At the commencement of each meeting, the Director or Fiscal Officer shall submit a certificate as to compliance with these Bylaws as to notice and notification. A reasonable attempt at notification shall constitute notification in compliance with these Bylaws. Such certificate shall be conclusive upon the Board of Library Trustees as to the facts set forth herein.

#### **B. Quorum**

Four persons, a majority of the full membership of the board, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, provided that in the absence of a quorum those present may adjourn the meeting until a quorum is present.

#### **C. Order of Business**

The business conducted at any special meeting of the board shall be limited to the purposes stated in the written notice of such meeting, unless the transaction of other business shall be approved by all of the members present at the meeting. In general, the agenda of each regular meeting shall include the roll call and certification of notification; approval of minutes; comments from the audience; reports from the various standing committees of the Board; and reports from the President and Director.

The order of business of each meeting of the Board shall be determined by the presiding officer consistent with any expressed desires of a majority of the members of the Board present at the meeting.

#### **D. Reports**

At least one (1) week before each regular meeting of the Board, the Fiscal Officer shall mail to each member of the Board, at the address designated by the member, the following reports in such form as the Board shall from time to time request or the laws of Ohio shall require:

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- Agenda;
  - Minutes of the previous meeting;
  - Financial report;
  - Report of current personnel action for approval; and
  - Report of library service related matters.

A copy of the financial report as so mailed shall be submitted to the Board at the next regular meeting and shall be appended by the Secretary to the minutes of that meeting. At that meeting, the President shall inquire of the members present whether there are any questions or objections to the reports as so mailed or to the payments or actions therein reported. If no correction, amendment, or addition to a report as so mailed is made at the meeting and if no objection to the report is made by a member present at the meeting or is reported to the meeting as having been made by a member absent from the meeting, the reports and the payments and actions therein reported shall be considered as approved by each member present without motion, resolution or roll call thereof; and the Secretary shall so indicate in the minutes of the meeting.

Any member not present at the meeting when a report is considered may at the first regular meeting at which he is thereafter present voice any objection the member may have to any such report or to a payment or action reported therein and have the member's objection entered in the minutes of the meeting, but such objection shall not invalidate or otherwise affect the previous approval of such report, payment, or action, unless by motion, resolution and roll call the Board shall otherwise decide. Any report to which an addition, amendment, correction or objection is made at the meeting to which it is submitted shall be approved only by motion or resolution and vote of the Board.

#### **E. Voting**

Except when a larger vote is required by law, all actions of the Board shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the Board. When a motion is made and seconded to adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase or sale of real or personal property or the appointment of an officer or the payment of any debt or claim or the contracting or incurrence of any obligation or the payment of money or the transfer of property or the adoption of the annual budget or appropriation, or upon the request of any member of the Board, the Fiscal Officer of the Board shall call the roll of the members of the Board and enter in the minutes of the meeting the names of those voting "aye," those voting "nay", and of those abstaining.

#### **F. Rules of Order**

Where not otherwise governed by law or by these Bylaws, the proceedings of the meetings of the Board shall be in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order* as currently revised and published at the time of the meeting.

#### **G. Records of the Library - Public Information**

It shall be the policy of the Board of Library Trustees of the [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] to release for public information and place copies at the Information Desk of the library the official *minutes and financial reports* after approval by the Board.

All documents, which are public records, shall be available for review and inspection by any person upon reasonable request to the Director.

*Official reports of the Board* required by the Ohio Revised Code and the Auditor of the State shall be maintained in the Business Office and available to the public upon request to the Director if viewing these records does not infringe on privacy rights of individuals.

*Copies of the Policies of the Board of Library Trustees and of the adopted Position Descriptions and Salary Schedules* of the library staff shall be available to the public and the staff in each building.

*The annual report of the Director*, including those prepared by all heads of departments, shall be cataloged and made a part of the library's reference collection.

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*Working papers* of Committees and correspondence received by the Board of Library Trustees are not considered public documents.

## **IX. FINANCES**

### **A. Introduction**

The [INSERT LIBRARY NAME] shall observe the Federal, State, County, and local requirements regarding the finances of the library.

This includes receipt expenditures and investment of funds, preparation and presentation of budgets, bank depositories, insurances, contracts, records and reports, and bidding. The election and duties of the Fiscal Officer and Deputy Fiscal Officer are stated in Article V, Sections A and B, of these Bylaws.

### **B. Authorization to Classify Funds Received as Active, Interim or Inactive**

The Fiscal Officer of this library is authorized, upon receipt of funds of the library, to determine the extent to which the needs of the library reasonably require that such funds be classified as active funds or permit them to be classified as interim or inactive funds in an authorized depository or qualified investment provided that any such deposit or investment shall be in compliance with the authorizing resolutions of this Board for deposit or investment of interim or inactive funds.

### **C. Authorization to Transfer Inactive, Interim, and Active Funds and to Invest or Reinvest Funds**

The Fiscal Officer of this library is authorized, upon maturity of any funds of this library held as interim or inactive funds, to determine the extent to which the needs of the library reasonably require that such funds be transferred to the status of active funds and the extent to which such funds may remain as interim or inactive funds and to deposit, invest or reinvest any such funds remaining as interim or inactive funds in an authorized depository or other qualified investment provided that any such deposit, investment or reinvestment shall be in compliance with the authorizing resolutions of this Board for deposit or investment of interim or inactive funds.

### **D. Use of Building and Repair Funds**

The use of the Building and Repair Fund shall be limited to major planned expenditures or emergency repair expenditures, each of which shall be individually submitted to the Board for approval. In December of each year a transfer from the unexpended General Fund appropriation to the Building and Repair Fund may be approved by the Board.

### **E. Approval of General Fund Expenditures**

The Board's General Fund Annual Appropriation Resolution empowers the Fiscal Officer to expend the funds required for the operation of the library. However, the following shall be submitted individually to the Board for prior approval:

1. Non-recurring or initial expenditures in excess of \$5,000.00;
2. Recurring expenditures in excess of \$5,000.00, which have increased by 20% or more over the prior year;
3. Reassignment or creation of responsibilities, which results in the addition of salaried staff positions;
4. Any special circumstances, at the discretion of the Director.

### **F. Bid Openings**

Section 3375.41 of the *Ohio Revised Code* states that bids for library construction "...shall be opened at the next meeting of the board..." However, the Board of Library Trustees has determined it to be in the library's best interests, pursuant to public bidding, for the Board to provide for the public opening and reading of such bids by the Fiscal Officer, immediately after the time for filing such bids has expired, and not wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Board. All bids will be tabulated and a report of such tabulation will be provided to the Board of Library Trustees at its next meeting. At that time, a decision shall be made as to which bid, if any, to accept.

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**G. Authorization of Petty Cash**

The Fiscal Officer is authorized to keep in the vaults of the office an amount not to exceed \$1,300.00 as a cash reserve, as per Section 135.17 of the Ohio Revised Code.

**X. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No members of the Board of Trustees shall have any pecuniary interest in any contract entered into by the Board (ORC 3375.35).

This Board of Trustees subscribes to the tenets contained in "A Statement of Ethics for Library Trustees" of the American Library Trustee Association (attached).

**XI. AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the Board of Trustees, provided that a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given with the notice of the meeting.

*Sample provided by the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.*

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# D Appendix D.5 ETHICS STATEMENT

## ETHICS STATEMENT FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Trustees in the capacity of trust upon them, shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity and honor.

Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the situation.

It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.

Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.

A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with that particular state's freedom of information act.

Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Trustees who accept appointment to a library board are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

*Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1985.  
Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985.  
Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988.  
Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January, 1989.*



# Appendix E

## FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY

- I. Scope of the Feasibility Study
  - A. Research and Analysis
    - 1. Determine square foot area space needs
    - 2. Develop written building program
    - 3. Assess building condition with regard to energy consumption
  - B. Development of Schematic Design
    - 1. Floor plans of entire building with one redesign
    - 2. Exterior or interior sketch or model of revised floor plans
  - C. Project Budget Estimates
    - 1. Completion costs (total and in phases)
    - 2. Building costs
    - 3. Site development costs
    - 4. Fixed equipment costs
    - 5. Heat/air conditioning requirements and costs
    - 6. Furnishings
    - 7. Professional fees
    - 8. Contingencies
  - D. Written Report
- II. Requirements for Submitting a Proposal
  - A. Company/Organization Information
    - 1. Description of firm (brochures)
    - 2. Experience in library design
    - 3. List libraries worked for and contact person
    - 4. Staff backgrounds and expertise
    - 5. Name specific strength(s) of your firm
  - B. Timetable
    - 1. Describe work process and prepare a list of dates leading to the completion of the project
  - C. Compensation
    - 1. Contract for the architectural services specified herein will be on a fixed basis
- III. Selection Criteria to be Used by the Board
  - A. Quality of the Proposal
  - B. Credentials of Key Personnel
  - C. Demonstrated Ability in Present or Past Projects
  - D. Fee

*Sample provided by the Mentor Public Library.*



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# **F** **Appendix F** **HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY** **DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING IN OHIO**

## **HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN OHIO**

By A. Chapman Parsons, Former Executive Director, Ohio Library Council (1996) *[updated by the OLC 1996-2017]*

The first recognition of libraries in the laws of the state is found in the charter of the Dayton Library Society, February 21, 1805. However, there is evidence that the settlers established libraries in Belpre in 1796, Cincinnati in 1802, and the Coonskin Library in Amesville (Athens County) in 1804.

These first libraries were organized cooperatively and were available to shareholders, subscribers, or members. They were known as "social" libraries, "subscription" libraries, or "association" libraries. The Ohio General Assembly passed many separate acts incorporating libraries prior to 1817. In that year, however, the Assembly passed a general statute providing for the incorporation of libraries. It was also in 1817 that the General Assembly approved the establishment of the State Library by Governor Thomas Worthington.

Library organization lagged from 1817, but from 1824 to 1840 more than 120 new libraries were established. This growth paralleled the rise of the lyceum movement, which had as one of its aims "calling into use neglected libraries and giving occasion for the establishment of new ones." Commercial libraries and reading rooms had developed earlier and according to Caleb Atwater, an early historian, "by 1838 most towns had reading rooms and that libraries were increasing in number as well as size."

In 1824 the State Library began to receive regular authorization. In 1846, school district libraries were authorized but their support was left to the initiative of the district. By 1850, 192 library societies or associations had been incorporated.

The School Act of 1853 laid a base for tax support of school district libraries in Ohio, and between 1853 and 1856, Ohio placed 332,579 volumes in libraries.

In 1856 and again in 1857, the tax for school district libraries was suspended and in 1860 the school library tax was repealed. In 1867, a law was passed for the purpose of maintaining and increasing the school library of city school districts. It authorized the board of education to levy, annually, a tax of one-tenth of a mill, and, in 1895, the board of education was empowered to appropriate money for the purpose of supplying their schools with books other than textbooks.

In 1869, the General Assembly enacted legislation authorizing municipalities to open and maintain free libraries and reading rooms. This law, plus the increase in women's clubs, expanding school curricula, and the opening of evening schools for adults, increased the number of libraries, especially in small communities. By 1902, the state Commissioner of Schools was able to report that 59 city districts contained libraries. The report also names 589 villages and special districts that had libraries containing over 200 volumes.

The first county library legislation was passed in 1898 when two bills authorized creation of the Hamilton and Van Wert County library systems.

During the first century of statehood, the legislature made it possible for public libraries to be established under any one of four taxing authorities: a municipality, township, school district, or county. The pattern most generally followed was for the municipality to create a public library and operate it as part of city government, although there were notable exceptions. Many libraries were established during the years that Andrew Carnegie provided building funds for libraries.

Further library developments included the passage of the County District Library Law in 1921 and its revision in 1923.

Until 1921, most public libraries in Ohio were either the association or municipal type with a few organized as school district, township, county, and county district. Prior to that time, the legislature passed a 15 mill limitation on real property taxes, and subdivisions that had been levying up to a mill and a half tax for libraries suddenly found themselves unable to do so. However, the right of a school district to levy outside this limitation was reestablished in 1921. Since school districts thus were exempt from the limitation, any library,

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which might be organized as a part of a school district, could levy a tax of one and one-half mills. This caused many of the association and municipal libraries to change their form of organization to school district. However, in 1921, effective in 1931, the people of Ohio voted a constitutional limitation of 15 mills--reduced to 10 mills in 1934-- on all real property, making this apply also to school districts. When this occurred, public libraries supported by real property tax lost their support. Theoretically, they were entitled to support if they could get it, but other political subdivisions could not be expected to share the funds they received within the 15 mill limitation. During 1930, the Ohio Library Association Legislation Committee worked hard to persuade Governor Cooper to call a special session of the Legislature to consider the possibility of extending for the biennium the exemption expiring at the end of 1930. However, the amendment took effect on January 1, 1931.

General tax revision had begun several years earlier and the only hope for libraries seemed to be somewhere within the work of the Special Joint Taxation Committee whose chairman was the newly elected Senator Robert A. Taft. The first committee bill to be introduced was Senate Bill 323 to tax intangible personal property at classified rates. The bill was signed by Governor White on June 29, 1931. During 1932, a Hamilton County court declared three sections of Senate Bill 323 unconstitutional, which automatically held up payment of tax money by county auditors to public libraries. A lengthy appeal followed, and on February 7, 1933, the State Supreme Court upheld the lower courts. This decision required that new legislation be proposed. Senate Bills 30 and 239 provided permanent library support, and mandated that any library participating in the distribution of intangible tax must open its doors to all county residents. The number of libraries increased from 197 in 1934 to 280 in 1947.

In 1935, the 91st General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 for the first limited state aid program for public libraries. Until 1973, the State Library Board used state aid grants to extend and improve public library services. A new state aid program was authorized by the General Assembly in 1969, which has been used to support regional library systems, interlibrary loan services, and services to the blind and physically handicapped.

In 1945, House Bill 35 created the Ohio Library Survey commission. The Commission Report, issued January 15, 1947, recommended that all public libraries established after September 15, 1947, be on a countywide basis. Libraries already established would be permitted to continue, but the county would be the only taxing authority that could establish a new library. In 1977, the law was amended to revert to the 1947 status.

The Ohio Library Foundation was established in 1963. A 501(c)(3) charitable foundation, it serves to enhance college, public, school and special library services. The Foundation invites gifts and grants for library projects, research, publication, scholarships and other related library needs for which library funds may not be readily available.

In 1983, the intangibles tax was repealed, effective in calendar year 1986. House Bill 291 created the Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF) to replace this tax, and authorized appointment of a committee to recommend the means for distributing the fund. The LLGSF represents 6.3% of the total state income tax collection.

The Public Library Financing and Support Committee issued a report, which contained a distribution formula for the LLGSF, which establishes how the fund is paid out to counties. County budget commissions establish distribution to the libraries within each county. This formula was incorporated in House Bill 146, which was passed by the General Assembly in May 1985, and signed into law by Governor Celeste on July 12, 1985.

On January 1, 1993, the Ohio Library Association, the Ohio Library Trustee Association and the Ohio Friends of the Library officially formed a federation, the Ohio Library Council. Each organization maintains its own set of bylaws and elects members to the OLC Board of Trustees.

Starting in 1994, the state's biennium budget "temporarily" reduced the 6.3% LLGSF level to 5.7%, and in June of 1995, 5.7% was written into permanent law. Also in 1995, the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN) was funded by the legislature. The network links all public libraries electronically, provides access to databases, and insures equity of access to information for all Ohioans.

On June 30, 2007, Governor Ted Strickland signed into law the state's FY 08-09 biennium budget and, with it, began a new era of anticipated stability and the opportunity for growth in state funding for Ohio's public libraries. As of January 2008, Ohio's libraries were funded through 2.22% of the state's total general revenue tax fund (GRF). The new funding source broadened the base of library funding to all general tax revenue for the state.

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In addition, Senate Bill 185 changed the name of the Library and Local Government Support Fund to the Public Library Fund (PLF) effective June 20, 2008. The name change more clearly identifies the purpose of these funds.

In September 2008, the nation's economy began heading toward its historic crash and, with it, went the budgets of every state government including Ohio's. It was clear that library funding from the state also was in a downward spiral. In January 2009, as Governor Strickland was putting the finishing touches on HB 1, the FY10-11 biennium budget, it was still unclear just how far the economy would deteriorate. The PLF was projected to lose 15-20% just based on the declining state revenue.

On June 19, 2009, as HB 1 languished in Conference Committee, Governor Strickland held his "Budget Framework" press conference where he announced a series of recommendations to the legislature to balance the state's budget. The two largest proposed cuts were a reduction in the state's employer contribution share of OPERS and a 30% reduction in funding to the PLF, in addition to the already projected 15-20% loss (projected to cost libraries more than \$200 million).

Library patrons were stunned and mounted an unprecedented response to this proposal. Quickly, the Ohio General Assembly rejected the Governor's proposal. Instead, legislators reduced the PLF funding percentage from 2.22% to 1.97% of the GRF. The result of this was an 18% loss in funding in 2009 for public libraries. The decline in state funding for public libraries continued in 2010 because state revenues did not rebound. As of December 2010, public libraries received nearly 23% less than they did in 2008.

Beginning in 2011, the PLF finally started to experience a small amount of growth. However, the state was still experiencing a significant projected budget deficit fueled primarily by Medicaid and education costs. Again, the PLF was a target for reduction, in FY12 and FY13 the PLF was frozen at 2010 levels and then cut 5%. In addition, the FY12-13 biennium budget legislation required that the existing 2.22% PLF percentage be recalculated for the FY14-15 budget on June 30, 2013. The expectation of the Office of Budget and Management and General Assembly was that the reset allocation would provide a restoration of some modest growth in the PLF to off-set the decline that resulted from temporary cuts and freezes in recent years.

Unfortunately, the date used to reset the PLF percentage was just prior to the passage of sweeping tax reforms when the PLF was at a low point and the state's revenue was at a high point. The PLF percentage was reset to 1.66% of the GRF. As a result, Ohio's public libraries experienced another reduction in revenue in 2014 instead of the growth projected in budget documents.

In 2014, the OLC and Ohio's public libraries began a statewide campaign to educate legislators and members of the media on state funding for Ohio's public libraries and the services they provide. As a result of that campaign, the Ohio General Assembly decided to restore some funding to the PLF. The legislature temporarily increased the PLF percentage of the GRF from 1.66% to 1.7% for the fiscal year FY16 and FY17 biennium. This increase coupled with the growth in the economy resulted in a 10.4% increase in 2015. However, this was not the case for 2016 as the anticipated modest growth was not fully realized as state revenues in 2016 came in below estimates and state funding for public libraries decreased.

In February 2017, Gov. John Kasich's state budget proposal included returning the PLF to 1.66% of the state's GRF as dictated by statute. However, as the state budget bill (HB 49) worked its way through the Ohio General Assembly, the OLC's advocacy efforts resulted in having the PLF set in temporary law at 1.68% of the GRF in the state's FY18-19 budget (effective July 2017).



## Appendix G LIBRARY ACRONYMS

ALA	American Library Association
ALAO	Academic Library Association of Ohio
ALTA	American Library Trustee Association
ASIS	American Society for Information Science
CALICO	Columbus Area Library and Information Council
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
INFOhio	Automation network of school libraries
LJ	<i>Library Journal</i>
LLGSF	Library and Local Government Support Fund
LSCA	Library Services and Construction Act
MVL	Miami Valley Libraries
NEO-RLS	Northeast Ohio Regional Library System
NORWELD	Northwest Regional Library System
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center
OCLIS	Ohio Council on Library and Information Societies
OELMA	Ohio Educational Library Media Association
OFL	Ohio Friends of the Library
OhioLINK	Automation network of state university and college libraries
OIF	Office of Intellectual Freedom of ALA
OLC	Ohio Library Council
OLTA	Ohio Library Trustee Association
OPLIN	Ohio Public Library Information Network
ORALL	Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries
PLA	Public Library Association
PLF	Public Library Fund (originally the LLGSF)
SERLS	Southeast Ohio Regional Library System
SLA	Special Libraries Association
SLO	State Library of Ohio
SLOLINE	State Library of Ohio electronic mail system
SWON	Southwest Ohio and Neighboring Libraries
ULC	Urban Library Council

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# H Appendix H OLC INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM POLICY

## I. PREAMBLE

The Ohio Library Council is concerned with the freedom of all members of a democratic society to examine what they will in the course of making the social, educational, and political judgments upon which that society is based. Libraries provide to a free society the defense necessary against pressures toward conformity. Libraries enrich their communities through provision of recreational reading, listening, and viewing materials for a wide variety of tastes and interests. Libraries provide students and/ or scholars with ideas and information concerning current, and perhaps controversial, issues. Library employees should deem their freedom, and that of libraries and their users, of the utmost importance to the continued existence of democracy.

Libraries enrich the communities they serve by providing open meeting room space, programs/services, computer and Internet access.

## II. AUTHORITY

The Board of Directors of the Ohio Library Council endorses the American Library Association's

- Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations
- Freedom to Read Statement
- Freedom to View Statement
- Code of Ethics
- Libraries: An American Value
- All Policy Statements and Resolutions

as delineated in the latest edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*.

The Board of Directors empowers the Intellectual Freedom Committee to investigate and report to the Chairperson of the Council and the Board of Directors about problems arising in the areas of concern described below. Such investigations and reports shall follow the "Procedures for Handling Reported Violations of Intellectual Freedom" adopted by the Intellectual Freedom Committee and the OLC Board of Directors.

Reports to the Board will normally be given at regularly scheduled meetings, but the Chairperson, or an authorized deputy, shall call special meetings as authorized under Article 3, Section 3.07, of the Code of Regulations of the Ohio Library Council in circumstances which necessitate immediate action.

## III. AREAS OF CONCERN

- A. The OLC is concerned with actual or proposed restrictions on library materials or on the selection judgments, order procedures, or administrative practices of library employees, originating with individuals, voluntary committees, or administrative and governmental authorities.
- B. The OLC believes that every library, in order to strengthen its own selection process and to provide an objective basis for evaluation of that process, should develop an official statement of policy for the selection of library materials based on the Library Bill of Rights. In making decisions about how to offer access to information, each library should consider its mission, goals, objectives, cooperative agreements, and the needs of the entire community it serves.
- C. The OLC is concerned about legislation or policies at the state, local, or school district level which might place library collections in jeopardy or which might restrict, prejudice, or otherwise interfere with selection, acquisition, or other professional activities of library employees. At the same time, the OLC

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is supportive of legislation or policies at the state, local, or school district level which would strengthen the position of libraries and other media of communication as instruments of knowledge and culture in a free society.

- D. The OLC believes that its members should be free to exercise their constitutional rights as individuals to express their views in public on any subject. Members should not be constrained by the possibility that expression of unpopular views may result in loss of employment. Members should, however, make a clear distinction between their personal views and the policies of the library or institution by which they are employed.
- E. The OLC believes that each library user has a right to privacy with regard to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired.
- F. The OLC believes in full and free access to the Internet in libraries and opposes all attempts by federal and state governments, or their agencies, to impose filtering on libraries.



