



VIRGINIA PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEE HANDBOOK | ADVISORY BOARDS



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This handbook was created utilizing the 2012 Public Library Advisory Board Handbook produced by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC).

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MESSAGE FROM SANDRA G. TREADWAY

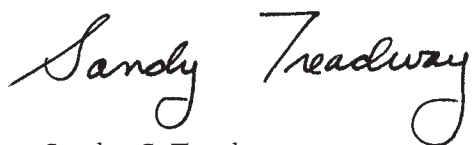
Dear Virginia Advisory Board Trustees,

The Library of Virginia is pleased to release the first edition of the *Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook – Advisory Boards*.

This handbook is intended to assist both new and experienced advisory board trustees in carrying out their vital roles as connectors between the library, local government, and the community. Public libraries today provide many services traditionally associated with libraries across the years, but they have also added new programs and activities to meet the diverse needs of their communities. Workforce development, school readiness, digital literacy, online learning, community engagement—these are just some of the areas in which libraries are helping their communities stay current and informed. Your support and advocacy of these critical library services are needed now more than ever, as is your perspective on ways that local libraries can continue to grow to keep their communities strong.

Your service as a public library trustee is essential to the health of our public libraries and the vitality of Virginia's communities. We applaud your commitment to free and open access to library services and thank you for investing your time and talent to ensure that Virginia's public libraries remain vibrant assets for all in our commonwealth.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandy Treadway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sandy" and last name "Treadway" clearly distinguishable.

Sandra G. Treadway
Librarian of Virginia
December 2020



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Library of Virginia wishes to express deep appreciation to all who assisted in the preparation of the *Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook – Advisory Boards*.

There are a variety of library boards working with public libraries today. They include, but are not limited to, governing boards (common in public library history), advisory boards, Friends of the Public Library Boards (Friends), boards for age-level functions (e.g., teen boards) and public library foundation boards. In addition, many public libraries are members of consortia, collaboratives, and partnerships, and these relationships often bring board activities and responsibilities.

One of the most important relationships, however, is the advisory board and public library relationship, which now exists in a large number of public libraries. Although there has been a great deal written in the last few decades on advisory boards in the public sector in general, very little information is published on advisory boards for public libraries. The Library of Virginia is committed to supporting public library advisory boards in Virginia with the publication of the *Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook – Advisory Boards*.

This handbook could not have been created without the *Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) Public Library Advisory Board Handbook*, which served as the template for this publication, and without which this document could not have been produced. Special thanks go to the creator of that document, Dr. Julie Todaro, and to TSLAC staff member Jennifer Peters. The cooperation and assistance of public library directors with advisory boards within Virginia have been invaluable. Crucial contributions were made by Sonia Antoine-Alcantara, Jennifer L. Carroll, Eva Poole, and Elizabeth Sensabaugh. Thanks also need be given to the Library of Virginia's Kim Armentrout for her contributions in launching this initiative.

We would also like to thank communications manager Ann Henderson and graphic designers Christine Sisic and Amy Winegardner, as well as buyer specialist Paranita Carpenter.

Finally, although there are few published monographs on public library advisory boards, there are many advisory board documents and examples linked from library websites throughout the United States. A number of these documents are cited in an annotated resources list in the appendices.

Revised by Reagen A. Thalacker, Public Library Consultant
December 2020

I. 21ST-CENTURY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Public libraries, a sometimes quiet but always major force in communities, have been supporting their constituents for hundreds of years. In service to their communities, they provide a destination, resources, and services for education, recreation, information, and culture. Many sizes and types of public libraries exist to serve all ages and populations. Public libraries support informal, formal, and lifelong learning. They excel in acquiring and organizing resources to meet needs and provide a unique balance of meeting changing needs by providing new, cutting-edge opportunities. Public libraries partner with other entities to expand potential and seek collaborative opportunities to maximize their support for communities. A major strength of yesterday's, today's, and tomorrow's public libraries is a vision for the future with a commitment to preserving the past.

Constant 21st-century changes in the public arena, however, are forcing many public libraries to rethink their vision and mission as well as their roles and responsibilities in the community. Today's public libraries are struggling though still committed to their communities. They are restructuring their image and "re-branding" to reposition themselves within city and county government and community life. These changes emphasize the value, especially the economic value, libraries bring to their communities.

Today's Public Libraries and Library Staff

- Provide a variety of reference services and materials in a wide range of formats
- Teach patrons in point-of-use, in person, virtually, and in small and large groups in "classroom" settings encompassing a wide variety of ages, levels, and styles of learning
- Select, make accessible (in numerous formats), and create print and online documents, guides, and resources to meet patrons' needs
- Maintain all traditional, as well as 21st-century, toolbox competencies for staff, including high-end productivity software and use of web-delivered resources
- Address education and training in hardware, software, teaching and learning, general management issues, and technology issues, such as hardware set-up, maintenance, and networking
- Maintain competencies, learning, and development in a continuous process
- Work virtually, digitally, and in person
- Count and track many more things today in a wide variety of usage categories, including books and periodicals through physical or in-person ownership, as well as access to virtual and digital information and materials delivered over the web



Library supporters are critical to the public library's success. Advisory boards, foundation boards, and Friends' groups are working with governing entities and library managers to better define or reposition the 21st-century library as an ongoing critical community service. Public libraries in the 21st century must focus on the following: marketing their role in supporting small businesses and community enterprise; marketing their staff expertise as information specialists; involvement in and support for community workforce activities, such as job fairs, career information, green and/or sustainable programs/services; and the public library's significant role in the support of both informal and formal learning, which now includes a formal educational support role for both in-person and distance learning by their community members.

21st-Century Library Roles

- Public libraries today aren't necessarily in new roles, but are emphasizing important community roles that include support for and services that enhance early literacy, such as parent and family programs and services for babies, general outreach to both parents and caregivers, training for child-care providers, school readiness, and academic success.
- Public library locations assist in revitalizing community areas through downtown, central, or main street locations; mixed-use settings; commercial or for-profit locations; and joint or contiguous settings.
- Public libraries provide critical small business support through access (in library or at desktops) to online subscription content with significant, vetted resources, rather than only broad, web-delivered content.
- Public libraries support and provide workforce development through access to the web, technology, and information literacy training, as well as technology hardware and software training and adult literacy initiatives, such as English language training, career workshops, early reading initiatives, employment skills, job identification, and application support.

One of the primary jobs of public libraries, library staff, and library advocates today is to make the case by explaining exactly what libraries are and what they do. Although all libraries have to "explain" who they are and what they do, often public libraries have to continuously reinvent themselves and often compete for local dollars. To "prove our worth," public libraries need to define why they exist in the 21st-century economy.

What We Know We Can Say

- Libraries are public education.
- Public libraries are fundamental to public education and provide both print and online resources to inform and educate millions of constituents at every stage of living and learning.
- Libraries organize and offer resources for school curricula, provide business information to thousands of self-employed and small-business owners, make available authoritative health and medical resources to support public need and the education of health sciences professionals, and help in just about every area of learning.
- Libraries support in-person and distance learners, including the casual learner building a deck for his or her home; the individual applying for a job or trying to learn new skills; the college freshman writing a paper; the researcher investigating quantum physics; or the child discovering the wonderful world of dinosaurs. In short, libraries make advancement possible.
- Library usage is at an all-time high in spite of those who think every answer can be found through Google.
- From the need for accurate and published digital content to technical support, from traditional learning materials to those expensive reference collections that can only be afforded through public access, libraries are needed more than ever before.
- In the near future, libraries will play an even more vital role in linking people to government health and human services because many forms, applications, and basic information may soon be accessible primarily online.
- As most local, state, and federal government information becomes available primarily online, libraries will be one of the few places where those without access to computers or who need technical assistance will be able to access and get one-on-one help in using this vital information.

II. PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARDS

Most public libraries throughout the United States owe their very existence to the commitment and active participation of local community members, who, through hard work and dedication, established libraries in cities, counties, and hometowns throughout the country. Providing more than “just fundraising” for many decades, these individuals volunteered their time and sought locations, identified and moved thousands of materials, donated, and, when needed, built furniture, rallied other community members, advocated appointed and elected officials, and petitioned for revenue streams. Many individuals, committed to the process and the results, have then become members and officers of library boards and Friends and volunteer groups.

Virginia public libraries are commonly founded in this manner even today. This handbook recognizes the efforts of local and regional volunteers and advocates who have extended and continue to extend themselves on behalf of library service to their communities. It is designed to provide information and support to those volunteers and dedicated individuals who have championed libraries and then joined boards and support groups to continue to make a difference. The handbook is designed to help library directors plan their own productive, rewarding collaborations with their boards.

The Handbook

- Provides background on advisory boards in general and those community service opportunities available in advisory boards
- Defines what a library board is
- Helps board trustees understand their positions in the context of current public library philosophy and practice in the United States
- Helps board trustees understand the context of a public library organization and practice in the Commonwealth of Virginia
- Seeks to explain board trustee processes to encourage interested individuals to join and participate in the important act of giving and providing service to local libraries
- Helps board trustees understand their roles and responsibilities as trustees and/or officers of the board
- Helps board trustees realize that they are part of a vast network of persons, institutions, and associations committed to the ideal that a democracy is most appreciated and best served by community members empowered by access to, and a free and independent pursuit of, information and ideas



PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARDS IN VIRGINIA

Public libraries in Virginia are the responsibility of local governments. As organizational entities, libraries fall into four categories:

- Regional libraries (a library established by two or more political subdivisions that join in maintaining a library system under the terms of a contract)
- County libraries
- City libraries
- Town libraries

The *Code of Virginia* requires that all regional libraries and all counties, cities, and towns govern their public libraries through boards of trustees, with the exception of “(i) any city or town with a manager, (ii) any county with a county manager, county executive, urban county manager, or urban county executive form of government,

- any county that has adopted a charter, or
- the Counties of Caroline, Chesterfield, and Shenandoah, by virtue of this chapter.” These excepted counties, cities, or towns may, if they wish, establish either governing or advisory library boards.

The *Code* also provides the legal framework for counties, cities, and towns that have not established public libraries to appropriate funds for the support and maintenance of library service operated and conducted by a company, society, or association. The boards of these nonprofit, private organizations are appointed by the membership.

Va. Code §42.1-33. Power of local governments to establish and support libraries

- The governing body of any city, county or town shall have the power to establish a free public library for the use and benefit of its residents. The governing body shall provide sufficient support for the operation of the library by levying a tax therefor, either by special levy or as a fund of the general levy of the city, county or town. The word “support” as used in this chapter shall include but is not limited to, purchase of land for library buildings, purchase or erection of buildings for library purposes, purchase of library books, materials and equipment, compensation of library personnel, and all maintenance expenses for library property and equipment. Funds appropriated or contributed for public library purposes shall constitute a separate fund and shall not be used for any but public library purposes.
- An advisory board has only those legal responsibilities granted by the local government. The *Code of Virginia* does not specifically address advisory library boards. The advisory board generally makes recommendations and acts as a liaison between the library, the local government, and the community to promote the library's services and programs. In reality, the power and authority of an advisory board may fall anywhere along a continuum running from truly advisory to that of an almost-governing board. What the board can or cannot do is determined by the ordinance that established it and the understanding reached over time between the board and the local government. As board trustees and government officials change over time, it is necessary for both groups to maintain such understandings and communicate them clearly.

III. LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD REQUIREMENTS

Public Library Advisory Boards DO

- Advocate for library support, including seeking support for annual or operational and capital funding
- Advocate for support of the library for local, state, regional, and national legislative initiatives
- Promote library services and programs
- Assist library management in developing policies and budget proposals
- Provide support for management initiatives and decisions
- Advise their governing body on actions to take for the library

Because they are “advisory” only in nature, governing bodies have the ultimate authority and can accept, reject, or amend advisory board advice.

Advisory Boards DO NOT

- Govern the library
- Hire, manage, or fire the library manager/director
- Hire, manage, or fire other library staff members
- Make decisions concerning policies, budgets, hiring practices, salaries, and other library management tasks and issues
- Governing structures may ask advisory boards for their input or opinion on several activities given the nature of their work with library management.

Advisory Board Activities

- Input on library management performance evaluation
- Information on advocacy initiatives
- Clarification on library policies (e.g., access, confidentiality)

Advisory Board's Work

- Attend and participate in board activities and events
- Serve in an advisory capacity to the governing body in matters that pertain to the library
- Serve as a liaison and representative from the community on library matters
- Advocate for the library for support from governing entities
- Support public library vision and values, such as intellectual freedom and the right to access content
- A complete list of advisory board roles and responsibilities appears later in this section.



BUILDING AND SUSTAINING A PRODUCTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

Planning for productivity on boards is a combination of the “right” board trustees being appointed, skillful orientation, nurturing board trustees, and training and ongoing development for board trustees. This process is built on consistent communication about the library that includes information relevant to their library from the professional literature, local information relevant to advising the library, and advocacy content to assist board trustees in successfully communicating the role of the library in the community. To sustain board membership, build a sound, cohesive working team. To ensure that board trustees are “up to date,” a sound communication plan is needed. More specifically, make it available to them in the appropriate modes and methods for maximum involvement.

The professional literature on nonprofit environments has much to say about successful boards. Clearly, an interest in, and commitment to, the community in general are the most important credentials for board service.

The literature also encourages organizations to, when possible given their umbrella organizations, communicate the need for boards to be both constituency and competency based. To this end, library managers should prepare a board profile for the governing authority who appoints advisory board trustees. This profile (often called a “wish list”) should identify interests and needs for the overall board makeup. It should also include definitions and explanations and outline the expertise of “retiring” or exiting board trustees.

Given the reality that many advisory boards are appointed by a variety of people and may be political in nature, it is important to communicate the value of, along with the interest and commitment of, constituency boards that can include:

- Board trustees who represent the diversity of the community
- Board trustees who represent or speak for community members by geographic location
- Board trustees who represent or speak for target populations

When looking at “competency-based” boards, definitions should include knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes; seeking board trustees who have unique or specific knowledge and/or skills and abilities and/or education and training. These competencies would include, for example, expertise in management, general or community leadership, librarianship, public entity or government agency expertise, legal issues (specifically nonprofit legal expertise), a vision for and commitment to the library’s vision and mission, funding or development experience, public relations and marketing, and experience with volunteerism. Additional competency areas include knowledge of the community and broad knowledge of and success in working in the community for other nonprofits, as well as successful entrepreneurial work and successful for-profit business management.

For both types of boards, committee or project experience, productivity, and specific attributes such as values should also be considered.

Further, what makes a board productive, active, and engaged?

Board productivity for all types of boards and board trustees should also be identified very specifically to give board trustees a “real” look at what is needed by the library for active and engaged trustees. Task statements or job descriptions should take care to include reasonable activity levels for these committed volunteers. Productivity and activity statements should include a range of characteristics and requirements.

Productivity

- Attendance and activity in regularly scheduled meetings
- Willingness to assume a board leadership or officer role
- Attendance at library community events
- Participation in basic board communication during and between meetings and events, and use of the library board communication plan in general
- Acceptance and activity in special projects

Activity

- Knowledge of and a commitment to promoting the library’s resources and services to the community
- Active participation in library and board processes, such as strategic and/or long-range planning and fundraising
- Activity in advocacy and political processes for local, state, regional, and national levels of legislation

- Library support such as local annual funding requests, state advocacy for library funding, and state advocacy for state agency initiatives designed to support public libraries and local communities
- Assistance in identifying a network of community members to actively support the library

Characteristics of Successful Boards

- Board trustees who practice a division of board activities to use trustee expertise as well as to pace work and distribute the workload
- Board officers who complete roles and responsibilities, but who also use other board trustees for delegation and support
- Board officers who use communication plans and rules of communication and engagement to run meetings

Library directors should seek to create profiles of board preferences and styles.

Trustee Profiles

- Preferred modes and methods of board trustee communication (Do you prefer email, fax, regular mail?)
- Resources needed (Do you need to be paired with staff for their assistance in board activities? Introduced to community members with unique information?)
- Timelines for preferred communication (Do you prefer I communicate to you weekly? Monthly? And what time of day is the best time to work with you/provide you with information?)
- Information distribution for sharing information and knowledge (How long do

you need to review documents before the board meeting, budget hearing, etc.?)

- Document style and preferences for learning/learning styles (Do you prefer a summary statement or executive summary at the beginning of the document? Should I use general terms and not use library terms or use them and provide a glossary? Would you like a legend of library terms included with each report?)
- Illustration of information for gaining knowledge, explanation, persuasion, and influence (Do you like charts and graphs? Pictures? Data only? Narrative? Technical writing? Personal or patron stories? Comparisons to other libraries? Other public entities? Do you like examples throughout the document? Past statistics? How far back should I go in comparing or presenting need?)



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD TRUSTEES

Advisory boards exist to advise, recommend, and advocate to the policy-making governing body, such as a city council, a city manager, or a county commissioner's court. In some environments where joint use or partnership organizations span policy-making entities, the advisory board may be reporting to (or advocating for) the library to more than one entity. For example, the board may report to a city council and a county commissioner's court. In this case, the county contracts with the city library for service for county constituents without library service.

Typically, organizations have general roles and responsibilities for advisory board trustees. While these statements can also be placed in a job description, finding sample job descriptions should be done with care as the majority of sample documents available are more for governing boards than advisory boards. While there is overlap, samples should be carefully vetted to make sure roles and responsibilities, either by themselves or in a job description, are not governing or managerial in nature.



Roles and Responsibilities

- Provide input and recommendations, as invited and appropriate, in support of the governing authority's interviewing and selection of the library director, library director orientation and training, and performance evaluation of the library director
- Assist the library director in determining the library's vision and mission
- Participate in short-term, long-term, and strategic planning
- Advocate for adequate resources
- Assist in managing resources effectively and efficiently by providing guidance and recommendations to library management
- Be familiar with and assist the library in communicating about resources, services, and public image
- Provide a forum for public communication on library issues
- Assist the library in assessment
- Report library activities and issues back to the governing authority
- Assist in succession planning for new trustees by identifying and motivating others to serve on the advisory board when slots become available
- Maintain knowledge of existing and new community populations
- Participate in processes to ensure effective board teamwork
- Stay current on library trends and issues
- Be familiar with the library and its policies and procedures
- Participate in trustee orientation as well as continuing education and development of the board

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

XYZ Library

<http://www.xxxx.xxxxx>

Advisory Board

Community Name (City, County, etc.)

Library Vision, Mission

Position

The advisory board of the XYZ Public Library exists to advise, recommend, and advocate for the library to the policy-making governing body, in the City of XYZ. The board supports the work of the library and provides leadership to the library director as well as leadership to the community regarding library services and resources. Although the operations are managed by the library director, the board-director relationship is a partnership.

Specific board trustee responsibilities include the following:

- Specific roles and responsibilities of board trustees
- The services and resources available in the library
- Governing authority reporting structure for advisory boards
- Community members (all service areas)
- Board processes, such as effective teamwork
- Local, regional, and statewide resources and/or other libraries near or contiguous to your service area
- Liability issues for advisory board trustees
- Serving as an advisor to the library director

Fundraising

Advisory board trustees may assist the library in development and fundraising activities that include assisting the library director, the library foundation board, or other groups by making annual gifts, by identifying potential contributors (e.g., individuals, foundations, organizations), or by assisting in special projects, such as book sales and fundraising activities.

Board Terms/Attendance

Advisory board trustees will serve a ##-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term. Board meetings will be held (e.g., quarterly) and any board committee meetings will be (e.g., held in coordination with full board meetings). Board trustees must attend a minimum of ## board meetings to retain membership on the board.

Board Trustee Qualifications

Enthusiasm for volunteer service, commitment to a literate community, passion for the vision and mission of the library, and a successful track record of community leadership, including board leadership, are all desirable. Selected board trustees will possess specific competencies in business, finance, or the law and knowledge of and/or experience with area populations. Personal attributes desired include integrity and credibility.

The XYZ Library in the City of XYZ is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and seeks board trustees who represent every part of the community.

Service on the XYZ Public Library advisory board is without remuneration. Board trustees may, however, be reimbursed for certain expenses, e.g., travel to and from meetings and accommodation costs not to exceed \$\$\$.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIBRARY BOARD TRUSTEES

The most successful board trustees in organizations are provided with an extensive education, including an in-depth orientation and ongoing training and development throughout their board tenure. Board trustee education, as all education, has changed dramatically in the last decade, and as more and more information is available electronically, and often ONLY electronically, it is imperative that board education change with new educational models and delivery systems. However, much of the educational process must be balanced to include the variety of delivery modes and methods that meet needs of diverse board trustees who may be technologically challenged or still more print-based.

Library directors should identify appropriate content, but spend as much time matching content and learning activities to staff learning styles and preferences. Directors should focus on active and collaborative learning techniques and activities and consider providing technology workstations in libraries where advisory board trustees can complete self-directed learning or learn with peers.

Although the primary responsibility for their education rests with the library director, others that should be included in the education process are representatives or designees of the governing

authority, other advisory board trustees for the library (such as the Friends board and any foundation board), workshops and programs from association meetings, and, as appropriate, staff members. Another effective educational process for board training is the identification and assignment of other board trustees as overall mentors to individual board trustees. If most board trustees are new or not able to mentor in general board activities, individuals could be identified to mentor in specific areas. This type of mentor assignment works best if boards have included competency-based trustee appointments.

In addition, library directors should provide board trustees with websites that will add both information and value to board education. These should include local government websites, state agency web content, state and national association web content, and related websites that provide background and updated information on relevant legal issues, information and data on libraries, and library supporter websites, such as United for Libraries [see Resources for more information]. While these websites provide a wealth of information, care should be taken to distinguish trustee or governing board content from advisory board content.



ORIENTATION

A critical element of education is an orientation for new board trustees. Orientation introduces or acquaints board trustees to initial content necessary to be successful for the first few months. Orientation is NOT a brief introduction to everything, but rather to a limited number of areas new trustees must be aware of immediately. Orientation differs from training and education in its content and delivery. It is typically the first step in education.

One technique in the educational process is to divide the orientation process into two phases.

Phase I should be an advisory board orientation geared toward the first meeting, first month content, and communicating the top elements or activities taking place in the first board meeting. Phase II includes more in-depth content on policies, planning, and advocacy. Typically, chunks or packets of information are divided into the following categories and small group or one-on-one teaching styles are employed.

A brief look at Phase I and Phase II highlights can be found in the following callout boxes.

Phase I

Each new advisory board trustee should receive a print or online notebook containing the following information:

- Library vision, mission, and goals and a very brief introduction to resources and services typically accomplished through a behind-the-scenes library tour with an emphasis on people
- A copy of, or link to, this Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook – Advisory Boards
- Board bylaws
- Board trustee roles and responsibilities
- Board officer roles and responsibilities
- Names and addresses of other board trustees
- Elected officials who form the governing authority over the library
- Description of library programs and services
- Communication processes between the library director, the advisory board, and the board trustees
- Timeline and calendar for board activities
- Agenda of the first meeting with minutes from previous meeting

Phase II

- Library information/content/data
- Budgets
- Staff information
- Policy manuals
- Promotional flyers and brochures
- Past agendas and minutes
- Friends of the Library officers
- History of the library
- Definitions for the board including what an advisory board does and doesn't do and how an advisory board differs from a governing board (trustees)
- Administrative issues such as paperwork, board documents to form the core of educational materials for the first board year, and goals and objectives for the coming year
- Library policies that include basic or foundation policy descriptions
- Library projects such as facilities upgrades, strategic plans, development issues, statistics, community profiles, collection plans, and a current SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats)

DEVELOPMENT

Development, an integral part of the educational process, includes teaching and learning opportunities where the content is focused on a change in attitude or values. Development for board trustees may include workshops on the values and challenges of intellectual freedom; advocating for library issues; library policies designed to support confidentiality of information; and codes, guidelines, and standards for libraries, such as the American Library Association's *Code of Ethics* or Internet policies.

Just as orientation is planned to include certain content, development (or changes in attitudes or values) is best learned in settings that employ case scenarios, interactive activities, or discussion opportunities. Also, as in orientation and training, development is critical to the success of board trustees and is primarily the responsibility of the library director. Some would argue that after orientation, development is the most critical area for board training in order to prepare board trustees to advocate for the library.



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

- Time on the board's agenda for the review of programs and services offered by the library so that each board trustee is aware of these activities
- Time on the agenda for brainstorming and for exploring the backgrounds and talents of the board trustees (and staff) to identify strengths
- Completion of training courses such as those provided by the Library of Virginia's Library Development and Networking Division (LDND)
- Attendance at state, regional, or local meetings and workshops
- Attendance at conferences that focus on issues related to the library's future success
- Access to and discussion of current state and national professional literature, as well as information and reports provided by the Library of Virginia
- Advisory board development should align with the board's needs but also take into account the standards for library boards outlined in *Planning for Library Excellence: Virginia Public Library Standards*.

LIABILITY OF LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD TRUSTEES

Advisory board trustees typically do not participate in the governing activities associated with governing boards or trustees. That is, library advisory board trustees do not make policies for the library or financial or employment decisions. If advisory board business is carried out as policies dictate, by providing only advice and recommendations, then liability issues may not be a problem.

Working closely with the library director, they may, however:

- Report on library activities and needs to the governing body
- Review existing, revised, or new policies
- Assist with the justification, design, and advocacy for the library budget proposal
- Advocate, in general, for libraries at the local, regional, state, or national level
- Recommend a course of action to the library's governing body
- Recommend policy adoption to the library's governing body

Although these advisory activities do not constitute the type or level of decision that incurs liability for these public boards, the decision to contract for liability insurance should be made in concert with the governing authority. If the board is concerned about the issue of liability for actions made in the execution of board roles and responsibilities, trustees should ask the following questions of the library director, the governing body, and/or their own insurance carriers.

Questions Trustees Should Ask

- In the event of a lawsuit against the advisory board, does the governing body's legal representation represent the advisory board?
- Does any existing personal liability insurance a board trustee might have cover their advisory board work?
- Is there a recommended personal or individual professional liability insurance that might cover board activities?
- Will the governing body purchase liability insurance for the advisory board trustees?

Processes Advisory Boards Should Always Follow

- Identify the process for clear tracking and recordkeeping regarding recommendations made by the advisory board vs. decisions made the governing body
- Ensure that current, well-written policies are in place and that all policies have been approved by the governing body
- Follow all rules and regulations regarding open meetings and discussion and recommendations for board activities
- Ensure that advisory board documents include ethical statements for board behaviors that include conflict of interest and recommendations vs. decisions

The library director should take great care NOT to expose advisory board trustees to liability, but advisory board trustees should seek clarification if ambiguity exists.

ETHICS STATEMENT FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD TRUSTEES

Over the years, a number of general or model behavioral or performance statements have been made available through the American Library Association (ALA). These statements have been designed for library board trustees or governing board trustees, but are applicable to advisory board trustees as well. The most recent ALA statement is even more general. As such, it is applicable for not only governing and/or advisory board trustees (officers and trustees), but also for library management and library employees. The policy can and should apply to additional individuals or groups, which include volunteers, Friends' group members, and foundation board members. For example, this author has added "volunteers" to the statements as a category of people who should be ethical and sign "conflict of interest" statements. If libraries use volunteers, volunteers should be included in these processes and statements. If they don't use volunteers, these categories should be excerpted.

Another area for editing these statements to meet individual library needs includes the inclusion of appropriate titles. For example, the term "executive director," which appears frequently, in reality is not often used in libraries. Exact titles of trustees and employees, etc., should be used.

The two statements that are provided in this handbook are interrelated in that a general ethics statement outlines general ethical behavior. An element of ethical behavior is awareness and avoidance of a conflict of interest. Both statements have been edited by the original handbook author to make them broader and more applicable to more individuals and groups.



SAMPLE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND LIBRARY EMPLOYEE ETHICS POLICY

The XYZ Public Library is dependent on the trust of its community to successfully achieve its mission; therefore, it is crucial that all board trustees, employees, and volunteers conduct business on behalf of the XYZ Public Library with the highest level of integrity avoiding any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

Guiding Principles:

- Board trustees and employees should uphold the integrity of the XYZ Public Library and must perform their duties impartially and diligently.
- Board trustees and employees should not engage in discrimination of any kind including that based on race, class, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or belief system.
- Board trustees and employees should protect and uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in their use of the library's resources. A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Board trustees and employees should avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities, or financial affairs are, or are likely to be perceived as, being in conflict with the best interests of the XYZ Public Library. Situations must be avoided in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the institution.
- Board trustees and employees should avoid having interests that may reasonably bring into question their ability to carry out the duties of their position in a fair, impartial, and objective manner. It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself or herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.
- Board trustees and employees should not knowingly act in any way that would reasonably be expected to create an impression among the public that they are engaged in conduct that violates their trust as board trustees or employees.
- Board trustees and employees should not use or attempt to use their position with the XYZ Public Library to obtain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others.
- Board trustees and employees should not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism.
- Board trustees and employees should not denigrate the organization or fellow board trustees or employees in any public arena. Board trustees and employees 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.

Therefore: To preserve and uphold the XYZ Public Library's reputation as an organization of unimpeachable integrity, each board trustee and employee will sign a "Conflict of Interest Statement" and an "Ethics Statement" at the beginning of each calendar year (and at the commencement of his or her service) during their tenure with the XYZ Public Library.

SAMPLE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND LIBRARY EMPLOYEE ETHICS POLICY

Compliance: If any board trustee or director appears to be in conflict of the “Guiding Principles” listed here, he or she will be asked to meet with the executive committee to discuss the issue. The executive committee will make a recommendation to the full board based on their findings. Employees who are, or appear to be, in conflict with the “Guiding Principles” will be asked to meet with the executive director, who will make a determination as to discipline or termination based on his or her findings.

<http://www.ala.org/united/trustees/policies>



CONFLICT OF INTEREST INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD TRUSTEES

Sample Board of Trustees and Library Employee Conflict of Interest Policy

Officers, Board Trustees, and Employees

No board trustee and/or employee of the XYZ Public Library shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation on the board or employment by or position in the library. Other than compensation, no employee shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her employment by the XYZ Public Library except through activities that may facilitate professional advancement or contribute to the profession, such as publications and professional service, and which have been fully disclosed to the board.

Each individual shall disclose to the board any personal interest that he or she may have in any matter pending before the board and shall refrain from participation in any decision on such matter.

Trustees of XYZ Public Library Board and/or employees shall refrain from obtaining any list of library patrons that result in personal benefit.

Statement of Associations

This is to certify that I, except as described on the reverse of this sheet, am not now nor at any time during the past year have been:

A participant, directly or indirectly, in any arrangement, agreement, investment, or other activity with any vendor, supplier, or other party doing business with XYZ Public Library that has resulted or could result in personal benefit to me.

Any exceptions to the above are stated on the reverse of this sheet with a full description of the transactions, whether direct or indirect, which I have (or have had during the past year) with persons or organizations having transactions with XYZ Public Library.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____

XYZ Public Library position: _____

<http://www.ala.org/united/trustees/policies>

BEST PRACTICES FOR ADVISORY BOARDS

There is a growing body of literature specific to advisory boards. In general, the following six areas are identified as critical to the success of boards. Library directors should create, share, and seek best practices in the following areas:

1. Communication

Advisory boards must have an infrastructure of communication that provides content to create and then maintain knowledgeable board trustees for each board activity (meetings, events, and advocacy activities), but also for the work that occurs between meetings, events, and activities for board officers, individual board trustees, and for any board subgroups, workgroups, or committees. While many board trustees today are technologically savvy, many may not be. Effective or best practices must include a balance or hybrid blend of print and online content and communication to meet the needs of all board trustees.

2. Management Documents

Board content comes in many forms and goes beyond the initial Phase I and Phase II orientation information. Library directors must organize, label, and create a library of management documents for board trustees to reference throughout their board tenure. While most library directors create content that is given to board trustees for home or off-site use, there is value in creating a space within the library where board trustees can not only use technology, but also store and reference management documents.

3. Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, Outcomes, and Workplan

Although the library has its vision, mission, and goals designed to guide the library overall, there is great value in using these documents as supporting infrastructure to create board



goals, outcomes, and workplans. Specific goals and outcomes for board trustees assist them in identifying tasks, prioritizing their work, and matching their work to what library needs and directions require. Building their goals and outcomes based on library goals and outcomes ensures an ongoing focus and increases the chances for board productivity. These directions and guidelines become content to use at board meetings and naturally become the jumping-off point for reporting board activities back to the governing body.

That being said, another reason for creating separate board goals and outcomes is that some governing bodies have standardized forms for boards to use for communication in general or for reporting. Maintaining board content in these formats provides a shortcut to preparing reporting for governing bodies.

4. Calendars (time management)

The Management Document workspace, the communication process and plan, and the goals and outcomes workplan create structures that strive to make the most effective use of the volunteers' limited time. Maximizing delivery, availability, and techniques for keeping up save time and energy in both the short term (for example, director and board trustee preparation for each board meeting) and the long term (e.g., compiling, tracking, reporting board business for library reporting, and the board reporting to the governing body).

These timesaving approaches, which can be assisted by a master calendar for board business, are created at the beginning of the board work year. They include, as well as emphasize, not only due dates for the library, but governing body timelines, draft dates and completion dates for content needed, board trustee timeline issues, and any dates needed for the actual creation, printing, or copying of content.

5. Job Descriptions (officers, trustees, teams, etc.)

Boards function better with general infrastructure from the organization (management documents, calendars, board goals, and outcomes) and individual statements identifying roles and responsibilities. Job descriptions for the board in general, individual officer responsibilities, and general board trustees, as well as descriptions outlining what subgroups such as committees might do are critical. In addition, special projects as well as scripts for specific activities should be created.

These might include:

- Board trustee outline for attending governing body budget hearings
- Committee member outline for a nominating committee's annual meeting
- Existing board trustees' roles in orienting new board trustees

6. Recognition

Building and motivating groups of volunteers

is an important part of a library director's job. These groups of volunteers include general library volunteers; organized, project, or task-specific volunteers; Friend's groups; other board trustees, such as foundation board members; and advisory board trustees. An important part of motivating and thus sustaining board trustees is a system of recognition for service.

Just like productive employees and managers, productive boards take time and energy. Although board trustees "aren't in it for the glory" and certainly not for the money, a good library director spends time deciding how to nurture and inform the board. A key element of this is board recognition and reward for service.

Although service is rewarding in itself and many think it should be its own reward, library directors should make every effort to recognize board trustee service. Suggestions for rewarding public entity board service include:

- Providing board trustees support, as needed, to gather information, complete tasks by identifying functions needing support, and pairing board trustees with individuals who can provide the specific support (Internet research, use of office productivity software, access to hardware, etc.) they need. (Resource people could include staff, volunteers, Friends members, previous board trustees, and current board trustees, as well as the library director.)
- Prominently displaying board trustee names and pictures within the library.
- Seeking display space in governing body offices (outside council chambers, commission newsletters, etc.) for advisory board membership.
- Seeking display space in the library's public area/environments for advisory board membership and service information.
- Providing a standard panel of pictures, names, and service information about the board for inclusion in all library informational and promotional materials.

- Advertising and highlighting the importance of board projects separately from service and including these activities in press releases to media.
- Seeking opportunities to use board trustees to lead or assist in introducing, kicking off library activities to recognize trustees, and service, as well as illustrating board support.
- Publicly thanking board trustees annually, but more important, and, as appropriate, at every library activity and opportunity, including library interactions at governing body activities.
- Offering library programs or presentations to board trustees when possible. For example, if an advisory board trustee is a Rotarian, then the library director might present an annual program on local archives and history to that organization.

BASIC BOARD BUSINESS PROCESSES

All groups need to identify those business practices that, when used, organize what they do and what they get accomplished through their group process. Advisory boards are no exception. Often, the way they work is different from how other boards might work because they are all-volunteer boards. In addition, trustees may have different commitments to constituents or members or are providing recommendations on a “business” that is new to them. Finally, they walk a fine line of balancing recommendations with decision making. To this end, elements of board work should be reviewed to ensure these pieces are organized and consistently follow good business practices. Specifically, boards should choose and create, when needed, structures that include board meeting guidelines and meeting organization (agendas, rules, and minutes), and focus on streamlining meetings.

Board Meetings

Meetings are the backbone of work activities for advisory board trustees. As such, it is important that meetings be well organized and make the best use of trustee time, as well as give staff, and the public, opportunities for dialogue and exchange of ideas. Although many advisory board trustees and library managers wish that the public took more interest in the board meetings, the burden falls on the board and staff to make sure that constituent voices are heard regardless of the attendance. Meetings should be scheduled at a variety of times to provide multiple opportunities for attendance. Meetings should also be in locations that are accessible to a broad constituent base, including both reactive scheduling and proactive invitations for community member input. Boards and library managers should work together to increase feedback opportunities by designing “talk back” or suggestion boxes either on-site (internal and external to the library) or online.

Although the basic open meetings law does not change with any regularity regarding advisory boards, legal citations should be assessed annually for specific and related laws, library laws, and Attorney Generals’ opinions. Also, some local city and/or county governmental charters require open meetings for all groups. Because some local governing authorities ask that ALL community board trustees take a service oath (which includes swearing to uphold the Open Meetings Act), many boards follow Act guidelines. In addition, most library managers and library board trustees feel that their deliberations are sufficiently important to the community to follow the spirit (and, in some cases, the letter of the law) for holding open meetings with prior notice. Notice may include posting formats, timelines, locations, etc. Finally, the more specific the guidelines are and the more consistently guidelines are followed, the more likely liability threats (whether a board needs insurance or not) are reduced.

Meeting Organization

Advisory board meetings should be well organized and well run to maximize the time of trustees, staff, and the community and to provide a systematic structure to capture discussion and information for overall public library support. While all meetings should strive to be welcoming and, if possible, fun experiences, the best meetings should simply be productive. Although advisory board bylaws provide structure, specific meeting planning ensures that meeting rules, a proper agenda, minutes, and an overall streamlined format are achieved.

MEETING RULES

The best meetings are those with a choice of rules. Rules are important to provide a structure for scripted and unscripted parts of the meeting. Rules include:

- Choice of the structure for discussion to include a guide for parliamentary procedure, such as *Robert's Rules of Order* or *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*:
 - *The Official Robert's Rules of Order Web Site* <http://www.robertsrules.com/> (Official site includes full information and summative charts.)
 - *Parliamentarian and Parliamentary Consultant Jim Slaughter* <http://www.jimslaughter.com/view-articles-online.cfm> (Don't miss this best resource ever with links to full content of *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*.)
- A discussion of how the group will manage issues, which is formed on the choice of parliamentary procedures
- A decision on how the group will make decisions:
 - Groups may employ multiple methods to make decisions or recommendations. These include consensus decision making and voting on decisions. In fact, it is normal that a board may move between these processes if issues are controversial:
 - Consensus decision making is preferred for advisory boards. Reaching consensus for boards means reaching a majority opinion or decision through discussion that includes clarification, seeking opinions, and compromise. Consensus typically assumes that board trustees are prepared to cooperate. Often, the discussion facilitator may want to clarify goals, vision, and values of cooperation (i.e., what people should be bringing to the table). When the facilitator is trying to achieve consensus, board trustees will discuss topics until the discussion leader believes that all are in agreement. Although consensus may take more time to reach a decision, it provides a solid foundation for implementing decisions. Reaching a decision should not exclude the realization that some group trustees may not be completely on board but may “agree to disagree.” It should be clarified for those trustees that while it is completely acceptable to do so, after the board moves forward and decides on a direction, board trustees not in complete agreement are on board with not only moving forward but supporting future activities regarding this issue. It is reasonable that not everyone will be comfortable with all decisions where board trustees are representing many constituents. In those cases, board trustees may have to provide support by keeping silent on the issue.
 - There is a strong possibility that board trustees will have strong opinions, and, if consensus is not viable, then board trustees may decide by voting. For voting decisions, rules of parliamentary procedure are adopted.

MEETING AGENDAS

Meeting agendas can follow a variety of formats, including using samples found in the Open Meetings guidelines, even though advisory boards are not required to follow these guides. Agendas should be consistently organized to provide a structure for recordkeeping. The board chair and the library director prepare agenda topics jointly. Agendas provide lists of topics and issues and the order of discussion. Other topics in agendas may include time estimates for each item, definitions of topics, briefings on background issues, and a designated topic discussion leader. If your library is requested or required to follow the Open Meetings Act processes by a local governing entity, then agendas must be posted at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. The posting must follow a certain format and be posted in legally designated places. In some cases, those posting places must be approved by the governing body.

Sample Public Posting

- Official name of the board holding the meeting
- Address of the meeting
- Date and time of the meeting
- Certification or verification that the meeting was posted on a specific date and at or by a specific time
- Signature of a legally responsible person, i.e., an authorized administrative official, the library director, or the board chair

A well-planned agenda is essential. It allows for focus and sets the tone for the meeting. Additional meeting agenda tips include identifying process owners for follow-up needed on the agenda itself and a status list, which identifies issues on the agenda that have been on the agenda before and may have been held over, as well as a reason why. That is, an agenda item may have content added, which is brief, but says “item discussed for consensus on x date, but consensus not reached; therefore, the issue has been brought back for voting.”

Sample Agenda Order

Agenda:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- Public Comments
- Discussion Items:
- Library Reports
- Marketing Group Report – Review suggestions for marketing library programs and services
- Director’s Report – Review library goals and objectives
- Action Item:
 - Discuss and consider approval of Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Adjournment

MEETING MINUTES

A critical part of meetings is the recordkeeping and recording of meeting discussions and outcomes. On advisory boards, minutes are usually the job (and sometimes the only job) of the elected board secretary. Care should be taken to minimize problems associated with taking minutes. Steps to minimize problems include:

- A well-designed agenda that can be used as a template for taking minutes
- A group decision selecting who takes minutes
- Recording meetings, with permission, so minute-takers can take board minutes, but have backup content
- Seeking assistance from others, such as a volunteer or library staff member (library directors and board chairs should NOT take minutes)
- Using technology provided by the library (if needed) to assist (e.g., taking minutes online for immediate posting)

Minutes should meet the following needs:

- Provide a structure during the meeting that supports the agenda and formalizes the process
- Provide a short review of discussion, identification of the types of decisions and recommendations that are made (e.g., consensus or voting), an overview of assignments and process owners, and timelines and deadlines for those in attendance and those that are absent
- Provide an accurate account of meeting activities for those not in attendance, including board trustees, staff, constituents, and governing body members
- Provide a body of knowledge (record, archive, or history) of the organization for recordkeeping, reference, and reporting

- Provide an official legal record of topics discussed, actions taken, and decisions made for constituents, trustees, staff, and the governing body

Items to Include in the Meeting Minutes

- Minutes should be considered official correspondence of the board and, as such, approved and posted or forwarded according to the requirements of the governing body (i.e., the city secretary or the county judge's secretary). Minutes should include the following items:
 - Date, time, and place of the meeting
 - Meeting purpose
 - Board trustees present or absent
 - Library staff present or absent
 - Names and, as required, contact information of visitors, guests, and other nonboard members present
 - The agenda
 - Process owners, assignments, and deadlines
 - Copies of all handouts distributed at the meeting, including research, data, reports, or correspondence
 - List of reports made
 - Motions made, decisions reached, and any votes taken, including any individuals required to be recognized if parliamentary procedures are used

As/if the governing body requires and/or if parliamentary procedures are used, guidelines for handling written minutes should be adhered to and include, but not be limited to:

- Distribution of draft minutes (location and timeline)
- Distribution of approved minutes (location and timeline)
- Notification of minutes and accessibility (for board trustees, constituents, governing bodies, and library staff)

STREAMLINING MEETINGS

Streamlined meetings mean better board trustee attendance and productivity. To ensure maximum participation, it is important to respect board trustees' time. Let them know that you strive to recognize their singular (membership) and ongoing time commitment. Although larger groups are valuable, when designing workflow, consider reducing the size of groups doing background or preparation work. Encourage smaller work groups that work between meetings to make the work of the whole board go more smoothly. Spread out responsibilities, seek support from staff as needed, and create work to be done in smaller rather than larger increments. Techniques to assist in creating streamlined meetings include:

- Restrict the number of agenda items. Boards can only cover so much in meetings, so don't overload the agenda.
- Distribute advance work or background material in advance of the meeting.
- Restrict agenda/meeting items to those that have had preparation; save explanations or data review for memos and/or advance work.
- Plan difficult issues for the earliest timeslot in meetings.

Prepare a legend for agenda items that includes:

- "Action" for issues that require action (no matter what that action may be)
- "Initial review" for new items when the timeline is not critical or is upcoming
- Mark "information only" items as such
- Indicate closure as needed, such as "consensus agreement tonight" or "voting before the xxx meeting"

- Estimate discussion time recommended for each issue and consider "time not to exceed"
- Respect guest and public input time by placing these timeslots immediately after the meeting begins, so guests and the public can leave
- Consider using a "consent agenda" that includes no roll call, a pre-meeting reading of the minutes (minutes can be sent earlier or posted online), and correspondence (excluding matters of importance)

With the goal of maximum use of time in meetings, utilize these techniques to support increased productivity. Trustees should feel their time is valued and well spent. Meetings should not be viewed as burdensome. To decrease negative feelings about meetings in general and increase the board trustees' knowledge base, meetings might include:

- Poster sessions for before-and-after viewing of programs and services that board trustees supported
- A cart with new books for board trustee review and check out (some library directors even give board trustees first picks on books not already reserved by patrons)
- Packets for board trustees advertising specialty items picked up/free by library staff at association meetings
- Interesting and unique data, such as materials most checked out or book/service facts from the local library or libraries in general
- Refreshments!

IV. THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR AND THE ADVISORY BOARD

The most important factor in the library advisory board and director relationship is just that—the relationship. The board and director’s work must be an equal partnership to provide the very best library services and resources for the community. Because advisory boards do not have specific governing responsibilities or decision-making roles or responsibilities, it can be more difficult to sustain a relationship that is time-consuming but not, in essence, required to “do business.” To clarify the advisory board’s roles and the relationship with the director and staff, board trustee activities should be outlined. Primary and secondary roles and responsibilities should be outlined, as well as what trustees typically don’t do.

It is always important to remember that, along with the value of building a supportive advisory team to assist the library in achieving library goals, the advisory board is typically asked to assist the governing body in hiring library leadership and in the annual evaluation process.



Library Director Roles and Responsibilities

Library director roles and responsibilities vary almost from library to library. The basic responsibilities of a library director include the organization, planning, coordinating, supervision, and budgeting for library services, programs, resources, and activities. In this position, the director also works with the governing body (could be a governing board), advisory board, staff, and community.

It is accurate to say that a library director’s role is very different today than it was yesterday. At the very least, if it doesn’t appear to be different from the outside, the tools and processes that library directors use today vary dramatically from the past. In today’s communities, library directors often manage more than the library. They may manage library partnerships designed to provide additional or unique services, or consortia to expand resources to the community, such as a relationship with an academic library or even a formalized relationship with the local school.

A library director may also serve as manager of another city department or county service. In some communities, the library may operate out of joint use or contiguous spaces with both formal and informal relationships with a school district, college or university, parks and recreation department, museum, or archival or records management entity.

The Library Director's Duties and Responsibilities in Regard to the Advisory Board

- Orientation and ongoing education of board trustees
- Meeting with the library board at regularly scheduled meetings and additional meetings with either the full board, individual board trustees, or board subgroups or committees
- Assisting with the preparation of meeting agendas with the board chair
- Informing the board of activities of the library
- Informing the board regarding budget and financing issues, as well as impact of budget decisions at the local, state, and national levels
- Attending meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences of organizations appropriate to the library and management fields related to board work
- Keeping informed of library trends through professional reading both in general and related to the library
- Identifying, annotating, and disseminating advocacy information to board trustees to inform and to enlist support
- Coordinating and scheduling advocacy outreach by board trustees as needed and appropriate

Decision-Making, the Library Director, and the Library Advisory Board

Advisory boards do not make governing decisions for the library. They do, however:

- Review library decisions on matters of constituent concern and indicate support, as appropriate
- Review policies, on which decisions will be based, for knowledge and recommendations
- Identify which library decisions and recommendations must be sent for approval to governing bodies
- Review and participate in strategic planning to assist the library in identifying strategic directions and development
- Help develop a three- to five-year strategic plan
- Work with the director to identify decisions and recommendations that should be taken to the governing entity

In addition, the advisory board should determine the best ways to hear decisions and make recommendations. For example, will the board come to agreement based on consensus or use a process that includes voting? Specific information on these processes can be found in this handbook's section on advisory board meetings.

V. PLANNING, THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR, AND THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

Planning is everyone's responsibility in the organization. Library directors are primarily responsible for:

- Designing and carrying out longer-term strategic plans, as well as operational or annual/short-term plans
- Working with library staff, board trustees, constituents, councils, and/or commissioners and partners to provide input into strategic and operational planning
- Coordinating operational with long-term or strategic plans
- Gathering data to measure all levels and types of plans
- Reporting planning progress or problems
- Analyzing plans to determine revisions for future plans
- Ensuring staff goals, activities, and initiatives are coordinated with other (i.e., regional, state, community, city, county, system, consortial) plans, along with operational and strategic plans



Advisory Board's Role in Strategic Planning

The advisory board's role in planning is to assist the library director in formulating strategic or longer-term (three to five years) plans for the library. Advisory board assistance may take the form of reviewing existing plans, identifying benchmark plans and libraries, designing processes, surveying the community, speaking with community organizations, receiving input, generating support, or securing data.

Advisory board trustees do not, as a rule, assist the library director in forming annual or operating plans. However, it is important for the board to be familiar with plans and lend expertise on how annual plans might assist in accomplishing strategic plans.

Advisory Board's Role in Annual/ Operational Planning

Libraries create a variety of plans. They include annual, one-year or operating plans, as well as smaller plans, such as public relations and communication plans (typically annual). Advisory boards do not typically focus on annual or operational planning. Advisory boards may, however, receive periodic reports on the status of annual plans and may be given the opportunity to weigh in as representatives from the community.

SPECIFIC STEPS IN PLANNING AND BOARD TRUSTEES' ROLES

1. Identify the values, beliefs, or assumptions that are the organization's guiding principles.

Advisory board trustees may participate in discussions to determine values, beliefs, and assumptions.

2. Conduct an environmental scan: Identify SWOT (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), related competitors and their plans, and relevant benchmarks and models.

Advisory board trustees may assist in interpreting data and assessing community plans.

3. Create a vision statement.

Advisory board trustees may identify key vision words and benchmark statements. Trustees may review drafts to ensure that vision statements match constituent needs.

4. Design a mission statement.

Advisory board trustees may identify key mission words and benchmark statements. Trustees may review drafts to ensure that mission statements match constituent needs.

5. Develop the roles, goals, and, if appropriate, values of the organization.

Advisory board trustees may review constituent needs to determine whether goals and objectives align and also participate in the drafting of the strategic plan.

6. Develop objectives, strategies, and action plans.

Advisory board trustees may review constituent needs to determine whether objectives, strategies, and action plans align. Advisory board trustees may participate in the drafting of the strategic planning content.

7. Implement the strategic plan.

Advisory board trustees endorse the strategic plan and participate in the advertising and dissemination of it.

8. Monitor, evaluate, and adjust the plan as objectives are accomplished and as priorities shift.

Advisory board trustees regularly address the implementation of the strategic plan, as well as discuss and report plan accomplishments to assist in plan evaluation.

STIMULATING COMMUNITY INPUT

The library advisory board represents the community or constituent group of the library. In many libraries today, however, far more people are using the library than just the local community trustees. A credit to the library, this phenomenon means that boards need to collect and assess data on the variety of communities they ARE representing. Today's "geographic" library users may include:

- Patrons from neighboring communities who are trustees or users based on partnership arrangements (for example, these arrangements include use, but not board representation)
- Patrons who use the library's resources online only from afar or outside the geographic areas
- Patrons who travel through or to the library service area for unique resources or programs to use in the library
- Users who live within traditional service area boundaries

Library staff and management are aware of these new uses, but often board trustees and other supporting groups are not aware of the diversity of uses and users. These changing uses and needs include:

- Curriculum support for families that are homeschooling
- Higher education support for distance learners (from the community and beyond) whose coursework support is only available online and, therefore, seek support from the public library
- New community users displaced temporarily from their own communities (e.g., economy, natural disasters, emergencies)

- New community users permanently relocating to new communities (e.g., economy, natural disasters, emergencies)
- New uses from existing users, such as technology, assistance with using technology, and education and training for new technology

It is imperative that advisory boards represent the full measure of the community they represent. This includes both library users and non-users. Stimulating input includes gathering information on perception and attitude from BOTH groups, as well as specific needs and uses from the breadth of the community. This is often taxing. Suggestions include:

- Public forums designed solely to gather input on the library (These work best when focused on specific topics, such as "Do we need a new building?" or "Help us design our strategic plan")
- Feedback forms (for general or specific topics) distributed at other public meetings (partner meetings, council, or commission events, etc.)
- Typical social activities designed to include board trustees who attend to gather information (sporting events, activities, programs, etc.)
- New social networking or online activities (online forums for discussion, such as Facebook, online surveys or polls, and suggestion box opportunities)
- Board meeting public feedback agenda items for both general and specific topics (with suggestion boxes available for private content as well)
- Standard feedback mechanisms in the library (suggestion boxes, bulletin boards,

over the circulation and reference desk
general exchanges)

- Survey feedback once or twice a year with online or in-print questions on services and resources in general or on a targeted focus
- Feedback forms submitted to audience participants at public meetings where library representatives are present
- Feedback forms submitted to audience participants at public meetings where library representatives attend and announce they are seeking input



COMMUNITY AND SERVICE AREA DATA GATHERING

Gathering and assessing ongoing significant data must be a standard process not only for the library, but also to provide information for advisory board responsibilities. This community data is crucial to the library and its services.

Data must not only assess needs, but also evaluate the social conditions and political climate of the service area. Assess population climate and growth projections and consider the users who are typically community or geographic users. Sample issues include:

- How do the economy and the demographics of the community affect the library?
- What are the trends affecting public libraries?
- How have the new community members used the library?
- How did the library support the _____ (example: hurricane, flood, tornado, heat wave)?
- How are childcare providers using the library?
- How are homeschooling parents using the library?
- Has the recent downturn reduced school library service? Is the public library able to step up and meet expanded needs?

Simple areas of research/statistics and data gathering in libraries include standardized data.

Examples of standardized data may or may not include:

- Circulation per capita
- In-library use of materials
- Library visits per capita (taxpayer)
- E-usage (IP address, area, zip code)
- Consortia data
- Program attendance per capita
- Reference transactions per capita
- Reference fill rate
- Title fill rate
- Subject and author fill rate
- Browsers' fill rate
- Materials availability survey
- Registration/authentication as a percentage of population
- Collection turnover rate
- Document delivery

Data gathered should include both qualitative (stories/comments) and quantitative (numbers). Both are important for decision making.

Data can be gathered via surveys, focus groups, interviews, or a variety of other methods.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: DESIGN AND EVALUATION

Planning is one of the most important functions of public libraries. Similarly, supporting planning is one of the most important functions of the advisory board. Planning is critical to providing an infrastructure for allocating existing resources, seeking new funding, identifying service and resource priorities, demonstrating accountability, and accomplishing goals, objectives, and outcomes. An action-oriented long-range plan is typically three to five years of planning and identifies how the library will operate.

Strategic Plans Should Include

- Three to five years of strategic directions
- Accountability with measurement objectives, outcomes, an action plan, timelines, and process owners
- Growth in depth, breadth, or both (no matter the budget issues) for library services and resources

Building evaluation mechanisms into the library's strategic plan is an important component of the planning process. Evaluation content should state the criteria for measurement to ensure that goals, objectives, and outcomes have been met. See "Stimulating Community Input" and "Assessing the Library" sections of this handbook for evaluation process resources.



ASSESSING THE LIBRARY

How Libraries Assess How Well They Are Doing

- By gathering and assessing one-dimensional or flat data (how many people walk in our doors)
- By gathering and assessing two-dimensional data (the number of users who walk through our doors with library cards)
- By designing goals and objectives and gathering specific data (e.g., the number of children who signed up for the summer reading club will increase by 20% for the FY 2021 year over the FY 2020 year)
- By designing outcomes to gather specific data (e.g., homeschoolers using the library are finding 80% of their curriculum online through the library's web pathfinders)
- By asking people through interviews, exit surveys, and suggestion boxes (e.g., "How are we doing?" "Did our adult author series entertain you, and if so, which time of day worked best for you?" "Did our parenting program give you information that you didn't have before? If so, what?")

It can be helpful to compare library and community data to area institutions, such as information on populations served, financial resources and expenditures, staffing, holdings, program attendance, hours of operations, circulation and reference transactions, and other comparative data. National comparison data is available from Library Research Service at <https://www.lrs.org/>.

Additional data should come from the director and library managers analyzing the success of goals and objectives; completion of strategies/tasks; accomplishments and completion of action plans; use of and adherence to budget

timelines; completion of directives from local, regional, or state legislative mandates; and identification and assessment of adherence to governing body requirements.

This list includes library staff and board trustees discussing and deciding evaluation and assessment techniques to be measured:

- Library team designing outcomes/other elements needed
- Choice if appropriate recordkeeping/data gathering forms to gather data
- Initial and ongoing training and education of library staff on using data-gathering forms (including advisory board trustees)
- Motivating employees to use data-gathering forms
- Periodically assessing data gathered and a review with staff and advisory board trustees
- Systematic processes in place for reviewing data
- Interpreting data and aggregating and annotating data/analysis

As stated, libraries are shifting how they are changing perception and are focusing on assessing the impact of libraries on the community.

LIBRARY MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS

Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, and Outcomes Statements

Libraries maintain vision and mission statements, as well as annual goals and objectives. These statements also have ancillary or subdocuments that include strategies, outcomes, and task statements. The vision statement is a broad, overarching vision that the library has for the community. The mission statement identifies the values, beliefs, or assumptions that are the organization's guiding principles. The mission statement acts as a foundation for the development of general and specific goals and objectives, as well as shaping programming plans. In review of vision and mission statements, the following should be noted:

- Some vision statements precede mission statements, while in other libraries mission statements precede vision statements, as long as one is a broader statement. While vision precedes a mission statement in most locations, there is no incorrect way to assign order. Statements should avoid using politically incorrect terminology.
- Public libraries should also consider adding in unique resources, special materials, or identification of unique target populations.

Sample Vision Statements

- XYZ Library embraces the vibrant future of our community. We create opportunities to participate, connect, and discover by:
 - Offering space for people and ideas to come together
 - Identifying and meeting the needs of our diverse community
 - Providing materials and programs that inform and educate, as well as entertain
 - Providing excellent customer service
 - Preserving the past and making a commitment to the culture of the community
 - Encouraging lifelong learning
 - Ensuring freedom of access to information
- The XYZ Public Library district will have vibrant libraries and will meet the needs of a diverse and growing constituency by providing services and partnering with other community organizations. The board of trustees and the staff will work together to serve the public and to respond to the changing nature of library services.
- The vision of the XYZ Public library is a literate community committed to lifelong learning.

Sample Mission Statements

- The XYZ Public Library enhances the quality of life in the community by providing resources and services for education, information, lifelong learning and enjoyment, space and opportunities to gather and connect, and by fostering a love of reading and a commitment to literacy.
- The XYZ Public Library provides materials and services to help community members obtain information meeting their informational, educational, and professional needs. Special emphasis is placed on providing contemporary reading materials, providing reference services and technology access and training, and on making facilities available.
- It is the mission of the XYZ Public Library to provide access to social and cultural ideas to the community by offering a wide variety of materials, programs, equipment, and software. The library has a special mission to encourage young children and their parents to foster a love of reading and lifelong learning. The library is committed to preserving the integrity of the special collections of xxxx.
- The mission of the XYZ Public Library is to provide the people of its community, from pre-school through maturity, with access to a balanced collection of books and other materials that will serve their educational, cultural, and recreational needs.
- The mission of the XYZ Public Library is to collect, preserve, and make available library materials in print and electronic formats to serve the recreational, informational, educational, and leisure needs of the community. The XYZ Public Library is committed to supporting a lifelong enjoyment of reading and learning.



POLICIES

In the context of libraries or government entities, a policy is approved at the senior levels of the governing entity. Advisory boards, rather than approving policies, may view and make recommendations for moving policies forward. Policy statements are the foundation for doing business in the library and should precede implementation or action. Policies are governing principles that mandate actions and/or allow or constrain actions. Policies should have institution-wide application, be designed to change infrequently, and set a course for the foreseeable future. Policies help define and ensure compliance and enhance the institution's mission. They indicate an "approved" statement of intent and commitment and reduce institutional risk.

Policies should be approved by governing bodies, approved by legal counsel (when applicable), and continuously reviewed for currency and timeliness. They should be supported by procedures, reflective of contemporary needs (ADA, harassment, HIPAA), used to inform others for proactive grassroots support, and should answer the question, "Why are you doing this?"

Library Directors Should Have Policies in Place That

- Comply with current laws, ordinances, etc. (local, "region," state, and federal)
- Are reasonable, fair, avoid denying services based on unreasonable criteria, and don't impose unreasonable penalties
- Are non-discriminatory, based on law, applied equally
- Are accessible and quantifiable, well written, displayed, and easily assessed for infractions

The director and library managers should always watch for situations that dictate the need for discontinuance, review and/or revision, and/or creation of a new and/or specific policy, such as:

- A new and/or discontinued service
- Receiving or ending grant monies for projects, programs, and/or services
- Legal mandates
- Identified best practices
- Changes in partners and/or collaborations
- Vendor contracts
- A new population
- A new access point
- New or changing technology

Policies identify and provide appropriate structure and rationale as to why a rule or guideline exists. Policies provide a foundation for those interactions between the library and its users and the ways in which programs and services are delivered. These policies should be in standardized form. That form might include policy statements being prefaced by the library's vision and mission statements and library goals and objectives.

Collection management or materials selection policies can include challenged materials, gifts and donations, and the presence and intent of, as well as access to, electronic resources, such as online databases. Facilities policies can include use of meeting rooms and public behavior. Other policies can include programs that consider these areas of public library policy:

Behavior—what are constituent or user behavior guidelines; what are employee and volunteer behavior guidelines

Cataloging and Technical Services—what to do when a new version of the Dewey Decimal System is issued; to what extent materials will be classified; how to code, classify, and shelve special collections; how vendors will be selected; who selects various types of materials

Circulation—issuing library cards; accepted for proof of residency; items that may not be checked out; items that may not be checked out for typical or normal periods; renewal issues; loan periods on high-demand items; chain of command in dealing with disputes over fines and fees

Collection Development—who selects various types of materials and formats; criteria for selection decision making; who receives various types of review tools; who weeds various collections and nonfiction titles; how “last titles” and discarded items are handled; who manages new and used materials donations, including who officially accepts gift books; what types of materials are accepted and what types are not; how gifts of used materials are stored and who reviews and selects them for inclusion into the collection; how donated materials not selected for the collection are handled

Emergency/Safety/Security—who has oversight for opening and closing the building; who will be called in emergency situations when the library is open and/or closed; who has oversight for maintaining emergency support resources such as fire extinguishers; evacuation of the building in case of fire or other disasters; who monitors and maintains the emergency communication plan

Reference—how many reference questions may be answered per call; the extent to which inappropriate questions can be handled, such as how/if crisscross directory service will be delivered, if medical or legal information is given out, and, if so, in what manner; the extent to which homework help will be provided; the order in which telephone and in-house users will be handled during peak times

Volunteers—who is in charge of recruiting, training, and supervising volunteers; who determines assignments for volunteers; what is the criteria for allowing court-ordered community service volunteers to work in the library; what is the dress code for volunteers

Advisory board trustees should be familiar with federal, state, and any local legislation that impacts library issues. Virginia-specific information can be found online at the *Code of Virginia*. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/>

Additional policy area discussion should be held on those policies that express the library’s values or beliefs and that provide the infrastructure for public library primary vision and mission. These areas include the following subjects.



INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND THE FREEDOM TO READ

Intellectual freedom is a term encompassing the broad ideal of “freedom of the mind.” It includes not only the constitutionally protected freedoms of speech and of the press, but also, by extension, the freedoms to hear, view, and read. These freedoms are at the heart of library service to the public. These are simplistic definitions for complex and volatile issues. They are presented thoroughly in the American Library Association’s Office of Intellectual Freedom’s *Intellectual Freedom Manual*.

All libraries must maintain policies needed in the defense of and resolution to challenged materials and resources. A challenge occurs when an individual or a group seeks to remove or limit access to library materials (books, media, audio tapes, etc.) or library resources (electronic media, the Internet, etc.). A ban occurs when an individual or a group succeeds in convincing the library’s governing body to order the withdrawal of materials or resources from the library or the restriction of access.

Although the perception of challenged materials focuses on “dirty books,” there are many reasons other than sexual content that precipitate challenges to library holdings. These reasons include discussions or depiction of history or historical events, treatment of populations or groups or individuals, inclusion or depiction of alternative lifestyles, use of terminology or language, the inclusion of graphics or images, and/or public access to the Internet, to name just a few areas. Although Internet access is generally challenged on the grounds of the pornographic or obscene content of many of the websites on the Internet, it is frequently challenged on philosophical and political issues similar to those described above.

Challenges can cause upheaval and must be handled via a systematic process. This process, designed prior to the challenge, can be time consuming. During the process, the library’s governing entity, advisory board, director, and staff devote a great deal of their time to answering constituent inquiries, providing media interviews, planning meetings, and working with the governing body’s attorneys, administrators, and elected officials to resolve the issue.

The library advisory board’s responsibility in these cases is to uphold library policies, which include the principles of intellectual freedom and the freedom to read. A library’s vision and/or mission statement may include language providing for “wide and diverse collections in a variety of formats” or for providing “a safe and confidential environment in which users may freely pursue intellectual interests.” Vision and/or mission statements including such language place advocates in the position of defending intellectual freedom as the library’s stated mission, as well as on the broader principle of intellectual freedom. It is essential that advisory board trustees, the director, staff, and other library advocates in the community show respect for opposing viewpoints at all times. They must remain sensitive to the right of all constituents to express their opinions and concerns.

Libraries should take care to include the following management documents in their arsenal that prepare and protect constituents and their use of the library. These documents include the materials selection policy, the acceptable use policy, and the policy for handling challenged materials.

Materials Selection Policy

All libraries should have a written policy determining the process by which materials and resources are selected for inclusion in the library or on the library's recommended materials lists (such as web links or pathfinders). A materials selection policy will include processes for selection, criteria for decision making, review sources, and other professional tools used for selection.

Acceptable Use Policy

Each library offering public access to the Internet must decide how to develop its acceptable use policy. Acceptable use information can be a stand-alone policy or incorporated into the materials selection policy. Issues generally covered in an acceptable use policy include age of users on filtered and unfiltered machines with reference to any relevant federal and state legislation, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) (online at <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act>), conditions under which a user may access the Internet, time constraints to allow fair access, use of filters, cost (if any) for printing, protection of confidentiality, and permissibility of downloading. A sample Internet access policy is included at the end of this handbook.

Policy for Handling Challenged Materials (Reconsideration of Materials)

Many constituent complaints against library materials can be dealt with simply through discussion between the director and the user making the complaint. If discussion does not satisfy the constituent, then a written form should be available for the user to fill out and sign.

The point at which a user files a written statement requesting withdrawal of the title is the point at which the complaint becomes a challenge. Subsequent procedures will be delineated in the policy, including some point at which the constituent may be invited to work with a review committee and/or attend a board meeting to formally present the challenge for board review.

The library board should recommend all such policies to the library's governing body for adoption. Their recommendations add credibility with the governing body. Once the governing body adopts the policy, it carries the authority of governmental resolution or ordinance. These steps provide more favorable conditions for successfully withstanding a prolonged or united challenge.



PROCEDURES

The library director establishes and revises procedures to provide the most effective and efficient methods for carrying out policies. The library's advisory board generally does not become involved in establishing and implementing procedures unless those procedures significantly affect the board itself. Regular updates should move from the staff to the board on policy AND procedure changes for their information.

Procedures answer the question, "How do you do this?" or "How do you carry this out?" Procedural statements describe how a service is to be carried out, establish the method for handling tasks, and detail the specific steps for implementing policies. Procedures are typically chronological, listing a sequence of steps to be performed with timelines, as needed. Typically, every policy has a procedure, and procedures have an overarching policy.

Examples of Procedures

- How to check out materials
- How to issue library cards
- How one applies to use the meeting room
- How one has fines and fees assessed
- How one uses computers at the library
- How staff assess fines

Library Directors Should Have Procedures in Place

- When penalties or punitive measures are needed
- When activities involve money of any kind
- When activities or services involve access
- When a grant/governing/umbrella body dictates it (administration, laws/legislation)
- When any staffing issues occur



PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Partnerships abound in the professional literature of social work, adult education, basic literacy education, religious or church work, educational environments, libraries, and governing entities, to name just a few environments. Partnerships are, in the broadest sense, connections between and among people and groups to share interests and concerns, and to create visions for the future.

Historically, partnerships have been formed to educate, open discussion, and address and solve problems among all parties involved. In some institutions, partnerships are not called partnerships but may be called outreach, collaborations, cooperative agreements, arrangements, consortiums, contracts, liaisons, facilitators/facilitations, and/or relationships. They can also be formal or informal.

When Partnerships Should Be Created

- There is a need, vision, goal, problem, situation, or issue, and the perception is that it cannot be handled by or solved by one entity
- It does not seem possible to solve the problem or address the situation by just one group, due to magnitude, lack of knowledge, or the amorphous nature of the issue
- The situation or issue cannot be addressed by one entity, etc., because of lack of resources including expertise
- The cost of solving the problem or addressing the issue is too costly for one group to address
- It is important to have a large number of people involved to educate and have good buy-in to the process

Although there are a variety of recommendations for partnership success (in review of the literature and based on experience), what works best is when one organization takes the lead in design, financial arrangements, and responsibility for the project, and the other organizations “contract” or purchase services that they assist in designing.



FORMAL AND INFORMAL BEST PRACTICES FOR PARTNERSHIPS

- Have an organization or structure (which even “informal” partnerships can have)
- Have vision, mission, and goals that focus on outcomes or the end user
- Are flexible and designed to change as issues evolve and problems are solved
- Find ways to involve people, but make maximum use of emerging and existing technologies
- Build in a sustained maximum activity and involvement by stakeholders and other participants
- Provide plans, as appropriate, such as business plans, marketing plans, technology plans, and communication plans
- Promise and produce a product and result that benefits all stakeholders, as well as constituents
- Design an active and interactive initial learning period (pilot programs) and maintain ongoing learning for stakeholders and participants
- Establish and maintain effective communication and ongoing dialog
- Are not thrust upon one group or set of stakeholders without their knowledge or cooperation
- Include a statement of what can be or is being done with what cannot be or is not being done
- Have a partnership or institutional “brand” that defines the unique benefits for partner constituents



PARTNERSHIPS

One can consult an attorney or pick up a law book for the most formal of language to define partnerships. Outside the legal interpretations, multitudes of definitions apply. In general, the more informal terms for partnerships among entities are:

- Outreach
- Cooperation
- Liaison
- Facilitators/facilitated, facilitations
- Arrangements
- Relationships

The more formal terms are:

- Collaborations
- Consortia/consortium
- Agreements
- Contracts
- Partnerships
- Joint use

Informal

Definitions found online at *Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online Dictionary*

Arrangements—can be both formal and informal. Having an arrangement for use of a service or an access point often denotes no written paperwork or a “handshake” that solidifies what is to occur. Defined as “an informal agreement or settlement.” Arrangements, if successful, often lead to formal agreements.

Cooperation—the term cooperation means a “common effort” or an “association of persons for common benefits” and is often used to establish a foothold for future, more formal arrangements and to assuage fears of a more formal restrictive environment. Only when the term is linked to “agreement” or “arrangement” does it typically denote the formal situations.

Liaison—the term liaison is defined as “communication for establishing and maintaining mutual understanding and cooperation.” An organization naming a liaison has made a formal declaration of responsibilities for someone in the organization. This declaration indicates interest and connection, but not a formal agreement of mutual behavior. Instead, it indicates the behavior of only one “side.” Liaisons, however, are often preliminary conduits for an information exchange that leads to action and more formal arrangements for both organizations involved.

Outreach—an older term, outreach in both public and academic libraries has historically meant identifying, locating, and reaching out to serve typically eligible clients or patrons but non-users. It is now used more for identifying, reaching out, and establishing partnerships to serve potential users heretofore unable to access or use resources.

Relationships—defined as “connecting or binding participants in a relationship.” Relationships are used as informal arrangements. They also often denote an unwritten or handshake situation where organizations are communicating about the issue and deciding how to proceed without formalizing activities.

Formal

Definitions found online at *Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online Dictionary*

Agreements—can be formal or informal. In an agreement, there is “harmony of opinion, action, or character,” or “an arrangement as to a course of action.” The more formal agreements are “a contract duly executed and legally binding.” The term agreement is often linked to both formal and informal terms such as a “cooperative agreement” or a “consortia agreement.” The latter most often refers to the actual paperwork executed that outlines the rules of order for behavior.

Collaborations—one of the oldest terms used in the profession is collaboration. This term denotes a formal process that includes working jointly with others, “especially in an intellectual endeavor” or “cooperating with an agency or instrumentality with which one is not immediately connected.” When organizations articulate that they are “collaborating” with another group, it indicates a formal process of exchanging information, resources, or services.

Consortia/consortium—a very formal term, a consortium indicates an “agreement, combination, or group (as of companies) formed to undertake an enterprise beyond the resources of any one member.” Consortia, in existence in libraries for many decades, are formal business agreements for sharing or providing resources and services. Using consortia as a term means that partners or members might have unequal status. The term cooperative indicates status that is more equal.

Contracts—the most formal of terms, a contract is “a binding agreement between two or more persons or parties, especially one legally enforceable” or “a business arrangement for the supply of goods or services at a fixed price.” Contracts are the cornerstone of formal arrangements and are found most often when

arrangements involve money, resources, and ownership. Money issues can also be tangential. For example, an initial service may not involve money, but rather use or misuse, such as user fees or fines and fees collected.

Joint use—also referred to as shared space and co-location, this (typically dreaded) partnership is becoming more common and examples include:

- Community college or four-year university who builds one library
- Co-design, funding of higher education environments to serve distance-learning students
- Public and academic libraries built to serve both
- Public and school libraries built to serve both
- Public and academic—public and school who partner to provide one service within another existing building

Partnership—is the friendlier and more often used word both in the literature and in practice for the more formal arrangements. A partnership can be defined as any project in which someone “partnered with another organization on programs or activities to accomplish a common goal.” As a more positive term, it implies by its very nature an equal footing for all involved. Not all formal agreements denote equal footing or even need to denote equal footing.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is a method of establishing and documenting partnerships, most commonly those in a consortia arrangement. It can be a document of incorporation or a method of outlining agreements between or among libraries or institutions. It is an umbrella for other vital documents, including:

- Vision, mission, and goals
- Outcomes, including patron or client benefits from relationship
- Organization
- Governance
- Trustee responsibilities
- Group responsibilities for services
- Resources (more specific articulation of objectives and strategies)
- E-resource and data rights and responsibilities
- Documents relating to access of information, as well as borrowing/access
- Fiscal rights
- Responsibilities and obligations
- Other elements such as local, state, regional, or federal laws that apply

Other terms that may be used synonymously for serving patrons from one library to another include articulation agreements, guidelines for service, patron/client support agreements, universal service agreement, affiliation agreements, statement of service, service commitments, cooperative service agreements, and service plans.

An example of ways to categorize partnerships:

- Library to/with library
- Library to/with other internal (departments, etc.)
- One library to/with many libraries (joining a group)
- One library to/with many libraries (leading a group)
- Library to/with other external institution partnerships (non-vendor/commercial)
- Library to/with other external institution partnerships (vendor/commercial)



A suggested approach to creating a partnership proposal follows:

Partnership Proposal

All questions and issues must be addressed before the proposal is turned in to _____. Please attach relevant documents.

Entity Requesting Partnership _____

Partner(s) Names/Titles/Organizations _____

Describe the partnership/project (attach any relevant documents):

- State the vision, goals, strategies, and outcomes, including products of the proposed partnership.
- Indicate ownership of product issues and specific benefits for constituents in outcomes language.
- State how this partnership fits into this institution's goals.
- State or speculate (if contact with all partners has not been made or finalized) how the partnership fits into all partner/member goals.
- Outline a preliminary implementation plan, including individual partner roles and responsibilities.
- Identify the resources required (staff, funding, equipment, etc.) and how these will be provided: money (capital, operating, soft money, hard money), in-kind contributions, revenue from ventures, and other alternative future funding. Next to each source and amount of funding, indicate likelihood and expectations. Identify, if funding is not yet available, what has to occur to secure funding.
- Include a project timeline, including dates for start-up, evaluation, and closure or continuation.
- State how this partnership fits into the job responsibilities of partner members. If job descriptions, goals, or outcomes need to change, identify how they will change.
- Outline sustainability of services, resources, etc., following partnership design and implementation for the first funding year.
- Outline sustainability of services, resources, etc., following partnership design and implementation for (at the very least) the two years following the first funding year.

Approved? _____ Disapproved? _____

If disapproved, why? _____

Returned for further information. Information needed includes: _____

Signature(s) _____ Date/Day _____

VI. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The two main sources of public library funding are state and local government. Additional funding is derived from municipal governments, corporations, organizations, and individuals. Refer to the advocacy recommendations in Section 5 to help prepare for seeking municipal funding.

Local Government Support

In most public libraries in Virginia, funds to operate the library are derived from allocations made by the county, city, or town government under which the library is established. When additional funds are needed, the board must be prepared to justify, to local authorities and to the general public, the need for such expenditure.

State Aid

Sections §42.1-46 through §42.1-58 of the *Code of Virginia* authorize the awarding of grants to provide for the development of library service and to assist libraries in improving standards of service.

The formula for state aid provides for the allocation of grants based on the following factors, effective July 1, 1992:

- Forty cents of state aid for every dollar expended, or to be expended, exclusive of state and federal aid, by the political subdivision or subdivisions operating or participating in the library or system. The grant to any county or city shall not exceed \$250,000.
- A per capita grant based on the population of the area served and the number of participating counties or cities—thirty cents per capita for the first 600,000 persons to a library or system serving one city or county, and an additional ten cents per capita for the first 600,000 persons for each additional city or county served. Libraries or systems serving a population in

excess of 600,000 shall receive ten cents per capita for the excess.

- A grant of ten dollars per square mile of area served to every library or library system, and an additional grant of twenty dollars per square mile of area served to every library system serving more than one city or county.

State aid may be used for library materials, equipment, and furniture. Up to 25 percent of the grant may be used for salaries of full-time certified librarians. Libraries serving populations of 13,000 and above, and operating without a full-time certified librarian, receive a 25 percent reduction in their state aid grant.

Library boards should be thoroughly familiar with the *Requirements Which Must Be Met in Order to Receive Grants-In-Aid* (17 VAC 15-11010), or the *Requirements Which Must Be Met by Libraries Serving a Population of Less Than 5,000 in Order to Receive State Grants-In-Aid* (17 VAC 15-90-10) from the *Administrative Code of Virginia*.

Federal Funds

From the 1960s until 1996, the Library Services and Construction Act (P.L. 101-254) provided funds to assist states in the extension and improvement of public library services. In 1996, Congress approved the Library Services and Technology Act (P.L. 104-208) “to stimulate excellence and promote access to learning and information resources in all types of libraries for individuals of all ages; to promote library services that provide all users access to information through state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; to provide linkages among and between libraries; and to promote targeted library services to people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to people with limited functional literacy or information skills.”

Miscellaneous Sources of Funding

- Gifts and donations. Policies should be adopted on the acceptance and handling of these funds.
- Endowments/foundations/trusts. A library's own endowment, foundation, or trust fund can be established, with the interest used to supplement the tax-based budget or to finance a special project.
- Fines and fees. Local policy determines the availability and use of fines and fees.
- Fundraising projects. A Friends of the Library organization can be beneficial to the library in undertaking fundraising events for special projects and programs.
- Grants. Corporations and foundations are frequently good sources for additional funds. Directories are available that identify local, state, and national sources. These grants are highly competitive and success may depend on the library's ability to prepare a well-written grant proposal.
- When funds from those sources are not enough to cover operating costs or maintain reserve funds, board members are responsible for raising the money necessary to continue working toward your ideal community library. When considering potential sources for funding, trustees should investigate opportunities with civic organizations, school districts, corporations, and matching gift programs



VII. A LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD'S ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

Levels of Involvement

An advisory board advocate must represent the library on many levels. Their essential business encompasses many areas including advocacy, lobbying, communicating need, persuasion and influence, and promotion and awareness.

These Levels Represent Connections and Networking with a Variety of Groups

- Other library advisory board trustees
- Other library-related organizations such as a Friends group or foundation
- Local government
- Business and industry
- Community groups (profit, nonprofit)
- State and national legislative efforts

Advocacy

Although librarians and library supporters typically think of advocacy as communicating the role and value of libraries to legislative sectors, the reality is that advocacy and advocating for libraries is the responsibility of all library staff and, of course, library supporters. Specifically, advocacy is the responsibility of the advisory board, who communicates the role and value of libraries to boards, cities, counties, higher education, and school district organizations. Advocates strive to tell the “library story” to increase visibility and present both data and arguments to decision makers in support of adequate funding for resources and services.

General roles for advocates include:

Speaking Out

Take your case to both individuals and groups as an effective, ongoing program of library advocacy. The time to be certain your neighbors and colleagues are aware of the library’s services is not just when you go before them to justify increased taxes or a building program. Ideally, every person you see will connect you with the library. This includes the people with whom you work or attend church, your children’s teachers, the grocery store clerk, and, very importantly, every civic, business, and government leader.

Accepting Invitations Where You Can Speak to Groups

Seek such invitations when they aren’t offered spontaneously. Be sure your library has an ongoing public relations program that you can draw upon for assistance. A simple 10-minute slide tour of your library can work wonders in bringing the library to people who have never darkened its door. If your library has a website, distribute that link. Always emphasize the role the community takes in developing and supporting the library.

Informing the Media

Your local media outlets are ideal vehicles for library information. The press should routinely cover board activities. The library should also keep the press informed about ongoing and special programs, major additions to the collection, and special achievements and honors attained by the board and staff.

This being said, all contacts with the media should be coordinated with the library director before advisory board members agree to speak with a media contact. Just as the library director always speaks on behalf of the library, the advisory board should speak as a unified voice

on behalf of its public library. In doing this, you avoid sending conflicting messages from the library.

Whenever you go out into the community to speak to a group, be sure the press is informed. Whenever there is an important issue concerning your library that your state or federal legislators will be considering, your local press should be informed. If the outcome of the issue would affect your library's services significantly, it is appropriate to request editorial support. This will not only draw attention to your library, but it will also add a great deal of weight when the press release is sent to the lawmakers who will vote on the issue.

Writing to Legislators

When writing your letters, remember the basics. Use business, personal, or library letterhead. Consider email as well as more traditional mail; however, handwritten notes still work. If you are writing concerning a specific piece of legislation, identify the issue or the bill. Before you actually send the message, be sure that you understand both sides of the issue under discussion. Subscribe to, for example, the Virginia Library Association's legislative mailing list (see this handbook's "Resources" section).

Making Personal Visits

The best way to establish and maintain a good relationship with your legislators is with a personal visit. Take advantage of such events as your state association's Legislative Day or National Library Week. Ask your governing body to declare a local library week. Be sure the press is aware of such designations, and use that week to call on those persons you feel can help influence the way your community members' library services are provided. In addition, there are times each year when state or federal legislative activity is at a minimum, and lawmakers are not in the throes of a campaign. That is the best time to visit. Take a colleague with you. A party of two or three ensures comfortable conversation and allows you to divide advocacy responsibility. Bring

data and review this handbook's "Persuasion and Influence" section to assist in developing the message.

Lobbying

Although lobbying is still greeted with discomfort by many library board trustees and staff, its negative image is changing. Lobbying is becoming an important role for library advocates.

Lobbying for funding is nothing more than knowing where funding originates and knowing the people who control the distribution of those funds. In this sense, library board trustees are "lobbyists," or they would not be board trustees. They are usually appointed by the governing body, which is the primary source of support for their library. In many cases, the ordinance that established the board encourages, even mandates, that a prime duty of the board is to consult or advise the governing body as to the needs of the library. Often, the board is also charged with identifying alternative funding sources for the library. They might also meet with other organizations or agencies that can promote the improvement of the library's services and programs. In this context, board trustees are appointed to their positions to be library "lobbyists."

Lobbying is the recognized and traditional right of all community members to be heard in matters that they feel should be addressed. Board trustees should regard lobbying activities as being of prime importance, a skill to be practiced and perfected, and an essential element of the public relations and awareness program.

Library board trustees have a leadership role in library advocacy: promoting their library, generating public interest, and winning political support. As a library board trustee, you must know your community. You are a bridge between the library and the community.

You are the advocate for the library, and you can help the community understand its importance in all aspects of life.

How can an advisory board trustee become an effective lobbyist for the library? Develop the following ideas based on the board's own talents, knowledge of the community, understanding of the library's services and programs, and commitment to achieving library goals and objectives.

Become an Effective Lobbyist for the Library

- Know your library and libraries in general. Libraries of all types are interrelated. Improvements to libraries, whether school, public, academic, or special, will produce positive results for your library program.
- Develop your legislative agendas. The board should ensure that library-related legislative matters are included within these proposals.
- Plan to provide, both individually and collectively, a persistent program of information to the community. In addition to the formal activities, such as newspaper articles and presentations to groups and organizations, a board trustee might have lunch with the local newspaper or media editor or meet regularly with the Chamber of Commerce staff or other agency or organization, which will broaden awareness of the library program.
- Get to know the local, state, and national representatives on a personal basis and become knowledgeable about their views and impressions of libraries in general. In this manner, board trustees can relate their library knowledge and concerns and, when required, influence or change any negative impressions or images that may exist.
- Make regular calls on all elected officials, as well as to other agencies or individuals, who can promote libraries and offer their services and programs. Attend events at which these officials appear and let them know why the board representation is there.
- Look at newly elected candidates for office and impart the "library's story" to these individuals in the early stages of their candidacy.
- Involve and invite those in the political process to library-sponsored events and activities.
- Visit legislators and legislative sessions in your state or nation's capital during specified legislative events.
- Plan regular meetings and support your regular data reporting with trustees of your governing body. This meeting may be an annual or more frequently scheduled event, but it should be carefully planned to provide the body with specific facts and figures about the needs of the library. It is also effective to spotlight your successes, as these lend credibility to requests for additional resources to support existing or proposed projects, programs, and services.
- Most important, change your mindset about lobbying and its importance to libraries. It is not a dirty word or concept. It is a very American concept and a right (and responsibility, too) of all community members to participate in the decisions of government, to represent viewpoints, and to support ideas and concerns.

COMMUNICATING NEED

There are many ways to communicate need. The most common way of communicating need is through advocacy activities and initiatives. However, promotion and awareness campaigns that include general public relations content, as well as content with a specific focus or a directed message to a target population, are also very helpful.

So how do you communicate your needs to governing entities? How do you convince them you need money?

How do you tell them that you want to stop a service? Or start a service? Or that the community needs a new building? Or that you want to close (or open) during specific hours?

You can apply a process for getting the most important points across to the most important audiences. Following are the steps in a “communicating needs” process. This process can be found in general literature on persuasion and influence:



“Communicating Needs” Process

- Determine your timeline for communicating to and convincing others.
- Identify specifically who you need to convince.
- Assess the best arguments for communicating and convincing.
- Assess the best styles for communicating your needs.
- Identify and gather the facts, figures, and information needed for the communication planned.
- Anticipate questions and prepare answers for the target audience.
- Define information needs and gaps you may have in your presentation or in answers to perceived/possible questions.
- Determine whether elements of emotion, e.g., patron input or great need, will sway decision-makers.
- Decide whether the logical negative is the way to convince others by identifying consequences for not acting on requests.
- Decide whether the logical positive—why something will work and why it offers benefit—will best sway decision-makers.
- Provide scenarios and choices that employ creativity, interesting changes, alternatives, and proposals.

PROMOTION AND AWARENESS

The advisory board participates in the design and implementation of library promotion and awareness activities that highlight the existence and use of the library. Public awareness, whether achieved through a publicity program or public relations, generates public support. Library promotion and awareness activities are developed through a formal planning process that involves all library boards, constituents, and library staff and management. Once developed, the plan should be reviewed and revised on a regular basis and aggressively implemented.

What Promotion and Awareness Plans Include

- Promotion and awareness goals and objectives
- Identification of specific target audiences
- Library and community timelines of activities and events on an annual calendar
- Identification of funding required to implement the promotion and awareness plan
- Identification of individuals (advisory board trustees, foundation board members, staff, volunteers, Friends of the Library members) who actively participate or perform specific duties or have special responsibilities under the plan

Examples of Promotion and Awareness Activities

- Sponsoring cultural and educational programs, such as film series, book discussions, author appearances, and seminars on subjects ranging from investments to rare books, keeping in mind the community's programming preferences
- Sponsoring and participating in book sales and other fundraising activities to provide money for projects or items not covered by the library's operating budget
- Communicating the library's financial needs to the governing body or the voters
- Advocating for increased library services and funding at the local, state, and national levels
- Organizing and/or providing volunteers for work on specific or ongoing projects suggested by the library director
- Supporting new services
- Operating or sponsoring entrepreneurial activities, such as gift shops with library advertising specialty items and/or used book stores in the library



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Advisory board trustees should strive to create communication processes that work for all trustees and meet the needs of the board overall. To this end, communication styles should be studied in general and individual board trustees should consider identifying their own communication style to increase their knowledge of communication patterns between and among board trustees.

There are many research studies that define communication styles. A simple but effective approach is a four-style model. It identifies all communication styles as one of the following four: 1. Expresser, 2. Driver, 3. Relater, 4. Analytical.

The Expresser gets excited while the Driver likes their own way and has decisive and strong viewpoints. Relaters like positive attention and want to be helpful and regarded warmly. Finally, the Analytical seek a lot of data, ask many questions, and behave methodically and systematically.

Of course, people may communicate differently given the person they are speaking with or speaking “to.” Different situations drive different styles or types of communication. However, these four classic styles provide a foundation for discussing topics and balancing ideas as they come from board trustees. They also identify initial reactions of board trustees and give the facilitator, board officer, or discussion leader a good idea of what to expect.

If the board officer is not aware of individual board trustee communication styles, the group leader can use these four areas to guide gathering opinions, identifying issues for discussion, and then requesting that feedback be given within the four categories. Board trustees are then tasked to discuss the issue by playing one of the four roles.

1. Expresser

They get excited!



2. Driver

They like their own way; decisive and **strong** viewpoints.



3. Relater

They like positive attention, to be helpful and to be regarded warmly.



4. Analytical

They seek a lot of data, ask many questions, and behave methodically and systematically.



FACILITATING DISCUSSION

Advisory boards, as groups, often have a mind and life of their own. A variety of techniques can and should be used to achieve successful group work. Successful advisory board discussion is one of the measures of board activity and business success. How successful these discussions and activities are is directly related to the type and level of involvement of all interested parties, even the public when appropriate.

Facilitating board work and/or group processes can be a challenging and rewarding experience. Professionals possessing skills in facilitation are valuable assets to organizations. The most successful facilitators are those that have knowledge of the group process, group discussion techniques, and specific communication techniques for managing the group, as well as the complete knowledge and skills required of group recorders. Board officers, no matter how experienced, need training or refresher training in leading groups, encouraging conversation and discussion, and consensus building.

Individuals, typically officers, serve as facilitators for discussions and group work.

Discussion and Group Facilitator Responsibilities

- Management of the group learning process
- Direction of group ideas and feelings
- Development of thoughts from all group members
- Continued focus of group process on main ideas
- Maintenance of a space where members feel safe and comfortable (as well as valued)
- Production of usable group memory
- Success of group goals

As with other group roles, there are misconceptions on how facilitators operate. There are several things that a facilitator or a facilitated session is not.

What a Facilitator or Facilitated Session Is Not

- An opportunity to expound on one's beliefs
- Passive group guidance that involves only calling on members
- A discussion where only views that agree with the facilitator are allowed
- A randomly planned discussion
- A session where views are presented that represent only one area, such as one office or department or one way to do a service

What a Facilitator or Facilitated Session Is

- Valuing all group members, their backgrounds, and their contributions
- Allowing group members to talk much of the time
- Helping a group focus energy, gather ideas, and find solutions



Facilitator Recommendations

- Prepare for the process, as well as the content
- Value diversity in the group
- Note where gaps in background of participants occur and try to get the group as a whole to expand ideas
- Practice nonverbal behavior that doesn't indicate judgment
- Pick up on group member clues, such as body language showing hostility, boredom, or distress
- Be aware of conscious or unconscious bias of members, such as gender, age, department, service area, or career level
- Consider using techniques such as "echoing" a person's thoughts back to allow the group to comment or clarify
- Build flexibility into your presentation; if one technique doesn't work, you can switch
- Concentrate on your primary role, which is that of listener and interpreter
- Give each member your complete attention

Although these are not the only ways to get groups conversing, these should be considered:

Questioning

Any group process chosen can begin by the facilitator posing questions to the group. However, the process may be too controlled by the choice of relevant questions and the recording of participant responses.

Brainstorming

This process has the facilitator tossing out ideas and the group responding with wild and even impossible ideas. The guidelines for brainstorming include the lack of evaluation of ideas as they are generated, a rapid flow

of ideas, and a timeline, such as a 10-minute brainstorming session, followed by a 15-minute discussion.

Nominal Group (or Round Robin)

Members individually respond in some order to specific ideas or issues presented. One issue is handled at a time. The strict definition of nominal group techniques includes options individually written on paper and either a verbal or written discussion occurring for each idea or issue presented.

Impossible Questions

The facilitator structures a question to elicit responses concerned with "what may be impossible ... but if we could, we would."

Visualization

Group members are given an ideal situation and asked to visualize it and respond. Or group members are asked to create an ideal situation, and then record it so that others may "see it." Then, the group discusses it.

Problem Solving

The facilitator, a group member, or the group as a whole discusses a situation or issue, identifies a problem, generates a list of options or ways to solve the problem, and then develops a plan.

Evaluate Options

The facilitator presents an issue, idea, or problem with a list of ideas, concerns, or solutions. Then the group members analyze, reduce, add, and decide on the list or the options presented.

Techniques, words, and phrases fall into two broad categories: those to use in discussion to generate information and those to use to manage the group.

PHRASES OR QUESTIONS TO USE IN GENERATING INFORMATION

- How does _____'s comment (central theme, example, etc.) relate to our discussion group theme?
- Could someone list three ways that _____'s idea could become a reality?
- _____ suggested three solutions to our group discussion theme. Can anyone add to the list, delete items, and prioritize it?
- Compare/contrast _____'s idea with what your office's experience has been.
- Let's take _____'s main topic and spend 10 minutes throwing out ideas on how it might work.
- Here are the two main themes we've just heard. I'd like to go around the table and have each member add to the list, delete, or reprioritize.
- Here's an impossible thought: "We have all the money we need for community partnerships. How could we spend it?"
- Imagine a perfect community situation where Comment on that.
- _____ said that this situation exists in offices today. What causes this?
- Building on what _____ said, give me an example of ... and how it works in your community.

PHRASES OR QUESTIONS TO USE IN MANAGING THE GROUP

- Hold that thought, make a note of it, and then share it when _____ is through.
- What an interesting idea! Comments? Agreement? Disagreement?
- Wait just one minute, and we'll get to your idea.
- Rather than sharing that now, wait until ...
- All of these ideas are important, so let's go in this order: _____ first, then _____, and then you.
- What do you see that is good in this situation (examples, etc.)?
- We've had several negative comments; any positive ones?
- Let's keep things positive.
- I want to keep things on our timeline so one more comment, then we'll move along.
- I love that idea. Can you reword that to fit our list?
- How do you think your comment relates to the main issue?
- I'm going to limit the next idea exchanges to three-word phrases to conserve time.

- Can everyone live with this list?
- Let's let the recorder review the three issues. Then, let's get opinions on each list.
- (Name of the person taking notes or the Secretary of the Advisory Board), would you re-read our list (clarify our map) so far?
- Tell us more about ...
- That's a good way to build on what was said.
- Can anyone add anything?

PHRASES OR QUESTIONS TO USE IN MANAGING THE GROUP OR PROBLEMS

Quiet members:

- I'd like to hear from everyone on this.
- I notice your expression of agreement. Which point makes the most sense?

Sidebar conversations:

- I'm sorry. I didn't hear what _____ said. Could we have quiet?
- I'm glad we all have ideas, but it's difficult to hear (or concentrate) with so many people speaking. Could we have only one person speaking at the table?
- I'll have to ask you two to wait to speak, as we can't hear. I'm sorry, but we need you both to be quiet.

Competition:

- Both of you have great ideas. I want us to record all your comments.
- Rather than responding to just _____'s ideas, what do you think of _____'s comments?

Members with lack of focus:

- How does this relate back to our main issue?
- Could our recorder please review the main issue for us so we can review our main ideas?
- I'm not clear on how your point relates to the ideas. Could you clarify?
- Save that idea until later.

Monopolizing members:

- We've got your thoughts on that now. Let's get other ideas.
- Let's get some other ideas on this.
- I had to interrupt you since our time is tight, and I want to be sure we all get a chance to talk. Because our time is limited, could you summarize that point?
- Save the rest of your comments, and I'll get back to you after a few others have had a chance to speak.

Attacking and criticizing ideas and people:

- I want to get all ideas out on the table, so let's value all comments.
- Wait ... I'd like all opinions to be considered.
- Let's remember to focus on issues and not personalities.
- Your tone of voice indicates a strong disagreement that's hard to work with; rephrase what you're saying.
- I can see/hear you have strong feelings about this. Setting your feelings aside and in the spirit of positive and negative criticism, how would you rephrase your comments?
- Stop and think a few seconds about how you're sounding. How could you rephrase that to sound less harsh?

Confusing messages:

- I don't understand. Let me rephrase it and see if I'm getting it.
- I don't understand. Could you rephrase your comments?
- Can you clarify your comments?
- Could the recorder repeat those last statements? I'm not clear.
- Do we understand the issues/comments?
- I'm confused about Please clarify your comment on ...

MANAGING CHANGE

Although all organizations are undergoing exponential change (and not all for the good), libraries have been thought of as more static environments for many years. Many who support libraries (e.g., advisory board trustees) are surprised to see libraries as 21st-century fast-moving entities. Library directors should pre-assess board trustees to make sure that orientation and training for new trustees includes content designed to inform, update, and, if needed, to change outdated perceptions. Boards participate in strategic planning, which typically identifies dramatic changes for libraries; therefore, library staff, resources, and services often need assistance in changing.

Techniques for Dealing with Change and Renewal

- Address the issue of change head on. Provide development content on change: how change affects people, how people “see” and deal with change, and how they get “through” change. Establish standard visual images to communicate and educate, such as flow charts and paradigm shifts.
- Involve others in changing: planning for change, designing processes for changing, gathering data, and analyzing changes. Engage not only board trustees, but also members from other groups as well as staff in the process.
- Identify and inform (early) those who need to help carry out changes.
- Clearly define people’s roles in change discussion, the goals of possible changes, and their achievement indicators.
- Disseminate the decision to change and the goals and objectives for the change in writing.
- Design flexibility into the change process, as well as specific timelines. Establish timelines and parameters and define the limits of the change. If at all possible, don’t change too quickly.
- Build in adjustment time for all people involved. Allow people to take adequate time to assimilate new skills, procedures, support mechanisms, and work behaviors that are needed to successfully institutionalize the change.
- Identify good and bad aspects of change, address all sides, and, whenever possible, focus on the data supporting the need for change.
- Design adequate training for change elements.
- Don’t assume that those needing to change (whatever level) can figure out how to get there. Assist those changing by designing scenarios, making choices, inviting other scenarios from those who have unique situations that only they might be able to identify.
- Design and implement a proactive plan for dealing with rapid change/information-sharing with governing bodies.
- Assess “anchor” organizational elements for their stability, and ensure that management documents are dynamic and current.

VIII. APPENDICES

A. Sample Documents

- Overview of Documents Critical to Success
- Advisory Board Bylaws
- Notice for Advisory Board Meetings
- Golden Rules for Trustees
- Code of Ethics
- New Trustee Orientation Plan
- Board Self-Evaluation

B. Selected Virginia Library Laws

C. Requirements That Must Be Met in Order to Receive Grants

D. Requirements That Must Be Met by Libraries Serving a Population of Fewer than 5,000 in Order to Receive State Grants-in-Aid

E. Resources

A. MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS / PROFESSIONAL STATEMENTS

The advisory board should work through the umbrella governing body and through the library director to establish the management documents necessary to conduct advisory board business.

Overview of the Types of Documents Critical to Advisory Board Success

- Orientation manuals including overviews of the library; the library's vision, mission, strategic directions or goals and objectives; recent reports; and past advisory board minutes and board reports
- Library plans, including but not limited to, strategic plans, short-term plans, facilities/building plans and snapshot overviews, marketing and public relations plans, and technology plans
- Library advocacy materials
- Budget overviews, including justifications
- Financial documents for grants, fundraising, and alternative financing, such as usufruct, wills/estates, and bond funds
- Policies—human resources, public access/use
- Procedures—human resources, public access/use
- Foundation documents that serve to support the profession of librarianship can be found posted to or linked from the American Library Association, including:
 - Access for Children and Young Adults to Non-print Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Challenged Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Codes of Ethics
 - Confidentiality Policy and Procedures
 - Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees
 - Evaluating Library Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
 - Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

- Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to View Statement
- Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- The Freedom to Read
- Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services, and Facilities
- Labels and Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- The Library Bill of Rights
- Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations
- Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Restricted Access to Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records
- Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Suggested Procedures for Implementing “Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records”

ALA Resolutions 242

- Resolution on Opposition to Federally Mandated Internet Filtering
- Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles
- Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software in Libraries
- Guidelines for the Development of Policies and Procedures Regarding User Behavior and Library Usage

ADVISORY BOARD BYLAWS

Advisory board bylaws are required for board organization and business. As a public entity, the board must design, approve, maintain, and consistently review bylaws as well as “register” bylaws according to the processes established by the governing entity.

Library boards must adopt bylaws and guidelines or rules and regulations and policies to conduct business such as public meetings, communication, advocacy, public relations, recordkeeping, roles and responsibilities, and relationships. Bylaws for public library advisory boards should be brief and are typically standard board operating guidelines. However, due to the variety of umbrella institutions for public libraries (cities/counties with varying populations and structures, etc.), it is not always easy to provide an example of perfect bylaws.

Some Critical Elements of Bylaws

- Umbrella organization authorization and the specific, formal identification of the advisory board
- Board power and influence and roles and responsibilities specifically as an advisory entity
 - Applicable ordinances
 - Advisory parameters as to what and to whom
 - Any relevant policies
 - Role in planning and guidance of operations
 - Role in interpreting policies as appropriate
 - Role in development of library funding
- How board trustees are selected
- Trustee terms, roles and responsibilities, power, and duties
- Board organization, such as officers and officer roles and responsibilities and how bylaws are managed
- Board workgroups, such as committees and committee duties or roles and responsibilities
- Board relationship to the library director
- How the board conducts business (meeting location, time, and frequency; quorum; any financial dealings)
- What guides board business, such as parliamentary authority, including calling and holding regular and special meetings, posting agendas, posting minutes
- Audience participation (comments, hearings, and general communication) in public meetings with relevant codes

- An outline of the order of business at meetings, such as voting, membership meeting requirements, attendance expectations, trustee sanctions, communication rules for board business meetings, and specifically:
 - Call to order
 - Adoption/amendment to agenda
 - Roll call
 - Approval of minutes
 - Correspondence and communications
 - Report of library director
 - Committee reports (standing, ad hoc)
 - Unfinished business
 - New business
 - Adjournment
- Reporting board business in general and specific to the library and staff (minutes, annual reports, and other board communication)
- Board trustee behavior, such as ethical behavior and roles and responsibilities for communication and public relations

Sample board bylaws can be found on the web in a number of locations. Bylaws posted on the Internet should be vetted to ensure they are current and that they apply to advisory rather than governing boards. For the best match to a library's needs, bylaws should be assessed for the size and type of library they represent.

A GENERAL OUTLINE FOR ADVISORY BOARD BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

NAME

As authorized by the (city, county, entity) Charter, XXX of _____, and XXX Ordinance No. _____. This body shall be known as the _____ Public Library Board. (Often the word “advisory” is inserted in the title to clarify roles and responsibilities.)

ARTICLE II

MEETINGS

Section 1.

The regular meeting of the library board shall be held at a time designated by the board in the library or such other place the board may determine.

Section 2.

Special meetings may be called by the chair or at the call of any two trustees of the board, provided that notice thereof be given to all board trustees and the library director.

Section 3.

A simple majority of the trustees shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the board. A meeting may be held without a quorum but is identified as such in minutes and board communiqués.

Section 4.

All questions presented for a vote of the library board shall be decided by a simple majority of the quorum. (The vote may or may not include the vote of the chair.)

Section 5.

Any trustee of the board who misses three consecutive meetings without good cause shall be deemed to have resigned, and the board will recommend to XXX that a replacement be appointed for the balance of the unexpired term. (The board should determine—in consultation with the director—if board trustees appointed to fill out terms are then eligible for appointment to the board given term limits.)

Section 6.

Board business should be conducted according to parliamentary procedure or rules of order. The process should be chosen by the board and the latest edition of the rules should be used to conduct business in all business meetings and board forums. (Boards should work within the XXX structure to determine whether specific parliamentary processes are required or if they may choose another.) Processes to choose from include *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (latest edition) or *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* (latest edition).

ARTICLE III

OFFICERS

Section 1.

The officers of the board shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary.

Section 2.

Officers shall be elected and take office at the first regular meeting after new board trustees have been appointed and sworn in.

Section 3.

Vacancies in office shall be handled as follows:

(a) In the event of resignation or incapacity of the chair, the vice-chair shall become the chair for the unexpired portion of the term.

(b) Vacancies of officers other than the chair shall be filled for the unexpired term by special election.

Section 4.

Duties of the officers shall be as follows:

(a) Chair:

(i) Preside at all meetings.

(ii) Represent the library board at public functions of the XXX (city, etc.) and at events such as special library events; local, state, or national advocacy activities for the library; or local, state, or national association activities.

(iii) Appoint standing, special, or ad hoc committees.

(iv) Assist library director in establishing the agenda for each meeting. Agenda items requested by any board trustee will be included.

(v) Liaison with the governing authority regarding library issues.

(b) Vice-chair:

(i) Assist the chair in directing the affairs of the board and act in the chair's absence.

(ii) Serve as chair of ad hoc or special committees or projects such as chair of an advocacy initiative.

(c) Secretary:

(i) Be responsible for the accuracy and posting of the minutes of the board meeting and bring any corrections to the attention of the board at its next meeting. The secretary shall sign the approved minutes and complete recordkeeping activities required by XXX.

ARTICLE IV

COMMITTEES

Section 1.

Committees may be appointed for completing regular business of the board and/or special purposes by the chair and by special request from the library director or the governing authority. Committees, following requests, are formed with the consent of the majority of the board. All committees will have at least one library board trustee serving on them. Standing committees are typically formed annually and reviewed for continuation annually. Ad hoc or special committees are automatically dissolved upon completion of the activity or project.

ARTICLE V

LIBRARIAN

Section 1.

The library director serves as an ex-officio trustee of the board.

ARTICLE VI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF BOARD TRUSTEES

Section 1.

Library board trustees provide opinion, support, and expertise as needed, but do not have governing authority. Board trustees shall:

- (a) Abide by applicable ordinances of the XXX _____.
- (b) Act in an advisory capacity of the XXX (city council, city manager, county official, library director, etc.).
- (c) Review existing policies and recommend new ones to govern the operation and program of the library.
- (d) Assist in strategic planning.
- (e) Provide opinion and guidance, as appropriate, for special issues to include, but not be limited to, new facilities, the expansion of existing library facilities, and the performance evaluation of the library director.
- (f) Provide opinion and guidance, as appropriate, for new library services.
- (g) Assist in interpreting the policies and functions of the library to the public.
- (h) Encourage in every possible way the development and advancement of the public library at local, regional, state, and national levels.
- (i) Participate in advocacy initiatives including, but not limited to, local issues, including funding issues and requests, state advocacy activities, and federal advocacy initiatives.

ARTICLE VII

AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at any regular meeting, provided all trustees have been notified of the proposed amendments at least ## days prior to such meeting. Such amendment would then be subject to approval by XXX.

SAMPLE NOTICE FOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS

All advisory boards should work through the city, county, or any other entities that appoint them to determine whether that governing body recommends or requires that their appointed advisory boards follow any relevant codes, acts, or standard business practices.

A Typical Posting for Open Meetings

Notice of Meeting

_____ Public Library Board (Use the board's specific title, which may include "advisory.")

Address of Meeting Location

(Simple directions should be included if the meeting is in a nonstandard, atypical, or hard-to-find location.)

Date and Day of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Public Comment Sign in (from x to x)

Agenda:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- Public Comments
- Discussion Items:
 - Library Reports
 - Marketing Group Report: Review suggestions for marketing library programs and services
 - Director's Report: Review library goals and objectives
- Action Item:
 - Discuss and consider approval of Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Adjournment

Accessibility Statement (for the library board and for meeting locations):

The _____ Public Library is committed to providing access to all community members wishing to attend meetings to the best of their abilities and to meet reasonable accommodations.

The _____ location is wheelchair-accessible. For sign interpretive services, call the XXX office at (phone number), at least 72 hours prior to the meeting on a weekday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Other special needs should be requested in the same manner with the same time requirement.

CERTIFICATION: I certify that this notice was posted on (legally designated posting place) no later than (time) on (date).

Signature/Title

Posting Time/Date

Resources to assist boards in reviewing meeting standards and guidelines can be found at: Va. Code §2.2-3707. Meeting to be public; notice of meeting; recordings; minutes. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title2.2/chapter37/section2.2-3707/>

GOLDEN RULES FOR TRUSTEES

1

Leave the actual management of the library to the library director. It is the library director's responsibility to select books, employ the staff, and supervise day-to-day operations.

2

After a policy or rule is adopted by the majority vote of the library board, do not criticize or re-voice your opposition publicly.

3

Respect confidential information. Do not divulge information regarding future board actions or plans until such action is officially taken.

4

Observe publicity and information policies of the board and library. Do not give information individually, but refer requests to the library director or appropriate representative to interpret policies.

5

Treat staff members and the library director in an objective manner. Under no circumstances listen to grievances of staff members or treat individual problems on your own. The library director is in charge of the staff and has administrative control up to the point where a grievance is presented to the library board as a whole.

6

Do not suggest hiring a relative or two members of the same family as library employees.

7

All rules and policies directed to the library director must be approved by a quorum of the board at a regular meeting. Even the chair should abide by this rule.

8

Do not hold board meetings without the library director.

9

Complaints from the public are the library director's responsibility. Continued dissatisfaction and problems should be taken up at the board meeting only if policy revision is necessary or legal ramifications are involved.

10

Assume full responsibility as a board member. If you are unable to attend meetings regularly and complete work delegated to you, resign so that an active member can be appointed.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR TRUSTEES

As a member of this board, I will:

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

Signature: _____

Date: _____

BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

Successful board teams pay attention to the process behind how they operate. Just as they evaluate the progress of their library, they must also assess the operation of the board team and determine how they can do this job better.

It's up to the library board to hold itself accountable for good performance. To do that correctly, the board should take time every year to formally evaluate board performance. The purpose of the evaluation is not to find fault with board members or the full board, but to examine strengths and weaknesses. The formal self-evaluation should be followed with a plan to improve board performance.

Does the board prepare to do its job by:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Conducting a thorough orientation for all new board members? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Integrating new members into the team as quickly as possible? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Participating in continuing education? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Providing regular board development activities for all board members? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Performing an annual self-evaluation of board operations? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Providing all board members with copies of the mission statement, bylaws, ordinance, plan, library laws, and all other important documents of the library? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7. Touring all facilities at least once a year? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Does the board ensure good meetings by:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Limiting most meetings to two hours or less? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Providing a comfortable meeting room conducive to business? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Convening and adjourning on time? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Having the board chairperson lead the meetings? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Sticking to the prepared agenda? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Ensuring the board has enough information to make decisions? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7. Working for consensus rather than fighting for a majority? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 8. Discussing issues cordially and avoiding personal attacks? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 9. Following a business-like system of parliamentary rules? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10. Including the director as a resource for all deliberations? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 11. Confining all discussion to policy issues and avoiding management issues? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 12. Allowing/encouraging all board members to participate in discussion and not letting one or two persons dominate? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Do individual board members:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Attend at least 90 percent of all board meetings and committee meetings to which they're assigned? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Come to meetings prepared? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Come to meetings on time? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Feel free to express even dissenting viewpoints? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Leave meetings with a feeling of accomplishment? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. See themselves as part of a team effort? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7. Act as advocates for the library? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 8. Know their responsibility as board members of the library? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 9. Attempt to exercise authority only during official meetings of the board? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10. Represent the broad interest of the library and all constituents, not special interests? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 11. Understand that the most effective way to govern is to delegate management to the director? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Does the board plan for the future of the library by:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Annually reviewing and approving the mission statement? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Annually reviewing yearly objectives/work plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Annually reviewing progress toward the long-range plan and modifying the long-range plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Having board committees work and produce results? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Operating from opportunity rather than crisis to crisis? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

In which of the major categories above does the board show real strengths? In which of the major categories above does the board need improvement? _____

NEW TRUSTEE ORIENTATION PLAN

Welcome

Introduce yourself (if you do not already know the new trustee), welcome the trustee to the board, thank the trustee for contributing his or her time and effort, and offer your support at any time throughout the trustee's term.

Session 1: Overview of Facility, Staff, and Services

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

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

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

- A customizable binder
- A brief history of the library
- Your library's mission statement, major goals, and strategic plan
- Your library board's bylaws
- A calendar of upcoming board meetings
- A list of library board members and their contact information
- An organizational chart for the library, populated with pictures of each staff member if possible
- Minutes from the previous year's library board meetings
- A statistical report for the last full year and the current year to date
- The current library newsletter and calendar of programming
- Information about the library Friends group, along with a membership form.

Session 2: Budget, Advocacy, and Public Relations

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

- A list of and information about the community's municipal board members, including the municipal board's meeting schedule and contact information

- The most recent library annual report
- The library's current budget
- The board's current advocacy and public relations plans

Session 3: Operations and Policies

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

- Key policies and information about how to access others
- Statistical report for the last full year and current year to date
- Role, name, and contact information for the Library of Virginia's consultants

B. SELECTED VIRGINIA LIBRARY LAWS

SELECTED LAWS GOVERNING THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

§42.1-1. The Library of Virginia. The Library of Virginia is hereby declared an educational institution and an institution of learning. The Library of Virginia shall be the library agency of the Commonwealth, the archival agency of the Commonwealth, and the reference library at the seat of government. It shall have the following powers and duties:

(1) [Repealed.]

(2) To accept gifts, bequests and endowments for the purposes which fall within the general legal powers and duties of The Library of Virginia. Unless otherwise specified by the donor or legator, the Library may either expend both the principal and interest of any gift or bequest or may invest such sums as the Board deems advisable, with the consent of the State Treasurer, in securities in which sinking funds may be invested. The Library shall be deemed to be an institution of higher education within the meaning of §23-9.2;

(3) To purchase and maintain a general collection of books, periodicals, newspapers, maps, films, audiovisual materials and other materials for the use of the people of the Commonwealth as a means for the promotion of knowledge within the Commonwealth. The scope of the Library's collections shall be determined by the Library Board on recommendation of the Librarian of Virginia, and, in making these decisions, the Board and Librarian of Virginia shall take into account the book collections of public libraries and college and university libraries throughout the Commonwealth and the availability of such collections to the general public. The Board shall make available for circulation to libraries or to the public such of its materials as it deems advisable;

(4) To give assistance, advice and counsel to other agencies of the Commonwealth maintaining libraries and special reference collections as to the best means of establishing and administering such libraries and collections. It may establish in The Library of Virginia a union catalogue of all books, pamphlets and other materials owned and used for reference purposes by all other agencies of the Commonwealth and of all books, pamphlets and other materials maintained by libraries in the Commonwealth which are of interest to the people of the whole Commonwealth;

(5) To fix reasonable penalties for damage to or failure to return any book, periodical or other material owned by the Library, or for violation of any rule or regulation concerning the use of books, periodicals, and other materials in custody of the Library;

(6) To give direction, assistance and counsel to all libraries in the Commonwealth, to all communities which may propose to establish libraries, and to all persons interested in public libraries, as to means of establishment and administration of such libraries, selection of books, retrieval systems, cataloguing, maintenance, and other details of library management, and to conduct such inspections as are necessary;

(7) To engage in such activities in aid of city, county, town, regional and other public libraries as will serve to develop the library system of the Commonwealth;

(8) To administer and distribute state and federal library funds in accordance with law and its own regulations to the city, county, town and regional libraries of the Commonwealth; and

(9) To enter into contracts with other states or regions or districts for the purpose of providing cooperative library services.

Wherever in this title and the *Code of Virginia* the terms "State Library" or "Library" appear, they shall mean The Library of Virginia. (Code 1950, §42-33; 1970, c. 606; 1984, cc. 389, 734; 1986, c. 565; 1987, c. 458; 1994, c. 64; 1998, c. 427.)

§42.1-2. The Library of Virginia under direction of Library Board; membership; chairman and vice-chairman; committees and advisory bodies. The Library of Virginia shall be directed by a board, consisting of fifteen members, to be appointed by the Governor, which shall be and remain a corporation under the style of "The Library Board," sometimes in this chapter called the Board. Prior to such appointments the Board may submit to the Governor lists of candidates based upon interest and knowledge, geographic representation, participation in community affairs, and concern for the welfare of the Commonwealth. In no case shall the Governor be bound to make any appointment from among the nominees of the Board. The Board shall meet and organize by electing from its number a chairman and vice-chairman. It shall have the power to appoint such committees and advisory bodies as it deems advisable. (Code 1950, §42-34; 1968, c. 122; 1970, c. 606; 1986, c. 565; 1987, c. 458; 1994, c. 64.)

§42.1-13. Appointment; terms of office; employment; duties. The Board shall appoint a librarian, to be known as the Librarian of Virginia, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Librarian of Virginia shall appoint principal assistants and approve the appointment of other employees. The terms of office and employment of such assistants and employees shall be subject to the personnel regulations of the Commonwealth.

The Librarian of Virginia shall supervise the administration of The Library of Virginia. The Librarian of Virginia shall make requests for appropriations of necessary funds and approve all expenditures of Library funds. Such expenditures shall be made as provided by law. (Code 1950, §42-48; 1970, c. 606; 1984, c. 444; 1985, c. 397; 1986, c. 565; 1994, c. 64; 1996, c. 812; 1998, c. 427.)

CERTIFICATION LAW

§42.1-15.1. Qualifications required to hold professional librarian position. Public libraries serving a political subdivision or subdivisions having a population greater than 13,000 and libraries operated by the Commonwealth or under its authority shall not use funds derived from any state aid to employ, in the position of librarian or in any other full-time professional librarian position, a person who does not meet the qualifications established by the State Library Board.

A professional librarian position as used in this section is one that requires a knowledge of books and of library technique equivalent to that required for graduation from any accredited library school or one that requires graduation from a school of library science accredited by the American Library Association.

No funds derived from any state aid shall be paid to any person whose employment does not comply with this section.

This section shall not apply to law libraries organized pursuant to Chapter 4 (§42.1-60 et seq.) of this title, libraries in colleges and universities or to public school libraries. (1988, c. 716; 2004, c. 559.)

LAWS GOVERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN VIRGINIA

§42.1-33. Power of local government to establish and support libraries. The governing body of any city, county or town shall have the power to establish a free public library for the use and benefit of its residents. The governing body shall provide sufficient support for the operation of the library by levying a tax therefore, either by special levy or as a fund of the general levy of the city, county or town. The word "support" as used in this chapter shall include but is not limited to, purchase of land for library buildings, purchase or erection of buildings for library purposes, purchase of library books, materials and

equipment, compensation of library personnel, and all maintenance expenses for library property and equipment. Funds appropriated or contributed for public library purposes shall constitute a separate fund and shall not be used for any but public library purposes.

§42.1-34. Power of local governments to contract for library service. Any city, town or county shall have the power to enter into contracts with adjacent cities, counties, towns, or state-supported institutions of higher learning to receive or to provide library service on such terms and conditions as shall be mutually acceptable, or they may contract for a library service with a library not owned by a public corporation but maintained for free public use. The board of trustees of a free public library may enter into contracts with county, city or town school boards and boards of school trustees to provide library service for schools. Any city or county governing body contracting for library service shall, as a part of such contract, have the power to appoint at least one member to the board of trustees or other governing body of the library contracting to provide such service. Any city or county thus contracting for library service shall be entitled to the rights and benefits of regional free library systems established in accordance with the provisions of 42.1-37. The board of trustees or other governing body of any library established under the provisions of 42.1-33 may also, with the approval of and on terms satisfactory to the State Library Board, extend its services to persons in adjacent areas of other states.

§42.1-35. Library boards generally. The management and control of a free public library system shall be vested in a board of not less than five members or trustees. They shall be appointed by the governing body, chosen from the citizens at large with reference to their fitness for such office. However, one board member or trustee may be a member or an employee of the local governing body. Initially members may be appointed as follows: one member for a term of one year, one member for a term of two years, one member for a term of three years, and the remaining members for terms of four years; thereafter all members shall be appointed for terms of four years. The governing body of any county or city entitled to representation on a library board of a library system of another jurisdiction pursuant to 42.1-34 shall appoint a member to serve for a term of four years, or until the contract is terminated, whichever is shorter. Vacancies shall be filled for unexpired terms as soon as possible in the manner in which members of the board are regularly chosen. A member shall not receive a salary or other compensation for services as a member but necessary expenses actually incurred shall be paid from the library fund. However, the governing body of Fairfax County may pay members of its library board such compensation as it may deem proper. A member of a library board may be removed for misconduct or neglect of duty by the governing body making the appointment. The members shall adopt such bylaws, rules and regulations for their own guidance and for the government of the free public library system as may be expedient. They shall have control of the expenditures of all moneys credited to the library fund. The board shall have the right to accept donations and bequests of money, personal property, or real estate for the establishment and maintenance of such free public library systems or endowments for same.

§42.1-36. Boards not mandatory. The formation, creation or continued existence of boards shall in nowise be considered or construed in any manner as mandatory upon any city or town with a manager, or upon any county with a county manager, county executive, urban county manager or urban county executive form of government, or the Counties of Chesterfield and Shenandoah, by virtue of this chapter.

§42.1-36.1. Power and duty of library boards and certain governing bodies regarding acceptable Internet use policies.

A. On or before December 1, 1999, and biennially thereafter, (i) every library board established pursuant to 42.1-35 or (ii) the governing body of any county, city, or town which, pursuant to 42.1-36, has not established

a library board pursuant to 42.1-35, shall file with the Librarian of Virginia an acceptable use policy for the international network of computer systems commonly known as the Internet. At a minimum, the policy shall contain provisions which (i) are designed to prohibit use by library employees and patrons of the library's computer equipment and communications services for sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading illegal material via the Internet, (ii) seek to prevent access by library patrons under the age of eighteen to material which is harmful to juveniles, and (iii) establish appropriate measures to be taken against persons who violate the policy. The library board or the governing body may include such other terms, conditions, and requirements in the library's policy as it deems appropriate, such as requiring written parental authorization for Internet use by juveniles or differentiating acceptable uses between elementary, middle, and high school students.

B. The library board or the governing body shall take such steps as it deems appropriate to implement and enforce the library's policy which may include, but are not limited to, (i) the use of software programs designed to block access by (a) library employees and patrons to illegal material or (b) library patrons under the age of eighteen to material which is harmful to juveniles or (c) both; (ii) charging library employees to casually monitor patrons' Internet use; or (iii) installing privacy screens on computers which access the Internet.

C. On or before December 1, 2000, and biennially thereafter, the Librarian of Virginia shall submit a report to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education, the House Committee on Science and Technology, and the Senate Committee on Education and Health which summarizes the acceptable use policies filed with the Librarian pursuant to this section and the status thereof.

§42.1-37. Establishment of regional library system. Two or more political subdivisions (counties or cities), by action of their governing bodies, may join in establishing and maintaining a regional free library system under the terms of a contract between such political subdivisions; provided, that in the case of established county or city free library systems, the library boards shall agree to such action.

§42.1-38. Agreements to create regional boards. Two or more political subdivisions (counties or cities) which have qualified for participation in the state's regional library program, have been recognized as a region by the State Library Board, and have made the minimum local appropriation of funds as may now or hereafter be recommended by the Board, are hereby empowered and authorized to execute contracts with each other to create a regional library board to administer and control the regional library services within the region. Each jurisdiction shall, as a part of such contract, have the power to appoint at least one member to the regional library board.

§42.1-39. Regional library boards generally. The members of the Board of a regional library system shall be appointed by the respective governing bodies represented. If the board of the regional library system is composed of two or more members from each county, city and town that is a part thereof, then each governing body represented on the board may appoint a member or an employee of the governing body to the board. Such members shall in the beginning draw lots for expiration of terms, to provide for staggered terms of office, and thereafter the appointment shall be for a term of four years. Vacancies shall be filled for unexpired terms as soon as possible in the manner in which members are regularly chosen. No appointive member shall be eligible to serve more than two successive terms. A member shall not receive a salary or other compensation for services as member, but necessary expenses actually incurred shall be paid from the library fund. A regional board member may be removed for misconduct or neglect of duty by the governing body making the appointment. The board members shall elect officers and adopt such bylaws, rules and regulations for their own guidance and for the government of the regional free library system as may be expedient. They shall have control of the expenditure of all moneys credited to

the regional free library fund. The regional board shall have the right to accept donations and bequests of money, personal property, or real estate for the establishment and maintenance of such regional free library system or endowments for same.

§42.1-40. Powers of regional library board. The regional library board shall have authority to execute contracts with the State Library Board, with the library boards of the respective jurisdictions, and any and all other agencies for the purpose of administering a public library service within the region, including contracts concerning allocation and expenditure of funds, to the same extent as the library board of any one of the jurisdictions which are parties to the agreement would be so authorized. In addition, to effectuate the purposes of this chapter, a regional library board is empowered to sell the surplus assets, including real estate, of the said regional library board if the net proceeds therefrom are used for public library services within the region.

§42.1-41. Funds and expenses of regional library system. The expenses of the regional library system shall be apportioned among the participating political subdivisions on such basis as shall be agreed upon in the contract. The treasurer of the regional library board shall have the custody of the funds of the regional free library system; and the treasurers or other financial officers of the participating jurisdictions shall transfer quarterly to him all moneys collected or appropriated for this purpose in their respective jurisdictions. Such funds shall be expended only for the library service for which the county or city contracted and for no other purpose. The regional library board shall furnish a detailed report of receipts and disbursements of all funds at the regular meeting of the governing body of every participating jurisdiction after the close of the state's fiscal year. It shall make a similar report to the Library of Virginia. The treasurer of the board shall be bonded for an amount to be determined by the board. The board may authorize the treasurer to pay bond premiums from state aid library funds.

§42.1-42. Withdrawal from regional library system. No county or city participating in a regional library system shall withdraw therefrom without two years' notice to the other participating counties and cities without the consent of such other participating political subdivisions.

§42.1-43. Appropriation for free library or library service conducted by company, society or organization. The governing body of any county, city or town in which no free public library system as provided in this chapter shall have been established, may, in its discretion, appropriate such sums of money as to it seems proper for the support and maintenance of any free library or library service operated and conducted in such county, city or town by a company, society or association organized under the provisions of 13.1-801 through 13.1-980.

§42.1-44. Cooperative library system for Henrico and Chesterfield Counties and City of Richmond. Notwithstanding the repeal of Title 42 of the *Code of Virginia*, 42-12.1 to 42-12.5 of Chapter 2.1 of former Title 42 are continued in effect and are incorporated into this title by reference.

§42.1-45. Transfer of properties, etc. of public free library to governing body of city in which it is situated. The board of directors or trustees of any public free library established pursuant to Chapter 13, Acts of Assembly, 1924, approved February 13, 1924, may lease, convey, or transfer any interest to its properties, real or personal, to the governing body of the political subdivision in which such library be situated in order that such library may become a part of the public library system of such city, subject to such restrictions and conditions as may be agreed to by such board of directors or trustees and such governing body.

LAWS GOVERNING GRANTS-IN-AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

§42.1-46. Library policy of the Commonwealth. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Commonwealth, as a part of its provision for public education, to promote the establishment and development of public library service throughout its various political subdivisions.

§42.1-47. Grants for development of library service. In order to provide State aid in the development of public library service throughout the State, the Library Board, in this chapter sometimes called the Board, shall grant from such appropriations as are made for this purpose funds to provide library service.

§42.1-48. Grants to improve standards. In order to encourage the maintenance and development of proper standards, including personnel standards, and the combination of libraries or library systems into larger and more economical units of service, grants of state aid from funds available shall be made by the Board to any free public library or library system which qualifies under the standards set by the Board. The grants to each qualifying library or system in each fiscal year shall be as follows:

(a) Forty cents of state aid for every dollar expended, or to be expended, exclusive of state and federal aid, by the political subdivision or subdivisions operating or participating in the library or system. The grant to any county or city shall not exceed \$250,000;

(b) A per capita grant based on the population of the area served and the number of participating counties or cities: Thirty cents per capita for the first 600,000 persons to a library or system serving one city or county, and an additional ten cents per capita for the first 600,000 persons for each additional city or county served. Libraries or systems serving a population in excess of 600,000 shall receive ten cents per capita for the excess; and

(c) A grant of ten dollars per square mile of area served to every library or library system, and an additional grant of twenty dollars per square mile of area served to every library system serving more than one city or county.

The Board may establish procedures for the review and timely adjustment of such grants when the political subdivision or subdivisions operating such library or library system are affected by annexation.

§42.1-49. Grants to municipal libraries. Every qualifying municipal library serving an area containing less than 5,000 population shall receive its proper share, but not less than \$400.

§42.1-50. Limitation of grants; proration of funds. The total amount of grants under 42.1-48 and 42.1-49 shall not exceed the amount expended, exclusive of state and federal aid, by the political subdivision or subdivisions operating the library. If the state appropriations provided for grants under 42.1-48 and 42.1-49 are not sufficient to meet approved applications, the Library Board shall prorate the available funds in such manner that each application shall receive its proportionate share of each type of grant. Applications must be received prior to June one of each calendar year.

§42.1-51. Obligations of libraries and systems receiving aid. The obligations of the various library systems and libraries receiving state aid, shall consist of establishing and maintaining an organization as approved by the Board, provided that personnel standards of such library systems and libraries shall conform to the provisions of 42.1-15.1. All books and bookmobiles purchased with state aid funds shall, if the Board so determines, become the property of the Library of Virginia in the case of any library system or library which does not meet its obligations as determined by the Board.

§42.1-52. Standards of eligibility for aid; reports on operation of libraries; supervision of services. The Board shall establish standards under which library systems and libraries shall be eligible for state aid and may require reports on the operation of all libraries receiving state aid.

As long as funds are available, grants shall be made to the various libraries, library systems or contracting libraries applying for state aid in the order in which they meet the standards established by the Board.

In the event that any library meets the standards of the State Library Board but is unable to conform to 42.1-15 relating to the employment of qualified librarians, the Library Board may, under a contractual agreement with such library, provide professional supervision of its services and may grant state aid funds to it in reduced amounts under a uniform plan to be adopted by the State Library Board.

§42.1-54. Procedure for purchase of books, materials and equipment and payment on salaries. All proposals for books, materials and equipment to be purchased with state aid funds and all proposals for aid in the payment of salaries of certified librarians shall be submitted for approval to the Library of Virginia by the libraries, library systems or contracting libraries applying for state aid, in form prescribed by the Board, and those approved may be ordered by the libraries, library systems or contracting libraries. Payments and disbursements from the funds appropriated for this purpose shall be made by the State Treasurer upon the approval of the duly authorized representative of the Board, to the libraries, library systems or contracting libraries within thirty days of the beginning of each quarter.

§42.1-55. Free service available to all. The service of books in library systems and libraries receiving state aid shall be free and shall be made available to all persons living in the county, region, or municipality.

§42.1-56. Meaning of term “books.” The term “books” as used in this chapter may be interpreted in the discretion of the Board to mean books, magazines, newspapers, appropriate audiovisual materials and other printed matter.

§42.1-57. Authority of Library Board to accept and distribute federal funds. The Library Board is empowered, subject to approval of the Governor, to accept grants of federal funds for libraries and to allocate such funds to libraries under any plan approved by the Board and the appropriate federal authorities. Such allocations shall not be subject to the restrictions of this chapter.

§42.1-58. Agreements providing for expenditure of federal and matching funds. The Library Board and the cities and counties of the Commonwealth are authorized to enter into agreements providing for the supervision of the expenditure of federal funds allocated to such cities and counties and matching funds provided by such political subdivisions. Such agreement shall set forth the standards and conditions with respect to the expenditure of such funds.

C. REQUIREMENTS THAT MUST BE MET IN ORDER TO RECEIVE GRANTS-IN-AID (VAC 15-110-10)

In order to qualify for grants-in-aid, all libraries serving more than 5,000 persons must meet the following requirements by July 1, 1992:

1. Be organized under the appropriate section of the *Code of Virginia*. Not more than one library in a county or regional library system or a municipal government unit may receive a grant.

2. Submit to the State Library Board:

Charter, resolution, or other legal papers under which they are organized.

A copy of the bylaws of the board of trustees, a list of trustees, revised as changes occur.

A five-year plan, adopted by the governing body of the library service in the area (or areas) served. In order to receive continuing grants, this plan must be updated annually.

A written statement of policy covering such items as service, personnel, and maintenance of book collections and other materials.

Statistical and financial reports including audits and statements of progress of the plan as requested.

A copy of the budget for the expenditure of local funds, not including anticipated state and federal funds. This must be submitted annually.

3. Have local operating expenditures of at least 50 percent of the median statewide local operating expenditures per capita, two-thirds of which must be from taxation or endowment. The median shall be recalculated each biennium. Libraries obtaining aid for the first time or those falling below the 50 percent median must meet the requirement within five years. Libraries that fall below 50 percent of the median in local expenditures per capita must submit a plan to the State Library Board for reaching the minimum requirement. The plan must include a schedule of annual increases in local expenditures of not less than 20 percent of the amount needed to attain local per capita expenditures of 50 percent of the median within five years.

Local operating expenditures from taxation or endowment for any library, or library system, shall not fall below that of the previous year. In cases where the budgets of all the departments of the local government are reduced below those of the previous year, the library's state grant-in-aid would be reduced. The State Library may require that the amount of such reduction in the library's total expenditure be subtracted from the library's eligibility and that the state grant be reduced accordingly. If the library's budget is reduced and other agencies' budgets are not, then the library would receive no state grant-in-aid and would be ineligible for one until local expenditures shall have again reached or exceeded the local effort at the time of the last previous grant.

The library would be ineligible for any federal funds if local funds are reduced below that of the previous year.

Grants-in-aid shall be used as supplements to local funds.

The amount of any undesignated balance in the local operating budget at the end of the fiscal year that exceeds 10 percent will be subtracted from the grant that is based on that year's expenditures.

4. Have certified librarians in positions as required by state law. Libraries failing to employ a certified librarian in the position of director will have their state aid grant reduced by 25 percent.
5. Keep open a headquarters library or centrally located branch at least 40 hours a week for a full range of library services. This schedule must include at least three consecutive evening hours and appropriate weekend hours. Evening hours are defined as the hours after 5:00 PM.
6. Maintain an up-to-date reference collection and set up procedures for securing materials from other libraries through interlibrary loan.
7. Organize materials for convenient use through shelf arrangement, classification, and cataloging, and provide a catalog of its resources.
8. Stimulate use of materials through publicity, displays, reading lists, story hours, book talks, book and film discussions, and other appropriate means.
9. Lend guidance in all outlets to individuals in the use of informational, educational, and recreational materials.
10. Maintain a collection of currently useful materials by annual additions and systematic removal of items no longer useful to maintain the purposes of quality of its resources. Have a telephone and the number of the telephone listed in the local telephone directory.
11. Provide the basic services listed in this section free of charge to the public as required by law.
12. Every regional, county, and city library serving an area of more than 400 square miles, or more than 25,000 persons, must provide some form of extension service acceptable to the board.
13. If the library system has two or more service units, either branches or stations, it must maintain a scheduled, frequent delivery system.
14. The Library Board may, at its discretion, make exceptions for a specified period of time to any single requirement listed above. The exception will be made only if the library can show that a real effort has been made to meet the requirement and that significant progress has been made toward meeting this requirement.

Approved by the State Library Board, March 13, 1991.

REQUIREMENTS THAT MUST BE MET BY LIBRARIES SERVING A POPULATION OF FEWER THAN 5,000 IN ORDER TO RECEIVE STATE GRANTS-IN-AID (17 VAC 15-90-10)

These requirements must be met by July 1, 1972, when full funding is anticipated.

In order to qualify for state grants-in-aid, all libraries shall meet the following requirements:

1. Be organized under the appropriate section of the *Code of Virginia*.
2. Submit to the State Library Board:

Charter, resolutions, or other legal papers under which they are organized.

A copy of the bylaws of the board of trustees, a list of trustees, revised as changes occur.

A five-year plan, adopted by the governing body of the library (trustees or equivalent) for the development of library service in the area (areas) served. In order to receive continuing grants, any revisions in this plan must be submitted annually.

A written statement of policy covering such items as service, personnel, and maintenance of book collections and other materials.

Statistical and financial reports including statements of progress of the plan as requested.

3. All libraries shall meet the following minimum requirements:

Give at least 20 hours of public service per week.

Provide adequate staff, with at least one paid employee working 20 hours a week while library is open.

Have a collection of currently useful books of at least 5,000 volumes.

Provide a minimum of 1,750 square feet of space.

Be located on a site that is conveniently situated for service to the greatest number of people in the area.

Add at least 200 currently useful books per year.

Expend annually at least \$3,000.00 per year in local funds, 2/3 of which must be from taxation or endowment. Local operating expenditures for any library, or library system, shall not fall below that of the previous year. The amount of any undesignated balance at the end of the fiscal year that exceeds 10 percent of the library's total budget will be subtracted from the grant that is based on that year's expenditures.

Provide an author, subject, and title catalog.

Provide a telephone.

It is strongly recommended that libraries in this category look toward joining larger units of service in order to meet recommended State standards.

Approved by the State Library Board, April 27, 1970.

E. RESOURCES

American Library Association (ALA)—advocates for the public’s interest, supports library professionals in acquiring competencies for current and cutting-edge content, and supports libraries as centers for community culture and lifelong learning. Advisory board trustees need to be aware of the primary professional library association, ALA, to keep up with trends in the profession, as well as having the latest links to legislation and advocacy initiative content at the national and state levels. <http://www.ala.org>

America’s Children—is an annual report from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that typically focuses on the well-being of the nation’s children and teenagers. The data provides advisory board trustees with extensive content (updated annually) for planning for an important public library constituent base. <http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/>

Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL)—touted as the voice of rural and small libraries across America, this is a network of persons throughout the country who believe in the value of these libraries and strive to create resources and services that address national, state, and local priorities for libraries situated in these communities. <https://www.arsl.org/>

BoardSource—provides leaders with an extensive range of tools, resources, and research data to increase board effectiveness and strengthen organizational impact. <https://boardsource.org/>

CensusScope—offers data on U.S. demographic trends with graphics and exportable trend data. Board trustees can use this data to assist in strategic planning. <http://www.censusscope.org/>

Code of Virginia – Title 42.1 - Libraries—lists the Virginia legal statutes relating to libraries and librarians. Chapter 2 in particular relates to local and regional libraries, which also covers information relating to library boards. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title42.1/>

Candid—offers extensive information on locating and getting grants. While current information is readily available, additional information can be found in the current and archived issues of the *Philanthropy News Digest* and in Foundation Center publications. <https://candid.org/>

Demographics Research Group—a part of the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, this site provides methods to bring population data to life through overviews, estimates, projections, and maps. Users can explore trends in population, regional distribution, politics, school enrollment, and migration. <https://demographics.coopercenter.org/>

Free Management Library—provides an interesting, massive list of resources to support nonprofit management, governing, and advisory boards. This site offers links to hundreds of forms, processes, and templates. <https://managementhelp.org/>

General Social Survey—is an excellent, searchable site that tracks “trends in American attitudes, experiences, practices, and concerns.” Subjects included are broad, and specific areas of interest include population, education, and statistics. It can also assist board trustees in strategic planning. <https://gss.norc.org/>

Library Research Services (LRS)—gathers and presents library statistics and research for library professionals, public officials, and the media. LRS reports and analyzes statistics and conducts studies

on major library issues. This information provides a base of information for working with media and designing public library strategic plans. <http://www.lrs.org>

Pew Research Center—a non-partisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping the world. It conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, media content analysis, and other empirical social science research. One of the many topics they devote their work to is libraries. <https://www.pewresearch.org/topics/libraries/>

Planning for Library Excellence: Standards for Virginia Public Libraries—revised in 2019, this resource provides benchmarks for direction and aspiration for library systems, as well as information to help libraries plan and evaluate their services to meet the needs of their users. Essential reading for boards of trustees, governing officials, trustees of funding agencies, and community support groups involved in planning for a library's future. <https://www.lva.virginia.gov/lib-edu/ldnd/standards/default.asp>

Statistical Data for Virginia Public Libraries—data collected each year from the public libraries via the annual report. <https://www.lva.virginia.gov/lib-edu/LDND/libstats/>

United for Libraries—a division of the American Library Association completely dedicated to helping library trustees, Friends, and foundations. Various training elements and resources can be found here. <http://www.ala.org/united/>

Urban Libraries Council—while all libraries do not have the same issues, much can be said about larger libraries of all types facing similar issues as well as urban academic libraries having the same issues as urban public libraries. The Urban Libraries Council website provides good information on trends, activities, and events for public libraries in metropolitan areas and the corporations that serve them. <http://www.urbanlibraries.org/>

Virginia Library Association (VLA)—the purpose of the association is to develop, promote, and improve library and information services, library staff, and the profession of librarianship in order to advance literacy and learning and to ensure access to information in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Since its founding in 1905, VLA has grown in number of members; expanded the scope of its organization; engaged legislatively at the state and federal level; provided its trustees with newsletters, scholarly journals, and a website; and supported library education, training, and outreach. <https://www.vla.org/>

Virginia Library Association / CQ Engage Action Center—a site dedicated to legislative initiatives on behalf of the Virginia Library Association. Individuals can sign up for legislative alerts and search for their elected officials. <https://cqrcengage.com/alava/home?14>

WebJunction—is an excellent resource and one of the most current sites on the web for public library-specific information, policies, discussions, webinars, archived webinars, and other content. Library staff can access free online professional development courses by creating an account. <https://www.webjunction.org/home.html>



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