



Idaho Trustee Manual:

A Guide for Public Library Trustees

The purpose of the ICfL *Idaho Trustee Manual* is to provide a convenient and reliable information source for current and prospective trustees and library directors on issues concerning public libraries and their boards of trustees.

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Welcome to ICfL's Guide for Public Library Boards of Trustees

One of the most democratic of American political traditions is to give the legal authority for the operation of public agencies to boards made up of members of the general public. Thank you for your willingness to serve as a trustee on your local public library board. The public library in its general make-up is a very democratic institution. It is open to all, but no one is forced to use it. The principle that lies behind it is that, given the opportunity, people can learn on their own and they can decide for themselves. As a public library trustee, you have the vital role of ensuring the continuance of this democratic principle. It is my hope that this guide will assist you as you build the library's ability to serve your community.

— Ann Joslin, State Librarian

Foreword

Libraries: A Great Democratic Tradition

I believe that the library is society's most vibrant, democratic and life-affirming institution. It does not attempt to impose its opinions on anyone, but seeks to help people make up their own minds. At its best, it is open to everyone, but it forces itself on no one. Because it neither affirms nor rejects any opinion, it gives a voice to the unpopular, the unheard and the brokenhearted, sometimes at a great cost to itself. Libraries should never be an afterthought. To have a great community, a great school, or a great college or university, you begin by creating a great library. And to have a great library, you must begin by having great librarians. Every one of us [in this room] has been given the opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives. It is both a wonderful privilege and a tremendous responsibility to be a librarian."

— **Gardner C. Hanks**, accepting the Librarian of the Year Award, Idaho Library Association, 2001

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- Common Sense Media
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- The U.S. Department of Labor
- The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
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- WebJunction®
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- The Wyoming State Library
- The trustees and directors of Idaho's public libraries
- ICfL's area field consultants

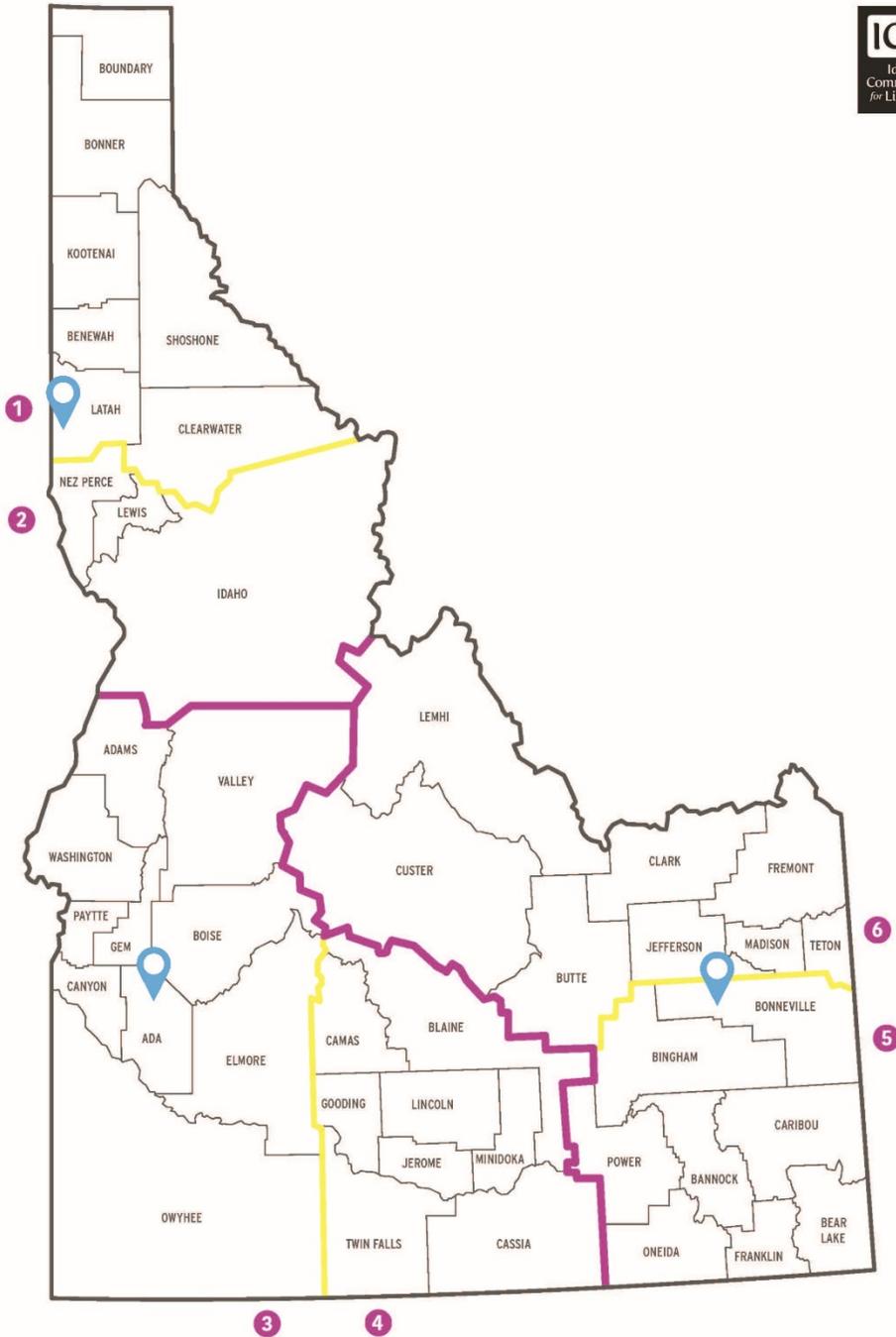
Updates

When updates are made to this manual, notification will be given on Idaho's library listserv, LibIdaho, a service of the Idaho Library Association (ILA). The notification will include the link to the online document. The notification will include the link to the online document. To sign up for LibIdaho, visit http://www.idaholibraries.org/subscribe_to_libidaho for instructions.

Notice will also be given via Truldaho, the e-mail discussion list for public library trustees in Idaho. Truldaho, provided as a service of the Idaho Library Association (ILA), welcomes respectful discussion of professional issues. To subscribe to Truldaho, visit <http://lists.ala.org/sympa/info/truidaho>, select "Subscribe" in the sidebar, enter your e-mail address, then click "Submit." Check your inbox for an authentication request. This verifies that the subscription request is from a person who really wants to be subscribed. Then click on the URL provided in the e-mail message to verify. Follow any other instructions on the screen if provided.

For more information about this manual, trustees and directors are encouraged to contact the ICfL area field consultant for their area:

- **Northern Idaho — Regions I and II — Emily Sitz, Moscow Field Office**
 - 208-882-8882
 - 866-212-0646 toll-free
 - Emily.Sitz@libraries.idaho.gov
- **Southwest and South-Central Idaho — Regions III and IV — Kevin Tomlinson, Boise Office**
 - 208-334-2150
 - 800-458-3271 toll-free
 - Kevin.Tomlinson@libraries.idaho.gov
- **Eastern Idaho — Regions V and VI — Patrick Bodily, Idaho Falls Field Office**
 - 208-525-7211
 - 800-548-6212 toll-free
 - Patrick.Bodily@libraries.idaho.gov





“Public library service” means the provision of planned collections of materials and information services provided by a library established under the provisions of chapter 26 or 27, [title 33](#), Idaho Code, and paid for primarily through tax support provided under these statutes. These services shall be provided at a facility, accessible to the public at regularly scheduled hours and set aside for this purpose. The services shall be governed by a citizen board appointed or elected for this purpose and shall be administered and operated by paid staff who have received appropriate training in library skills and management. The services shall meet standards established by the board of library commissioners.

[Section 33-2702\(6\), Idaho Code](#)

The Board of Library Commissioners is designated as the policymaking body for the Idaho Commission for Libraries.

[§ 33-2503, Idaho Code](#)



Boardsmanship

Basic Responsibilities

The library board is legally responsible for overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the public library. Board members, operating as a team, hire the library's administrator (the library director), plan the library's services, and approve the library's policies. They decide how much the library will request for its budget, and they have, according to Idaho Code, exclusive control of the expenditure of library funds.

Being a library trustee, then, is not just an honor. It is a responsibility. Good library board members do not just attend board meetings. They also take the time to study the role of the library trustee. They are aware of the laws that govern public agencies in general and the public library in particular. They learn what is going on in the library community by participating in state-wide library organizations and attending continuing education opportunities. They read and understand the bylaws of their board and the policies of their library. They talk to members of the community about the library and they bring this input with them to board meetings.

Effective Trustees

The issues and decisions involved in the administration of the modern public library are varied and complex. Trusteeship is not an honorary position. It is a working relationship with the community, library director, and fellow trustees. Trustees must devote a great deal of time and express a high level of interest to fulfill their duties. Commitment is the primary qualification for those who serve on the board.

Effective boards consist of informed, dedicated citizens who represent a cross-section of the community. There is a direct correlation between the quality of service a library offers its community and the knowledge, capability, and enthusiasm of its board members.

Being a trustee is the most important volunteer position in the library, and the only one that is not supervised by the library director or his designee. Because it is not possible to supervise one's supervisor, it is important that each library trustee respect boundaries by not volunteering for other jobs within the library until after her or his term has ended.

Effective Trustees Are Citizens Who Have:

- Readiness to devote time and effort to learning about the library in addition to the statutory duties and responsibilities of the job
- Recognition of the importance of the library as a center of information, culture, recreation, lifelong learning, and economic development in the community
- Willingness to become knowledgeable in areas of librarianship that include standards, trends, and new developments
- Rapport with the community, including a concerned awareness of diverse social and economic conditions, needs, and interests of all segments of the public
- Positions of leadership in the community in government, business, education, finance, law, or related fields
- Initiative and ability to work cooperatively with others
- Sound judgment, a sense of fiscal responsibility, legal understanding, and political awareness
- Verbal and written communication skills, the ability to relate to the public, and the availability to represent the library at public functions and meetings
- Willingness to participate with local, state, and national library leaders and trustees to improve library service on all levels.

A Trustee Knows:

- Type and organization of your library board
 - City library — a library established by a city ordinance and operating under the provisions of [chapter 26, title 33, Idaho Code](#)
 - Public library district — a library established and operating under the provisions of [chapter 27, title 33, Idaho Code](#), as an independent taxing district
 - School-Community library — a public library established by the electors of a school district for the benefit of its citizens. There are currently three school-community library districts in Idaho. As of June 30, 1994, no new school-community library may be established.
- Laws under which the library is organized
- Duties and responsibilities of a member of the board
- Library services and resources available
- Local government — structure, people, and operations
- Information needs and interests of the community
- How to work effectively in a group
- That all powers are at all times vested in the library board and none at all in the individual board member
- That the individual has no power to act for the library in any way, unless authorized by the board itself
- That it is always the board as a unit that holds the responsibility and the powers
- The Idaho Commission for Libraries and how to contact her area field consultant.
- National library trends, standards, and developments
- Librarians use a lot of professional jargon and will be glad to translate.

A Trustee Attends:

- Every board meeting and assigned committee meeting
- Idaho Library Association ([ILA](#)), Pacific Northwest Library Association ([PNLA](#)), Association for Rural & Small Libraries ([ARSL](#)), American Library Association ([ALA](#)) meetings and/or conferences whenever possible
- Other area and local library-specific meetings and workshops
- Online training opportunities to enhance boardmanship skills.

A Trustee Plans:

- For future growth and priorities of the library
- Policies of the library
- Bylaws of the library board
- Active community awareness programs
- Orientation for new board members.

A Trustee Supports:

- His library director and library
- The local governing body
- The community and citizens she or he represents.

A Trustee Supports or Opposes:

- Local, state, and federal legislation affecting libraries — always for the good of libraries.

A Trustee Acts:

- To articulate the library's needs
- To seek funding to support the library's plan of service and its operations
- To promote the library at all times — not only when called upon by the library's director, city council, or private citizens
- To develop good personal relations with local, state, and federal representatives of government
- To make himself, his board, and his library visible in the community
- To ensure the best interests of the library and the community it serves.

A Trustee Remembers:

- To keep confidential information confidential and does not give out information regarding future board actions or plans
- Not to voice her opposition or criticism, either publicly or privately, after a policy or rule is adopted by a majority vote of the board
- To carry his full share of responsibility as a board member, assuring that a few members do not have to do all the work or take all the blame or praise
- That all five trustees — including the chair — are equals, each with voting rights
- That individual trustees do not make assignments for the library's director, but must make these decisions as a group, in an open meeting, and following chain of command
- That the library board does not involve itself in the internal operations of the library, which is the library director's job.

Twelve Golden Rules for Board Members

1. A Trustee must have an interest in the library. Does she or he believe enough in the educational, informational, and recreational role of the library to fight for the library as the church member fights for her or his church, the school person for her or his educational program, the doctor for her or his patient? It is a duty of the Trustee to do so.
2. A Trustee must have time to give to the library. Continuity of policy is almost impossible if a board member is absent two out of three meetings. No citizen should accept appointment as a library Trustee if she or he does not intend to come regularly to meetings. Likewise, a Trustee who finds new interests interfering with attendance should resign.
3. A Trustee must consider the position not a matter of prestige, but an opportunity for courageous and forward-looking efforts to push the library ahead. An ideal trustee is a good businessperson, is interested in education, has few prejudices, and has good judgment, sound character, common sense, and public spirit. A Trustee should be chosen with these personal qualities in mind and not because of the church she or he attends, the section of town in which she or he lives, her or his political party affiliations, and so on.
4. A Trustee must know the law under which the library is organized.
5. A Trustee serves without compensation.
6. A Trustee carries a full share of responsibility as a board member, assuring that a few members do not have to do all the work or take all the blame or praise.
7. A Trustee does not voice her or his opposition or criticism, either publicly or privately, after a policy or rule is adopted by a majority vote of the board.
8. A Trustee is careful to keep confidential information confidential and does not give out information regarding future board actions or plans.
9. A Trustee treats the staff members and the librarian in a completely impersonal fashion. Under no circumstances does a Trustee listen to grievances of staff members or treat individual problems on her or his own. The library director is in charge of the staff and has administrative control until a grievance is presented to the library board as a whole.

10. A Trustee should know the funding sources of the library and be familiar with the library budget.
11. A Trustee must know the needs of the library and community and be aware of trends and new procedures in the library field. The best and perhaps only way to do this is to read professional library publications, meet with Trustees of other libraries, visit other libraries, and attend the annual conferences and meetings of Trustees and librarians.
12. A Trustee knows that all powers are always vested in the library board and none at all in the individual board member. The individual has no power to act for the library in any way, unless authorized by the board itself; it is always the board as a unit that holds the responsibility and the powers.

Excerpted from *The Public Library Start-Up Guide* by Christine Lind Hage. Reprinted with permission from Ms. Hage.

Some Additional Guidelines for Trustees

- The actual management of the library is left to the library director, whose responsibility it is to select library materials, employ the staff, and supervise day-to-day operations.
- Trustees respect confidential information that is protected by Idaho’s Public Records Act, I.C. § 74-108 <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH1/SECT74-108/>. In addition, trustees do not divulge information regarding future board actions or plans until such action is officially taken.
- Trustees observe all publicity and information policies of the board and library. Trustees do not give information individually but refer requests to the library’s director or appropriate representative to interpret policies.
- Trustees do not suggest hiring a relative or two members of the same family as library employees. There is more information on this topic on the following page.
- All rules, policies, and assignments directed to the library director are approved by a quorum of the board at a meeting held under the provisions of Idaho’s Open Meetings Law, [chapter 2, title 74, Idaho Code](#). All five trustees — including the chairperson — are equals, and abide by this rule.
- The board does not hold board meetings without the library director. It is the director’s job to attend all library meetings as stated in §§ [33-2608](#) and [33-2721](#).
- Complaints from the public are the library director’s responsibility. Continued dissatisfaction and problems are taken up at the board meeting only if policy revision is necessary or legal ramifications are involved.

[Idaho Code, section 18-1359 USING PUBLIC POSITION FOR PERSONAL GAIN.](#)

			4 Great Great Grandparent
		4 Great Grand Uncle/Aunt	3 Great Grandparent
	3 Child of Great Uncle/Aunt	3 Great Uncle/ Aunt	2 Grandparent
3 Second Cousin	2 Cousin	2 Uncle/Aunt	1 Parent
3 Cousin's Child	2 Nephew/Niece	1 Sibling	1 Person 'A'
3 Grand Nephew/Niece			1 Child
			2 Grandchild
			3 Great Grandchild

18-1359(1)(e). No public servant shall appoint or vote for the appointment of any person related to him by blood or marriage within the second degree, to any clerkship, office, position, employment or duty, when the salary, wages, pay or compensation of such appointee is to be paid out of public funds or fees of office, or appoint or furnish employment to any person whose salary, wages, pay or compensation is to be paid out of public funds or fees of office, and who is related by either blood or marriage within the second degree to any other public servant when such appointment is made on the agreement or promise of such other public servant or any other public servant to appoint or furnish employment to anyone so

related to the public servant making or voting for such appointment. Any public servant who pays out of any public funds under his control or who draws or authorizes the drawing of any warrant or authority for the payment out of any public fund of the salary, wages, pay, or compensation of any such ineligible person, knowing him to be ineligible, is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished as provided in this chapter.

18-1359(3). No person related to a mayor or member of a city council by blood or marriage within the second degree shall be appointed to any clerkship, office, position, employment or duty with the mayor's or city council's city when the salary, wages, pay or compensation of such appointee or employee is to be paid out of public funds.

The above consanguinity chart is from the [Idaho Ethics in Government Manual](#), published by the Office of the Attorney General of Idaho. Reprinted with permission.

HELP WANTED

Public Library Trustee

Individual with robust desire to learn and compelling wish to contribute to the community needed for service as trustee on the [insert library name] Library Board.

The winning candidate will enjoy an open mind, the ability to listen actively, an enthusiasm for lifelong learning, and a vigorous commitment to intellectual freedom.

Must have time to dedicate to responsibilities on a recurring basis. Those seeking a title in name only or a résumé item need not apply.

Orientation

The library board welcomes the new members of the board by providing the information necessary to feel comfortable with their new job and to begin work. Like any new volunteers, trustees will be more productive if they know how the organization functions and what is expected of them.

The library's board is responsible for providing a planned orientation program for new trustees. The library's director assists in the orientation of new trustees, including introduction to library procedures, departments, and staff. The new trustee should be made aware of how introductory activities will be handled and that responsibility for planning and implementing the orientation is shared by the board chairperson, board members, and library director.

The specifics will obviously vary with the style of the board and the size or type of library. However, the importance of a written orientation plan cannot be overemphasized.

Orientation Kit and Notebook

A new trustee needs information to review and consult. This should be compiled for new trustees in a binder that includes:

- Annual schedule of board meetings
- List of board members, names, addresses, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers
- Bylaws of the board¹
- Organizational chart for library, along with staff levels and pay scales
- Staff lists, titles, responsibilities, locations, job descriptions
- All policies of the library and board including code of ethics, intellectual freedom, personnel, collection development/materials selection, challenged materials, circulation, meeting room use, Internet use, and acceptable behavior.

¹ The board's bylaws are the set of rules that define the framework of the board's operations. Bylaws ensure that all members of the board clearly understand their role in the governance of the library.

Library policy defines the framework of the library's operation. The library director implements policies set by the board. The board works with the library director to adopt, amend, or retire library policies. This is one of the most important functions of the library board. A library policy is only a policy once it has been approved by the library's governing board in an open meeting held according to Idaho's [Open Meetings Law, chapter 2, title 74, Idaho Code](#).

- Strategic plan
- Most recent annual report of the library, with prior years for comparison
- Meeting minutes from the preceding 12 months
- Current budget and fiscal reports
- History of the library and the goals and objectives of its current strategic plan.
- Local laws, charter, and contracts pertaining to the library
- Community analyses, such as census figures, economic and occupational trends.

New Trustees Should Meet with the Library Director to Learn How the Library Is:

- Organized and governed
- Funded and budgeted
- Operated from day to day
- Serving the needs of the community
- Linked to other resources and groups related to the board of trustees

New Trustees Should Meet with Trustee Representatives to Learn about the Board:

- Type of board (city or district), officers, and committees
- Meeting location, schedule, and operation

- Responsibilities and expectations
- Goals, strategic plans, and projects in progress
- Accomplishments
- Roles of the director-board team

New Trustees Should Tour the Library (or Libraries) and Meet Staff Members.

Introductory Board Meeting

It is a good idea to hold the regular board meeting at a slower pace than usual so that new library trustees can ask questions and follow the business at hand. It is also important to have experienced board members briefly recap activities and accomplishments of the past year.

After adjournment, it helps to spend time reviewing with the new trustee and to ask for her opinions and observations.

On-going discussions and information sessions can be a valuable supplement to the on-the-job training that follows orientation. It pays to show some special attention to new members until they feel comfortable in the role.

Ethics for Public Library Trustees

Library Trustee Ethics Statement

Public library Trustees are accountable for the resources of the library as well as for ensuring that the library provides the best possible service to its community.

For more information, take a look at the [Public Library Trustee Ethics Statement](#), as approved by the United for Libraries board.

The Idaho Attorney General's office publishes the *Idaho Ethics in Government Manual*, available online at <http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/manuals.html>.

This manual contains information for elected and appointed officials concerning conflicts of interest, nepotism, and other ethical issues.

Intellectual Freedom

The libraries of America are and must ever remain the home of free, inquiring minds. To them our citizens ... must be able to turn with clear confidence that there they can freely seek the whole truth, unwarped by fashion and uncompromised by expediency."

— Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953

According to the American Library Association's (ALA's) [Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q & A](#), "intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored."

What Is Censorship?

"Censorship is the suppression of ideas and information that certain persons — individuals, groups, or government officials — find objectionable or dangerous. It is no more complicated than someone saying, "Don't let anyone read this book, or buy that magazine, or view that film, because I object to it!"

The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) — <http://www.ala.org/offices/oif> — has been a leader, educator, and supporter of local efforts to ensure that the library remains "... the home of free, inquiring minds."

The Idaho Library Association maintains an Intellectual Freedom Committee page — http://www.idaholibraries.org/intellectual_freedom_committee — where you can find more information and Idaho contacts.

There are multiple definitions of *censorship* available on the Idaho Public Television website: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/cultureshock/whodecides/definitions.html>.

Library Bill of Rights

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

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

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

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Please note that Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* includes age as one of the factors that should not affect a patron's equitable access to the library. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users. The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. ALA maintains that children and young adults unquestionably possess First

Amendment rights, including the right to receive information at the library. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Each child matures at his or her own rate. Different children have different background and interests as well as different reading levels and abilities. Decisions about what materials are suitable for particular children should be made by the people who know them best: their parents or legal guardians. While librarians are not authorized to act as parents, they are happy to provide suggestions and guidance to parents and younger library users at any time.

For more information on this complex issue, please take a look at ALA's document on [Coping with Challenges](#). Here you will find sage advice on the role of libraries and librarians in serving children and advice on how parents can help children and teens make the best use of the library.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by ALA's Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

Movie Ratings and Public Libraries

The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) is an American trade association that represents the six major Hollywood studios: 20th Century Fox Film Corporation; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment, Inc.; Universal Pictures; Walt Disney Studios; and Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc.

MPAA assigns movie ratings in the United States and is also politically active in lobbying for its member studios.

The MPAA administers a motion picture rating system used in the U.S. to rate the suitability of films' themes and content for certain audiences. The rating system is completely voluntary, and ratings have no legal standing. An unrated film is often denoted by NR in the media, although NR is not a formal MPAA rating. Movie theater

owners — as private business owners — enforce the MPAA film ratings voluntarily once those ratings have been assigned.

Public libraries, as tax-funded entities, do not discriminate on the basis of origin, age, background, or views. It should also be noted that the presence of films, books, or other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library. The adoption, enforcement, or endorsement of any of these rating systems by a library violates the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* and may be unconstitutional. The American Library Association opposes labeling as a means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library resources.

For more information on this topic, please read [Labeling and Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

If parents would like to see reviews of films as well as comments from other parents, one source is [Amazon.com](#). For many of the books and films available from Amazon, there are reviews from professional journals and newspapers as well as reviews written by parents for other parents.

Two other useful resources for parents are part of the LiLI Databases:

- **NoveList Plus** is a trusted source of reading recommendations for both fiction and nonfiction for all ages. This database offers read-alike recommendations for books, listen-alike recommendations for audiobooks, series information, professional reviews, reading lists, award winners, and more.
- **NoveList K-8 Plus** is a trusted source of recommendations for just-right books for younger readers, resources for teachers and parents, reading lists, award winners, and more.
- To learn more about NoveList Plus and NoveList K-8 Plus, visit [LiLI.org](#). LiLI is provided by the Idaho Commission for Libraries and assisted with funds from the Library Services and Technologies Act through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Another handy tool is **Common Sense Media** (CSM), a San Francisco-based non-profit organization that provides education and advocacy to families to promote safe technology and media for children. CSM reviews books, movies, TV shows, video

games, apps, music, and websites and rates them in terms of age-appropriate educational content, positive messages/role models, violence, sex, profanity, and more for parents making media choices for their kids. Common Sense Media has also developed a set of ratings that are intended to gauge the educational value of videos, games, and apps. To learn more about Common Sense Media, visit <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>.

Challenges to Library Materials

Public library boards should have in place a collection development policy that includes a procedure for working with community members who challenge library materials². This is usually included as the last section of the library's Collection Development Policy. This Challenged Materials section should include a Request for Reconsideration of Materials form with instructions on how to submit the form and an explanation of how the reconsideration process works.

For privacy reasons, the library board should not be involved in challenges except as part of the appeals process. This is because the library board's meetings must be held according to Idaho's Open Meetings Law. For more information, see the Patron Privacy Section, below.

An example of a well written Request for Reconsideration of Materials form is the one used by the Ada Community Library, Ada County, Idaho:
<http://www.adalib.org/system/sites/default/files/pdf/Request%20for%20Reconsideration%20form.doc>.

² A challenge, in the context of a library, is the attempt by a person or group of people to have literature restricted or removed from a public library or from a school curriculum. According to the American Library Association (ALA), a successful challenge would result in the removal of those materials, a form of censorship. ALA believes that it is important to monitor challenges made to books as well as actual bannings, as a challenge may lead to self-censorship by those seeking to avoid controversy. The word *materials* refers to all formats, including, but not limited to, print and electronic formats.

Patron Privacy Information

Related to Intellectual Freedom and of concern to public library boards is the privacy of patron information required by Idaho Code. According to I.C. § 74-108(3):

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH1/SECT74-108/>, the following records are exempt from disclosure: ... (3) The records of a library which, when examined alone, or when examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out, requesting, or using an item from a library.

Library boards and directors should work with their legal counsel to develop a policy concerning patron privacy that reflects Idaho Code's requirements. See Also the [Policy Development](#) section.

Resources and Examples

- ALA's *Code of Ethics* - <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics>
- ALA's *Core Values of Librarianship* - <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/corevalues>
- ALA's *Freedom to Read Statement* - <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomreadstatement>
- ALA's *Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials and Facilities* - <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/guidelinesforaccesspolicies>
- ALA's *Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q & A* - <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/faq>
- ALA's *Library Bill of Rights* - <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom - <http://www.ala.org/offices/oif>

- *Idaho Open Meetings Law Manual* -
<http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/OpenMeeting.pdf>
- *Idaho Public Records Law Manual* -
<http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/PublicRecordsLaw.pdf>
- *Free Access to Libraries for Minors* -
<http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=interpretations&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=8639>

Trustee Roles & Governance

There are three types of public library in Idaho that are authorized by Idaho Code:

- **City libraries (a city department) — Idaho Code section 33-2601:**

“It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state of Idaho, as a part of the provisions for public education, to promote the establishment and development of free library service for all the people in Idaho. It is the purpose of this act to assure an informed electorate by enabling the provision of free local library service, in the present and in the future, to children in their formative years and to adults for their continuing education. To carry out the purpose of this act, an independent, nonpartisan board shall govern the library.

“Every library established in this chapter shall be forever free for the use of the residents of the city, always subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the library board may find necessary to adopt.”

- **District libraries (independent taxing districts) — I.C. § 33-2701:**

“It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state of Idaho, as a part of the provisions for public education, to promote the establishment and development of public library service for all the people of Idaho. By so declaring, the state acknowledges that the ability of its citizens to access information has a critical impact on the state’s educational success, economic development, provision for an informed electorate, and overall quality of life. It is the purpose of this chapter to integrate, extend and add to existing library services and resources so that public library service may be available to all residents of the state from infancy through adulthood, beginning in the formative years and continuing for lifelong learning.”

- **School-community libraries (a district library that serves both as public library and school library) — I.C. § 33-2737:**

“(a) The board of trustees of any school district in which is situated no incorporated city having a population in excess of one thousand (1,000),

and in which no public library is maintained under any other provision of law, shall, upon petition of twenty (20) or more school district electors, submit to the school district electors of the district the question whether there shall be a public library established by the district for the benefit of the citizens thereof.”

As of June 30, 1994, new school-community libraries may no longer be established, per I.C. § 33-2737(d).

Each of these types of library has a board of trustees to:

- Establish library policy;
- Set and oversee the library’s operating budget;
- Hire, supervise, evaluate, and work as a team with the library’s director;
- Plan for the library’s growth and direction by creating a strategic plan;
- Ensure that its community is well represented by, and informed about, the library;
- Advocate for the library by communicating with decision makers at the local, state, and national levels.

In Idaho Code, city libraries are established in Title 33, Chapter 26, Public Libraries (<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/>); district libraries and school-community libraries, in Title 33, Chapter 27, Public Library District (<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/>).

Resources

- WebJunction Trustee Resources – <http://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/friends-trustees.html>
- Wyoming State Library’s “Trustee Trouble” Videos – <http://library.wyo.gov/services/ldo/trustees/>

Legal Roles and Responsibilities

Working as a board of five, the responsibilities of trustees can be divided into four general categories:

1. Governance

- a. Ensuring that the board and library's organization are in compliance with chapter 26 or 27, title 33, Idaho Code
- b. Building a competent board by
 - i. Recruiting board members who can help move the organization forward by utilizing their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs)
 - ii. Providing a planned orientation for new board members
 - iii. Ensuring that the board is representative of the community's current demographic
 - iv. Utilizing the services of your ICfL area field consultant
- c. Determining the library's policies and bylaws for the board's governance
- d. Ensuring the board's legal and ethical integrity in compliance with the provisions of title 74, Idaho Code, Transparent and Ethical Government
 - i. [Chapter 1, title 74 – Public Records Act](#)
 - ii. [Chapter 2, title 74 – Open Meetings Law](#)
 - iii. Chapter 3, title 74 – not yet assigned
 - iv. [Chapter 4, title 74 – Ethics in Government](#)
 - v. [Chapter 5, title 74 – Prohibitions Against Contracts with Officers](#)
- e. Monitoring and strengthening the library's programs and services, both outputs and outcomes to ensure continuous oversight and improvement

- f. Holding effective and efficient board meetings in compliance with chapter 2, title 74, Idaho Code

2. Finance

- a. Budgeting to carry out the library's strategic plan
- b. Budgeting to support open hours, staffing, and programming
- c. Budgeting to support the library's collection development plan
- d. Protecting assets and providing financial oversight as part of the board's legal responsibilities

3. Personnel / Human Resources

- a. Hiring, supervising, evaluating, and supporting the library director
- b. Budgeting for continuing education opportunities, both for the library's staff and for the library's trustees

4. Service and Community Relations

- a. Ensure effective strategic planning
- b. Engaging the community
- c. Using our voices as committed and informed champions for the mission of the library and the greater good of all public libraries

In order to fulfill his governance role as a library board member, it is critical that each trustee be aware of his or her full powers and duties as defined in Idaho Code.

Chapter 26, title 33, Idaho Code, outlines some of the powers and duties of the boards of trustees of city libraries³:

[33-2607](#). POWERS AND DUTIES OF TRUSTEES. In addition to the powers elsewhere contained in this chapter and *notwithstanding the provisions of title 50*, Idaho Code, the board of trustees of each city library shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To establish bylaws for its own governance;
2. To establish policies and rules of use for the governance of the library or libraries under its control; to exclude from the use of the library any and all persons who violate such rules;
3. To establish, locate, maintain and have custody of libraries to serve the city, and to provide suitable rooms, structures, facilities, furniture, apparatus and appliances necessary for library service;
4. With the approval of the city:
 - a. To acquire real property by purchase, gift, devise, lease or otherwise;
 - b. To own and hold real and personal property and to construct buildings for the use and purposes of the library;
 - c. To sell, exchange or otherwise dispose of real or personal property when no longer required by the library; and
 - d. To insure the real and personal property of the library;
5. To control the expenditures of money budgeted for the library;
6. To accept or decline gifts of money or personal property, in accordance with library policy, and under such terms as may be a condition of the gift;

³ “City library” means a library established by a city ordinance and operating under the provisions of chapter 26, title 33, Idaho Code [§ 33-2702, Idaho Code].

7. To hire, supervise and evaluate the library director;
8. To establish policies for the purchase and distribution of library materials;
9. To attend all meetings of the board of trustees;
10. To maintain legal records of all board business;
11. To exercise such other powers, not inconsistent with law, necessary for the orderly and efficient management of the library.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2607/>

33-2608. LIBRARY DIRECTOR — DUTIES — OTHER EMPLOYEES. The board of trustees of each city library shall appoint the library director, who shall serve at the pleasure of the board. The library director shall advise the board, implement policy set by the board, supervise all library staff and shall acquire library materials, equipment and supplies. The library director shall attend all board meetings but shall not vote.

With the recommendation of the library director, the board shall hire other employees as may be necessary for the operation of the library in accordance with city policies and procedures. These employees shall be employees of the city and subject to the city's personnel policies and classifications unless otherwise provided by city ordinance.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2608/>

33-2609. ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS — CONTROL OF EXPENDITURES. The board shall prepare and adopt an annual budget, stating anticipated revenues and expenditures, indicating what support and maintenance of the library will be required for review and approval by the city council for the ensuing year.

All funds for the library shall be in the custody of the city treasurer unless otherwise provided by city ordinance, and shall be used only for library purposes. The board shall have control of library expenditures. Money shall be paid for library purposes, only upon properly authenticated vouchers of the board of trustees. The board shall not make expenditures or incur indebtedness in any year in excess of the amount of money appropriated for library purposes. The board may hold a separate checking account to

be used to pay petty expenses of the library. This account shall be audited along with other library funds.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2609/>

33-2610. DONATIONS. Donations or gifts for the benefit of the library shall be budgeted along with other library accounts and shall be used only for library purposes. Money or other funds which are donated or given to the library may be expended by the board of trustees only in accordance with the city budget process.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2610/>

33-2611. REPORTS OF TRUSTEES. The board of trustees shall annually, not later than the first day of January, file with the board of library commissioners a report of the operations of the library for the fiscal year just ended. The report shall be of such form and contain such information as the board of library commissioners may require, but in all cases must include a complete accounting of all financial transactions for the fiscal year being reported. The board shall also report to the city council and mayor as required in section [50-210](#), Idaho Code.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2611/>

33-2620. FAILURE TO RETURN BORROWED MATERIAL. Any person who borrows from a publicly funded lending facility any book, newspaper, magazine, manuscript, pamphlet, publication, microform, recording, film, artifact, specimen, device, exhibit or other article belonging to, or in the care of, the facility, under any agreement to return the same within a specified time, and thereafter fails to return the book, newspaper, magazine, manuscript, pamphlet, publication, microform, recording, film, artifact, specimen, device, exhibit or other article, shall be given written notice, which shall bear upon its face a copy of this statute, mailed by a registered or certified letter with return receipt, or delivered in person to such person at his last known address, to return the borrowed article within fifteen (15) days; and in the event that the person shall thereafter wilfully and knowingly fail to return the borrowed article within thirty (30) days, or shall fail to reimburse the facility for the value of the borrowed article plus overdue fines and costs incurred, the person shall be guilty of a petit theft and punishable

as provided in [chapter 24, title 18](#), Idaho Code. For purposes of this section, a "publicly funded lending facility" includes any library, gallery, museum, collection or exhibit supported by public funds.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2620/>

Idaho Code section [33-2741](#) also applies to city libraries. This is the law that requires public libraries to filter public computers that are available to minors:

33-2741. PUBLIC LIBRARY — INTERNET USE POLICY REQUIRED. (1) Public libraries receiving public moneys and governed by the provisions of chapters 26 and 27, title 33, Idaho Code, that offer use of the internet or an online service to the public:

(a) (i) Shall have in place a policy of internet safety for minors including the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any publicly accessible computers with internet access and that protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene or child pornography or harmful to minors; and

(ii) Shall enforce the operation of such technology protection measure during any use of a computer by a minor.

(b) (i) Shall have in place a policy of internet safety, which may include the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any publicly accessible computers with internet access and that protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene or child pornography; and

(ii) May enforce the operation of such technology protection measure during any use of a computer.

(2) The provisions of this section shall not prohibit a public library from limiting internet access or otherwise protecting against materials other than the materials specified in this section.

(3) An administrator, supervisor or other authorized representative of a public library may disable a technology protection measure described in subsection (1) at the request of a library patron to enable access for lawful purposes.

(4) Each public library's policy shall be developed under the direction of the library's board of trustees, adopted in an open meeting and shall have an effective date. The board of trustees shall review the policy at least once every three (3) years. The policy shall reflect the most recent date of review.

(5) Notice of the availability of the policy shall be posted in a conspicuous place within the library for all patrons to observe. The board of trustees may issue any other public notice it considers appropriate to inform the community about the policy.

(6) The policy may:

(a) State that it restricts access to internet or online sites that contain material described in subsection (1) of this section and how the policy meets the requirements provided for in this section;

(b) Inform patrons that administrative procedures and guidelines for library staff to follow in enforcing the policy have been adopted and are available for review at the library; and

(c) Inform patrons that procedures for use by patrons and staff to handle complaints about the policy, its enforcement or about observed patron behavior have been adopted and are available for review at the library.

(7) For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Child pornography" means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where:

(i) The production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;

(ii) Such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or

(iii) Such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

(b) "Harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:

(i) Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;

(ii) Depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and

(iii) Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

(c) "Minor" means anyone who has not attained the age of eighteen (18) years.

(d) "Obscene" means a depiction that:

(i) The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find to appeal to the prurient interest;

(ii) Depicts or describes sexual conduct in a patently offensive way; and

(iii) Lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

(e) "Public moneys" means any and all moneys belonging to or collected by the state or any political subdivision thereof including, but not necessarily limited to, any city, county, town or district therein.

(8) The provisions of this section shall have no effect on the provisions of section 33–132, Idaho Code.

Chapter 27, title 33, Idaho Code, outlines some of the powers and duties of the boards of trustees of district libraries⁴:

[33-2720](#). POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

1. The board of trustees of each library district shall have the following powers and duties consistent with the laws of the state of Idaho:
 - a. To establish bylaws for its own government;
 - b. To establish policies for the administration, operation and use of the library or libraries under its control;
 - c. To employ and evaluate a library director or library director team to administer the library;
 - d. To create job descriptions, personnel policies, and compensation packages for library personnel;
 - e. To establish an annual budget and to oversee the financial management of the library district;
 - f. To establish and locate libraries, branch libraries or stations to serve the district and to provide suitable rooms, structures, facilities, furniture, apparatus and appliances necessary for the conduct thereof;
 - g. To acquire by purchase, devise, lease, or otherwise, and to own and hold real and personal property and to construct buildings for the use and

⁴ “Public library district trustee” means a qualified elector living within the boundaries of a public library district who is elected or appointed temporarily to fulfill the duties described in chapter 27, title 33, Idaho Code related to the governance of a public library district [§ 33-2702(5), Idaho Code]. “Qualified elector” means any person voting or offering to vote, at an election to create a library district, add territory thereto, or elect trustees thereof. A qualified elector must be, at the time of the election, a resident of the area involved for thirty (30) days prior to the date of the election, registered and an elector within the meaning of [section 2, article VI, of the Constitution of the state of Idaho](#) [§ 33-2602(7), Idaho Code].

- purposes of the library district, and to sell, exchange or otherwise dispose of property real or personal, when no longer required by the district, and to insure the real and personal property of the district;
- h. To accept gifts of real or personal property for the use and purposes of the library district;
 - i. To establish policies for the purchase and distribution of library materials;
 - j. To issue warrants, if used, in the manner specified for the issuance of warrants by school districts;
 - k. To invest any funds of the district in accordance with the public depository law and other applicable state and federal laws;
 - l. To pay actual and necessary expenses of members of the library staff when on business of the district;
 - m. To see to the proper conduct of library district elections;
 - n. To maintain legal records of all board business;
 - o. To exercise other powers, not inconsistent with law, necessary for the effective use and management of the library.
- 2. Individual trustees shall have no authority to make decisions about the policies of the library except as specifically authorized by the board.
 - 3. It shall be the duty of each trustee to attend all board meetings and committee meetings for committees to which he or she has been assigned.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2720/>

33-2721. LIBRARY DIRECTOR — DIRECTOR TEAM — EMPLOYEES. (1) Except for an administrative only district, the board of trustees of each library district shall appoint a library director or director team who shall administer the library district. The director or one (1) member of the director team assigned by the board shall serve as the secretary for the board without voting rights. The library director or director team shall

advise the board, implement policy set by the board, and shall acquire library materials, equipment and supplies. The director or director team shall attend all executive sessions of the board of trustees, except those called to consider the evaluation, dismissal, or disciplining, or to hear complaints or charges against the library director or director team member. No library director or director team member shall be an employee or board member of a library or other agency with which the district has a contract to provide library services.

(2) The board shall fix and pay employee salaries and compensation, classify employees, adopt personnel policies, and discipline or discharge any library director or director team member for cause. The library director or director team shall hire or oversee the hiring of all other employees based on the policies, procedures, and job descriptions created by the library board, and shall discipline and discharge any employee for cause, as necessary, according to the written policies of the board.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2721/>

33-2722. TREASURER — CLERK. The board of trustees of each library district shall appoint some qualified person, who may or may not be a member of the board of trustees, to act as treasurer of the library district. This person shall, on taking office, give bond to the library district, with sureties approved by the board of trustees, in the amount of at least five thousand dollars (\$5,000), which bond shall be paid for by the district and shall be conditioned upon faithful performance of the duties of his office and his accounting for all moneys of the library district received by him or under his control. The treasurer shall supervise all moneys raised for the library district by taxation or received by the district from any other sources and shall supervise all disbursements of funds of the district by order of the board of trustees.

Under the direction of the board of trustees, the treasurer shall have all moneys of the district deposited in accordance with the public depository law and other applicable state and federal laws.

The board of trustees of each library district shall appoint some qualified person, who may or may not be a member of the board of trustees, to act as clerk of the library board. The clerk shall prepare and distribute legal notices and shall have other duties as the board may prescribe.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2722/>

33-2725. LIBRARY DISTRICT BUDGET — PUBLIC HEARING — NOTICE — ADJUSTMENTS. The board of trustees of each library district shall prepare for the ensuing fiscal year a budget and prior to its adoption shall have called and caused to be held a public hearing thereon at a regular or special meeting. Notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be published at least once in a newspaper printed, or having general circulation within the district or in the county or counties in which the library district may lie. The board of trustees of each library district shall also prepare and publish, as a part of this notice, a summary statement of the budget for the ensuing year prepared in a manner consistent with standard accounting practices and indicating amounts previously budgeted for the then current year for purposes of comparison.

During the year the board of trustees may proceed to adjust the budget as adopted to reflect the receipt of unanticipated revenue, grants, or donations from federal, state or local government or private sources, provided that there shall be no increase in the property tax portion of the annual certified budget. Prior to the adoption of the budget adjustment, the library board shall have called and cause to be held a public hearing thereon at a regular or special meeting. Notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be published at least once in a newspaper printed or having general circulation within the district or in the county or counties in which the library district may lie. The board of trustees of each library district shall also prepare and publish, as a part of this notice, a summary of the budget and the adjustments prepared in a manner consistent with standard accounting practices and indicating amounts previously budgeted for the then current year for purposes of comparison.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2725/>

33-2726. FISCAL YEAR — ANNUAL REPORTS — AUDIT. The fiscal year of each library district shall commence on the first day of October of each year. The board of trustees of each library district shall annually, not later than the first day of January, file with the board of library commissioners a report of the operations of the district for the fiscal year just ended. The report shall be on the form and contain the information that the board of library commissioners requires, but in all cases must include a complete accounting of all financial transactions for the fiscal year being reported.

The board of trustees of each library district shall cause to be made a full and complete audit of the books and accounts of the district as required in section [67-450B](#), Idaho Code.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2726/>

33-2727. CONTRACTS — JOINT POWERS AGREEMENTS — PARTICIPATION IN NONPROFIT CORPORATIONS. (1) In lieu of, or in addition to, establishing an independent library, the board of trustees may purchase specified library services by contract from any taxing unit, or public or private agency maintaining a library. Contracts for services shall contain provisions on annual budget procedures, accounting for funds, dispute resolution procedures, ownership of assets purchased with district funds, annual reports and procedures for ending the contract.

(2) The board of trustees of a library district may sell specified library services to any taxing unit, or public or private agency which contracts to make an acceptable annual appropriation for these services.

(3) Any purchase or sale of library services shall be under a written contract that is in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

(4) In order to improve or expand public library services, library districts may participate in the joint exercise of powers with other public agencies as specified by law.

(5) In order to improve or expand public library services, library districts may become corporate partners in nonprofit corporations.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2727/>

33-2728. BOND ELECTION. (1) The purposes for which bonds may be issued shall be: To acquire, purchase, or improve a library site or sites; to build a library or libraries, or other building or buildings; to demolish or remove buildings; to add to, remodel or repair any existing building; to furnish and equip any building or buildings, including all facilities and appliances necessary to maintain and operate the buildings of the library; and to purchase motor vehicles for use as bookmobiles.

The library district may issue bonds in an amount not to exceed one percent (1%) of the market value for assessment purposes of property within the district, less any aggregate outstanding indebtedness.

The board of trustees of any library district, upon approval of a majority thereof, may call a bond election on the question as to whether the board shall be empowered to issue bonds of the district in an amount and for a period of time to be stated in the notice of election. The notice of bond elections, the qualification of bond electors, the conduct of the election, and the canvass of election and determination of the result of

election shall be in accordance with [chapter 14, title 34](#), Idaho Code, and with the general election laws of the state of Idaho. Provided however, that any such election conducted pursuant to this section shall be held on election day in the month of May or November as provided for in section [34-106\(1\)](#), Idaho Code. The majority required to pass a bond issue shall be two-thirds (2/3) of those voting in the election. The issuance of bonds, the expenditure of bond proceeds and the repayment of the bonds shall all be as specified in school district law.

(2) District library bond funds may not be used to purchase or expand a building for a contracting agency providing library services unless the district library gains an ownership share in the building proportional to the percentage of district bond funds used to purchase or expand the building.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2728/>

33-2729. PLANT FACILITIES RESERVE FUND AND LEVY. The library district board of trustees is authorized to create a plant facilities reserve fund as set forth in sections [33-804](#) and [33-901](#), Idaho Code.

District library facilities plant facilities reserve funds may not be used to purchase or expand a building for a contracting agency providing library services unless the district library gains an ownership share in the building proportional to the percentage of district bond funds used to purchase or expand the building.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2729/>

33-2741. PUBLIC LIBRARY — INTERNET USE POLICY REQUIRED. (1) Public libraries receiving public moneys and governed by the provisions of chapters 26 and 27, [title 33](#), Idaho Code, that offer use of the internet or an online service to the public:

(a) (i) Shall have in place a policy of internet safety for minors including the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any publicly accessible computers with internet access and that protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene or child pornography or harmful to minors; and

(ii) Shall enforce the operation of such technology protection measure during any use of a computer by a minor.

(b) (i) Shall have in place a policy of internet safety, which may include the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any publicly accessible computers with internet access and that protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene or child pornography; and

(ii) May enforce the operation of such technology protection measure during any use of a computer.

(2) The provisions of this section shall not prohibit a public library from limiting internet access or otherwise protecting against materials other than the materials specified in this section.

(3) An administrator, supervisor or other authorized representative of a public library may disable a technology protection measure described in subsection (1) at the request of a library patron to enable access for lawful purposes.

(4) Each public library's policy shall be developed under the direction of the library's board of trustees, adopted in an open meeting and shall have an effective date. The board of trustees shall review the policy at least once every three (3) years. The policy shall reflect the most recent date of review.

(5) Notice of the availability of the policy shall be posted in a conspicuous place within the library for all patrons to observe. The board of trustees may issue any other public notice it considers appropriate to inform the community about the policy.

(6) The policy may:

(a) State that it restricts access to internet or online sites that contain material described in subsection (1) of this section and how the policy meets the requirements provided for in this section;

(b) Inform patrons that administrative procedures and guidelines for library staff to follow in enforcing the policy have been adopted and are available for review at the library; and

(c) Inform patrons that procedures for use by patrons and staff to handle complaints about the policy, its enforcement or about observed patron behavior have been adopted and are available for review at the library.

(7) For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Child pornography" means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether

made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where:

(i) The production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;

(ii) Such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or

(iii) Such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

(b) "Harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:

(i) Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;

(ii) Depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and

(iii) Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

(c) "Minor" means anyone who has not attained the age of eighteen (18) years.

(d) "Obscene" means a depiction that:

(i) The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find to appeal to the prurient interest;

(ii) Depicts or describes sexual conduct in a patently offensive way; and

(iii) Lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

(e) "Public moneys" means any and all moneys belonging to or collected by the state or any political subdivision thereof including, but not necessarily limited to, any city, county, town or district therein.

(8) The provisions of this section shall have no effect on the provisions of section 33-132, Idaho Code.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2741/>

33-2620. FAILURE TO RETURN BORROWED MATERIAL. Any person who borrows from a publicly funded lending facility any book, newspaper, magazine, manuscript, pamphlet, publication, microform, recording, film, artifact, specimen, device, exhibit or other article belonging to, or in the care of, the facility, under any agreement to return the same within a specified time, and thereafter fails to return the book, newspaper, magazine, manuscript, pamphlet, publication, microform, recording, film, artifact, specimen, device, exhibit or other article, shall be given written notice, which shall bear upon its face a copy of this statute, mailed by a registered or certified letter with return receipt, or delivered in person to such person at his last known address, to return the borrowed article within fifteen (15) days; and in the event that the person shall thereafter wilfully and knowingly fail to return the borrowed article within thirty (30) days, or shall fail to reimburse the facility for the value of the borrowed article plus overdue fines and costs incurred, the person shall be guilty of a petit theft and punishable as provided in [chapter 24, title 18](#), Idaho Code. For purposes of this section, a "publicly funded lending facility" includes any library, gallery, museum, collection or exhibit supported by public funds.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2620/>

Resources

- WebJunction Trustee Resources – <http://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/friends-trustees.html>
- Wyoming State Library’s “Trustee Trouble” Videos – <http://library.wyo.gov/services/ldo/trustees/>

Trustee Appointments, Elections, Vacancies

Upon the election or appointment of new board members, the board's chair or secretary should notify the appropriate ICfL area field consultant so that the new trustees can begin receiving the ICfL newsletters and mailings. ICfL needs to know the new trustee's name, who last held that board seat, the address where the new trustee would like to receive the *Envoy*, and the expiration year of the new trustee's term. This information is used to maintain our mailing list and is not shared with anyone outside the agency.

The mayor and council appoint five city residents to govern a city library:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2604/>

33-2604. Board of trustees -- Appointment -- Term of office -- Compensation. For the government of such library there shall be a board of five (5) library trustees appointed by the mayor and council pursuant to section [50-210](#), Idaho Code, from among city residents. If the city government is organized pursuant to sections [50-801 through 50-813](#), Idaho Code, the city manager and the council shall appoint the board of trustees.

Five library district residents are elected by a vote of the people to govern a district library:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2715/>

33-2715. Board of trustees -- Selection -- Number -- Qualifications -- Term -- Oath -- Appointment of first board. (1) Each library district shall be governed by a board of trustees of five (5) members elected or appointed as provided by law, who at the time of their selection and during their terms of office shall be qualified electors of the district and if trustee zones have been established under section [33-2718](#), Idaho Code, shall be a resident of the trustee zone. Trustees shall be elected at each trustee election, held on the uniform election date in May. The regular term of a trustee shall be for six (6) years, or until his successor has been elected and qualified. Within ten (10) days after his appointment an appointed trustee shall qualify and assume the duties of his office.

An elected trustee shall qualify and assume the duties of his office at the annual meeting. All trustees qualify by taking the oath of office required of state officers, to be administered by one (1) of the present trustees or by a trustee retiring.

2010 was the last year trustee elections were to be conducted by the library district. In 2011, the county began conducting trustee elections.

How to Determine Six-Year Terms for a Board of Five Trustees

District library trustees are elected by the residents of the district to serve six-year terms. Trustee elections are always held on the uniform election date in May of odd-numbered years. The regular term of a trustee is for six (6) years, or until his successor has been elected and qualified.

In order to accommodate six-year terms for five trustees, there will be one trustee term expiring in a given year, two trustee terms expiring two years later, and two trustee terms expiring two years after that. It is a good idea to maintain a spreadsheet to keep track of these terms. Label the five seats as a), b), c), d), and e) will be much easier than labeling them using trustees' names. This way, if the board declares a vacancy, it is still clear that the newly appointed trustee will be completing the six-year term of the departing trustee. **For example:**

Seat	Current Seat Holder	Elected or Appointed	Term Ends	Replaces	Reason
A	Ms. Peppermint Patty	2017	2023	Ms. Betty Boop	Appointed to complete term
B	Ms. Wilma Flintstone	2017	2023	Mr. Jon Arbuckle	Election
C	Mr. Oliver Warbucks	2019	2025	Mr. Hector Peabody	Election
D	Ms. Velma Dinkley	2019	2025	Ms. Lucy van Pelt	Appointed to complete term
E	Mr. Dick Tracy	2021	2027	Mr. Hagar the Horrible	Election

Within ten (10) days after his appointment an appointed trustee shall qualify and assume the duties of his office. An elected trustee shall qualify and assume the duties of his office at the annual meeting, which is the first regular meeting in June. All trustees qualify by taking the oath of office required of state officers, to be administered by one (1) of the present trustees or by a trustee retiring.

Oath of Office for a District Library Trustee

I do solemnly swear (or affirm, as the case may be) that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Idaho, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of library district Trustee according to the best of my ability.”

See chapter 4, title 59, Idaho Code, for more information:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title59/T59CH4/>.

Resources

- Idaho Secretary of State — Elections:
<http://www.sos.idaho.gov/elect/index.html>
- Idaho Secretary of State — County Clerk Resources (forms):
<http://sos.idaho.gov/elect/Clerk/forms.htm>

Board Vacancies

Periodically, a board position will become vacant before a trustee's term has ended.

When a City Library Has a Board Vacancy

33-2605. BOARD OF TRUSTEES -- VACANCIES -- REMOVAL. The board shall report all vacancies to the council within five (5) working days. All such appointments shall be made in the same manner as appointments are originally made. Appointments to complete an unexpired term shall be for the remainder of the term only.

Any trustee may be removed by the city council by the unanimous vote of all of its members.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2605/>

How Is a Replacement Named?

"All such appointments shall be made in the same manner as appointments are originally made" refers to [33-2604](#), "appointed by mayor and city council."

When does a vacancy occur?

Although Idaho Code 33-2605 does not list specific reasons for declaring a vacancy on a city library board, there are two ways of defining a vacancy:

1. The city library board can add a vacancy clause in its own bylaws. Although a city library is an independent, nonpartisan, governing board ([33-2601](#)), it would be politic to ask if the city council has any objections before doing this, or
2. The city library board can ask the city council to address it in an ordinance or resolution for the library.

As a guideline for the establishment of a policy on vacancies, the city library board may wish to look at how district library law deals with this issue in I.C. § 33-2716(3): <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2716/>. This section identifies a number of reasons for declaring a vacancy. Those that could apply to a city library board:

1. The death of a trustee
2. The resignation of a trustee
3. A trustee is no longer a resident of the library's service area (which, in the case of a city library, is the city limits)
4. Upon appointment, a trustee refuses to serve
5. Without an excuse acceptable to other board members, a trustee misses two consecutive meetings.

How long is the replacement trustee’s term?

According to Idaho Code 33-2605, “Appointments to complete an unexpired term shall be for the remainder of the term only.”

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2605/>

A term on a city library board is always for five years and until a successor is appointed. A trustee appointed to fill a vacancy is appointed only for the remainder of that five-year term. For this reason, it is easier to keep track of the expiration dates of each of the five board terms, and not of individual trustees’ time on the board.

With five trustees, each serving a five-year term, there should be one board term expiring each year. This is easy to keep track of on a simple spreadsheet in which the board positions are labeled a), b), c), d), and e).

Seat	Current Holder	Elected or Appointed	Term Ends	Replaces	Reason
A	Ms. Jessica Rabbit	2017	2022	Mr. Sluggo Smith	Appointed to complete term
B	Mr. Snuffy Smith	2018	2023	Ms. Brenda Star	Term expired
C	Ms. Daisy Mae Yokum	2019	2024	Ms. Olive Oyl	Term expired
D	Mr. Dagwood Bumstead	2020	2025	Mr. Buck Rogers	Appointed to complete term
E	Ms. Mary Worth	2021	2026	Mr. Andy Capp	Recalled

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2604/>

When a Library District Has a Board Vacancy

According to 33-2716(3), "A vacancy shall be declared by the board of trustees when any nominee has been elected but has failed to qualify for office, or within thirty (30) days of when any trustees shall (a) die; (b) resign from office; (c) no longer reside in his respective trustee zone of residence; (d) no longer be a resident or qualified elector of the public library district; (e) refuse to serve as trustee; (f) without excuse acceptable to the board of trustees, fail to attend two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the board; or (g) be recalled and discharged from office as provided in this chapter."

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2716/>

How is a replacement named?

The board must declare that a vacancy exists within 30 days of the date the trustee is no longer on the board for any of the above-mentioned reasons. This must be done at either a regular or a special board meeting. The board then has 60 days to name a replacement. If the library board does not appoint a replacement within that 60-day window, the county commissioners of the district's home county are required by law to do so.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2716/>

How long is the replacement trustee's term?

According to Idaho Code 33-2716, "Any person appointed as provided in this chapter shall serve until the next election of public library district trustees following the appointment. At the election a trustee shall be elected to complete the unexpired term of the office which was declared vacant filled by appointment."

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2716/>

A term on a district library board is always for six years and until a temporary successor is appointed. That appointed temporary trustee serves until the next election of public library trustees following the appointment.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2715/>



Elections for library district trustees are held on the uniform election date in May [I.C. § 33-2715(1)] of odd-numbered years [I.C. § 33-2715(2)].

[33-2715\(1\) and \(2\), Idaho Code](#)



With five trustees, each serving a six-year term, there should be two board terms expiring one odd-numbered year, two board terms expiring the following odd-numbered year, and one board term expiring the following odd-numbered year.

It is easier to keep track of the expiration dates of each of the five board terms, and not of individual trustees' time on the board. This task will be much more easily accomplished by using a spreadsheet application.

Annual Cycle of City Library Events



The board sets the date of its annual meeting.

October 1	<p>Fiscal Year Begins for City Libraries</p> <p>I.C. § 50-1001 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title50/T50CH10/SECT50-1001/</p>
January 1	<p>Annual report to the Board of Library Commissioners</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2611 http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2611.htm</p>
Annually	<p>City Library Board Annual Meeting - Held According to the Board's Bylaws</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2606 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2606/</p>
Annually	<p>City Library Board Conducts Library Director's Performance Appraisal</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2607(8) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2607/</p>
May-August	<p>City Budget Hearings</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2607(5) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2607/</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2609 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2609/</p> <p>See also I.C. § 50-1002.</p>
September 30	<p>Fiscal year ends</p>

Annual Cycle of District Library Events



Because district library trustees are elected to an independent taxing district, the cycle of the year is guided by Idaho Code. The annual meeting of a district library board is the first regular meeting in June.

<p>October 1</p>	<p>Fiscal Year Begins for Library Districts</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2726 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2726/</p>
<p>November 30</p>	<p>Notify County Clerk(s) of Upcoming Elections</p> <p>I.C. § 34-405 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title34/T34CH14/SECT34-1405/</p>
<p>January 1</p>	<p>Annual Report to the Board of Library Commissioners</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2726 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2726/</p>
<p>February</p>	<p>Directors and Boards Prepare for Upcoming Trustee Elections (Odd-Numbered Years Only) and Bond, Levy Override, Recall, and other ballot questions for the May Election</p> <p>Trustee Election</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2715(1) and (2) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2715/</p> <p>Bond Election</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2728</p>



	<p>https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2728/</p> <p>Permanent Levy Override Election</p> <p>I.C. § 63-802(1)(g) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title63/T63CH8/SECT63-802/</p> <p>Temporary Levy Override Election</p> <p>I.C. § 63-802(3) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title63/T63CH8/SECT63-802/</p> <p>Recall Election</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2716(2) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2716/</p>
March	<p>County Clerk(s) Advertise in Newspapers – Petitions Available with the Clerk of the District</p> <p>I.C. § 34-1405 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title34/T34CH14/SECT34-1405/</p> <p>Last Day Candidate Nominations Accepted</p> <p>I.C. § 34-1404 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title34/T34CH14/SECT34-1404/</p> <p>Last Day to Certify the Wording for Other Ballot Questions</p> <p>I.C. § 34-106(8) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title34/T34CH1/SECT34-106/</p>
March-April	<p>Last Day to File as a Write-in Candidate; First Day to Declare the Election of a Single Candidate (Odd-Numbered Years Only)</p> <p>I.C. § 34-1407 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title34/T34CH14/SECT34-1407/</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2717A</p>

	<p>https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2717A/</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2717 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2717/</p>
April	<p>Notify County Clerk(s) of Budget Hearing Date by April 30</p> <p>I.C. § 63-802A https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title63/T63CH8/SECT63-802A/</p>
May	<p>Last Day to Declare the Election of a Single Candidate (Odd-Numbered Years Only)</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2717 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2717/</p> <p>Election Day – Third Tuesday in May of Each Year</p> <p>I.C. § 34-106(1)(a) https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title34/T34CH1/SECT34-106/</p>
June	<p>Annual Meeting – first regular meeting in June</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2719 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2719/</p>
August	<p>Budget Hearing</p> <p>I.C. § 33-2725 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2725/</p>
September	<p>Certification of Budget</p> <p>I.C. § 63-803 https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title63/T63CH8/SECT63-803/</p> <p><i>Fiscal Year Ends September 30</i></p>
September-October	<p>Prepare for November Election as Necessary</p>

See the Secretary of State's Election Calendar
<http://www.sos.idaho.gov/elect/index.html>

Board Bylaws

The library board sets library policy to guide the decision making of the library's staff.

Just as important are the board's bylaws⁵, the rules that govern how the board operates. Boards that create good bylaws for themselves can operate with greater efficiency, consistency, and objectivity.

Bylaws describe the offices of the board, duties of each office, the rules under which regular and special meetings will be held, the standing committees of the board (if any), and any other permanent operating procedures for the board itself. Below are some links to examples of bylaws for city libraries and for district libraries.

The examples below will help public libraries get started with their own bylaws.

Resources & Examples

- Boise Public Library Board Bylaws (City Library) - <http://www.boisepubliclibrary.org/info/board-of-trustees/>
- Ada Community Library Board Bylaws (District Library) - <http://www.adalib.org/system/libraryboard>
- Latah County Library District Board Bylaws (District Library) - http://www.latahlibrary.org/images/files/LCLD_Bylaws_6.18.13.pdf

⁵ The word *bylaw* is spelled as a single word, without a hyphen.

The Board Meeting



The word *meeting* is defined in I.C. § [74-202\(6\)](#) as “the convening of a governing body of a public agency to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter.”



Introduction

The focal point of the duties and powers of the library board is the board meeting. There are two reasons for this:

1. Individual board members have no legal authority over the library. An individual board member should not, and cannot legally, tell the library’s director to change a policy. When such a change is desired, it must be brought before the board as a whole.
2. The board only has authority when it makes a group decision in a legally constituted meeting. Discussion by a quorum of the board in a meeting that does not meet the requirements of the [Idaho’s Open Meetings Law, I.C. §§ 74-201 through 74-208](#), is illegal, and could result in a successful lawsuit being filed against the board and its individual members.

The library board’s power, then, comes into being only when its members meet in a legal board meeting. Additional resources in this part of the guide will include information on how board meetings can be run smoothly and efficiently. The board’s meetings should:

- Be as productive as possible.
- Deal only with appropriate issues.
- Clearly define the difference between the functions of the board and those of the library director.

A board's bylaws provide the general structure for its work. It is important to make certain that all members of the board understand their specific roles, assignments, and the expectations for all officers and committees.

General Guidelines

- The library director is present at all board meetings, including executive sessions, except when her tenure or evaluation are being discussed [I.C. §§ [33-2608](#) and [33-2721](#)].
- The board elects a new chairperson and other officers at its annual meeting [I.C. §§ [33-2606](#) and [33-2719](#)].
- Trustees rotate leadership responsibilities to create a stronger board. Each trustee should have the opportunity to hold office.
- Board meetings are planned on a regular, annual schedule as listed in the bylaws. In order to save time — and for transparency in government — the board can select specific dates, times, and meeting locations six to 12 months in advance.
- Each trustee informs the chairperson — preferably in advance — when unable to attend and states the reason.
- The board follows procedures for conducting business meetings as outlined in the board’s accepted parliamentary authority, such as *The American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*. If this seems too formal, the chairperson devises a specific order of business that maintains an orderly flow for the meetings.
- The board keeps an archival file of board minutes in the library. Individual board members retain current minutes in their trustee notebooks.
- To provide an opportunity for careful study of a particular issue, the board holds working board sessions and committee meetings. The committee’s findings are then presented to the full board at a regular or special board meeting, where the full board makes and final decision and votes.
- Committees and working groups remember that they issue recommendations to the board but do not make decisions. Written committee reports distributed before the board meetings are most effective.
- Committees, boards, and working groups follow all the provisions of Idaho’s Open Meetings Law, [chapter 2, title 74, Idaho Code](#). For more information, see the [Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual](#), published by the Office of the Attorney General, Lawrence Wasden.

Two Potential Pitfalls of Board Meetings

Although it is at board meetings where the most important work of the board is accomplished, board meetings are also the place where many good board members lose their enthusiasm for the job.

1. **The Wandering Board:** A board meeting may wander from one topic to another with little or no action being taken, and with many irrelevant side issues being discussed. When board meetings are like this, members come away feeling that their time has been wasted. When this occurs at meeting after meeting, many good members will consider membership on the board to be a waste of their valuable time.
2. **The Hurried Board:** The second problem is the opposite of the first, but the result is the same. Here, the board meeting is dominated by a desire to get done “on time.” Important issues that deserve discussion are passed over in a cursory manner because members are not willing to give enough time to the meeting. Again, good board members may feel frustrated by this situation, because important decisions are made with little discussion or reflection.



The ideal library board meeting is both productive and efficient. It is the seasoned board that recognizes which agenda items to dispose of quickly and which ones will need time for study and discussion before being brought to a vote at a future date.



Guidelines for the Board Chairperson

Before the Meeting

- The Chairperson — or simply Chair — plans the meeting carefully:
 - When?
 - Where?
 - What?
 - Why?
 - Who?
- He or she solicits input from the library's director to prepare a timed agenda in advance, allowing adequate time for the items listed. An agenda is a list or outline of things to be considered or done by the board members.
- The library's director mails or e-mails the board packet as far as possible in advance of the meeting, or delegates this task to a trusted staff member. The packet contains items that include the agenda, related reports, list of bills that need to be paid, latest statistics, and director's report.
- The library director or trusted designee then posts meeting and agenda notice of the meeting in a prominent place at the principal office of the library or at the building where the meeting is to be held. Requirements for giving notice of a public meeting are listed in I.C. § 74-204.
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH2/SECT74-204/>

To Begin the Meeting

- The meeting always begins on time with a call to order, an announcement by the board chair that the meeting is beginning. The call to order includes an announcement of the time the meeting begins.
- The call to order is followed by a roll call. This is important, as I.C. § 74-205(1)(a) requires that the written minutes of a public meeting contain a list of all members of the governing body present.
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH2/SECT74-205/>

- The roll call is followed by the introduction of visitors and/or new board members.
- Review, revise, and approve agenda. An agenda may be amended after the start of a meeting upon a motion that states the reason for the amendment and states the good faith reason the agenda item was not included in the original agenda posting [I.C. § 74-204(4)(c)].
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH2/SECT74-204/>
Once the agenda has been approved, the meeting proceeds, and the agenda is followed as approved.
- Approve consent agenda⁶
 - This can involve reading, correcting, approving, or disposing of minutes of previous meetings
 - Reports of officers
 - Reports of standing committees
 - Reports of special committees
- Verbal reports if pulled from consent agenda

During Meeting

- Focus on issues at hand.
- Follow agenda and established order of business as stated in the board's bylaws.
- Establish action items: who, what, when.

End Meeting

⁶ Many governing bodies — including library boards — use a procedure known as the *consent agenda*, also known as the *consent calendar*. Matters that are routine or believed to be noncontroversial are placed on the consent agenda, and they are all adopted by a single motion. If any member objects to or has questions about one or more items on the consent agenda, the items in question are removed from the consent agenda and moved to the regular agenda

- Review and evaluate meeting progress, decisions, next steps.
- Announce next meeting and develop preliminary agenda.
- Adjourn meeting officially.

After Meeting

- Ensure that minutes are compiled and sent to board members.
- Follow up on action items.
- Begin planning for next meeting.

Agenda Development

A meeting agenda, or order of business, is a blueprint of how the meeting is going to be run.

The meeting announcement should include the agenda and the issues that will be discussed under each heading.

A typical order of business for a library board is:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Introduction of visitors and/or new board members
4. Approval of agenda
5. Consent agenda
 - a. Reading, correcting, approving, or disposing of minutes of previous meetings
 - b. Reports of officers
 - c. Reports of standing committees
 - d. Reports of special committees
6. Verbal reports if pulled from consent agenda
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Announcements
10. Questions and comments from the public (optional)
11. Adjournment

Call to order — This is the official beginning of the meeting. The chair calls the meeting to order and a roll call of the members is taken. The secretary reports in the minutes the

precise starting time for the meeting and the names of the members who were present when the meeting began. (If members arrive or leave during the course of the meeting, this is noted in the minutes at the point where the member arrived or left.)

Approval of agenda — This procedure is usually routine. Changing the agenda is not done casually or routinely, as the posted agenda has informed the public about the issues that will be discussed at the meeting. Changes may be made, however, if an action item has come up after the agenda has been posted and if a decision must be made before the next scheduled board meeting. The chairperson asks for any additions or changes to the agenda. If a board member wishes to add or change an item, he or she offers an explanation of why this item cannot be held until the next board meeting or the good faith reason for the proposed change. This explanation or reason goes into the meeting minutes. Any addition to the agenda is to be approved by a majority of the board and the vote recorded by name. For Open Meeting Posting and Agenda Requirements, see I.C. § 74-204:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH2/SECT74-204/>

Consent agenda — When the board has a large number of uncontentious or routine matters to approve, it can save time by use of a *consent agenda*, also called a *consent calendar*. This section of the printed agenda lists matters that are routine or expected to be uncontentious and unlikely to raise questions or discussions.

Before calling for a vote, the chairperson may allow time for the trustees to read the consent agenda — which they are expected to have read prior to the meeting — to determine whether it includes any matters on which they may have a question, or matters they would like to discuss or possibly vote against. Any member of the board has the right to remove any item from the consent agenda. Removed items are then transferred to the regular agenda — under Verbal Reports — so that it may be considered and voted on separately. A trustee may ask a question to clarify a consent agenda item without removing it from the consent agenda. If, however, this develops into more of a debate than a clarification, the chairperson can insist that it be removed and placed on the regular agenda for more thorough discussion before voting on the item. The remaining items are then approved as a whole, by majority vote, without discussion, saving the time that would be required for individual consideration and votes.

Reading, correcting, approving, or disposing of minutes of previous meetings — Members are given an opportunity to review the record of the previous meeting and

make any changes in the record that is deemed necessary. Records of these changes are to be kept as part of the meeting record. It is not necessary for the secretary to read the minutes aloud. Considerable time can be saved at meetings if the minutes are sent to the trustees in advance, and if the trustees read them before arriving for the meeting. If minutes or other materials are mailed in advance, extra copies are made available at the library and at the board meeting for the public.

Reports of officers — These include a report from the Treasurer, giving a brief report of the library's revenues and expenses and calling attention to any unusual items; a report on completed audits as appropriate; and reports on election preparations or bond elections.

Reports of standing committees or special committees — Informational reports by standing or special committees are made at this point in the meeting. Written reports, mailed in advance, are prepared if committee reports are long or complicated. If committees are requesting action by the board, the chairperson is asked in advance to place these items under either unfinished or new business.

Verbal reports if pulled from consent agenda — Now is the time to discuss items that have been pulled from the consent agenda for further discussion or questions.

Unfinished business — These are issues that have been held over from previous meetings. Typically, if an item is listed in either unfinished or new business, it is expected that some type of action will be taken on it, even if the action is just to put off discussion.

New business — These are issues that have not been discussed in past meetings. They are often placed on the agenda at the request of the library director or of a board committee.

Announcements — This is an optional time for board members and/or the director to share any information, such as upcoming programs, visits from legislators, anniversary celebrations.

Questions and comments from the public (optional) — Although this agenda item is a courtesy that the board may wish to extend to the public, this portion of the agenda is optional, as Idaho's Open Meetings Law does not expressly require the opportunity for public comment. The *Public Comments* section is usually the last item on the agenda

before Adjournment. It is a good idea to require members of the public wishing to speak to sign in and identify themselves at the beginning of the meeting. They should each be given the same amount of time to speak, five minutes perhaps. Once the timer has sounded, the member of the public who is addressing the library board must stop speaking.

Adjournment — The adjournment is the official end of the meeting. No library business is conducted after the meeting has been adjourned. The exact time of adjournment is stated in the meeting minutes.

Posting the Agenda

In order to comply with Idaho's Open Meetings Law, notices of the meeting are posted at the library in advance of the meeting. Boards that do not have a regular meeting date post a notice of each regular meeting five days in advance. All boards post an agenda notice 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Effective July 1, 2018, notices for meetings and agendas must also be posted electronically, if the library has an online presence. Libraries that have an eBranch website, should contact Edgar Correa, Web Developer at ICfL with questions on how to do this. Edgar can be reached at Edgar.Correa@libraries.idaho.gov or at 208-334-2150.

For Regular Meetings, no less than a five (5) calendar day meeting notice and a forty-eight (48) hour agenda notice shall be given unless otherwise provided by statute. If a library board's meetings are held at regular intervals of at least once per calendar month scheduled in advance over the course of the year, meeting notice may be satisfied by giving meeting notices at least once each year of its regular meeting schedule. The notice requirement for meetings and agendas shall be satisfied by posting such notices and agendas in a prominent place at the principal office of the public agency, or if no such office exists, at the building where the meeting is to be held. [[I.C. § 74-204\(1\)](#)]



Effective July 1, 2018, notices for meetings and agendas must also be posted electronically, if the library has an online presence. Libraries that have an eBranch website, should contact Edgar Correa, Web Developer at ICfL with questions on how to do this.

In addition, an item on the agenda that requires a vote by the governing entity must be clearly identified as an "action item." Agenda amending requirements remain the same. However, additional language has been added to allow for action on an item to be taken after the start of a meeting if an emergency is declared. The declaration must be justified and reflected in the minutes of the meeting.



For Special Meetings— No special meeting shall be held without at least a twenty-four (24) hour meeting and agenda notice, unless an emergency exists [[74-204\(2\)](#)].

Beyond the 24-hour meeting notice and agenda notice requirement, library law requires that boards be given two days' notice of special meetings:

- **City Libraries** — Special meetings shall be held from time to time as the board may determine, but written notice thereof shall be given to the members at least two (2) days prior to the day of the meeting. [[I.C. § 33-2606](#)]
- **District Libraries** — Special or adjourned meetings may be held from time to time as the board may determine, but written notice thereof shall be given to the members at least two (2) days prior to the day of the meeting. [[I.C. § 33-2719](#)]

For Emergency Meetings — An emergency is a situation involving injury or damage to persons or property, or immediate financial loss, or the likelihood of such injury, damage or loss, when the notice requirements of this section would make such notice impracticable, or increase the likelihood or severity of such injury, damage or loss, and the reason for the emergency is stated at the outset of the meeting. The notice required under this section shall include at a minimum the meeting date, time, place and name of the public agency calling for the meeting. The secretary or other designee of each public agency shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make a good faith effort to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting. [[I.C. § 74-204\(2\)](#)]

For Executive Sessions — An executive session at which members of the public are excluded may be held during a regular or special meeting of the board, but only for the purposes and only in the manner set forth in [I.C. § 74-206](#).

It must be noted that executive sessions take place only at meetings. Before any executive session may be held, there must be a valid open meeting and a vote to hold an executive session. Every such "meeting" must satisfy the Open Meeting Law's notice and agenda requirements, [I.C. § 74-204](#). The word 'meeting' is defined in [I.C. § 74-202\(6\)](#) as "the convening of a governing body of a public agency to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter."

The motion to go into executive session must identify the specific subsections of I.C. § 74-206(1) that authorize the executive session. For example:

- “I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(a) to consider hiring a public employee (or staff member, or individual agent).”
- I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(b) to consider the evaluation (or dismissal of, or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against) a public employee (or staff member, or individual agent).”
- “I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(c) to acquire an interest in real property which is not owned by a public agency.”
- “I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(d) to consider records that are exempt from disclosure as provided in [chapter 1, title 74, Idaho Code](#).
- “I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(f) to communicate with legal counsel for the library to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation (or of controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated).” [The mere presence of legal counsel at an executive session does not satisfy this requirement.]
- “I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(i) to engage in communications with a representative of the public agency’s risk manager or insurance provider to discuss the adjustment of a pending claim or prevention of a claim imminently likely to be filed.” [The mere presence of a representative of the library’s risk manager or insurance provider at an executive session does not satisfy this requirement.]

There must then be a roll call vote on the motion and the vote must be recorded in the minutes. An executive session must be authorized by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the library board.

It shall be a violation of this act to change the subject within the executive session to one not identified within the motion to enter the executive session or to any topic for which an executive session is not provided. [[I.C. § 74-206\(2\)](#)]

I.C. § 74-206(3) specifically directs that the exceptions be construed narrowly. It is the opinion of the Attorney General of Idaho that no entity should try to “shoehorn” an issue into an executive session exception.

Even though certain enumerated matters may be **considered** in an executive session, it must be emphasized that: No executive session may be held for the purpose of taking any final action or making any final decision [[I.C. § 74-206\(3\)](#)]. No motions may be made in executive session.

Penalties for noncompliance — Failure to comply with [Idaho’s Open Meetings Law, I.C. §§ 74-201 through 74-208](#), renders board actions null and void [[I.C. § 74-208\(1\)](#)]. Any board member who participates in a meeting that violates these provisions is subject to a civil penalty:

- Not to exceed \$250.00
- Not to exceed \$1,500 for knowingly participating
- Not to exceed \$2,500 if subsequent to previous violation within the last 12 months.

It is the opinion of the Attorney General of Idaho that the Idaho Legislature intended that such fines be paid by the individual member of the library board, not by the library board itself.

For more information, see the *Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual*, published by the Office of the Attorney General:

<http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/OpenMeeting.pdf>

Amending the Agenda

An agenda may be amended, provided that a good faith effort is made to include, in the original agenda notice, all items known to be probable items of discussion.

- If an amendment to an agenda is made after an agenda has been posted but forty-eight (48) hours or more prior to the start of a regular meeting, or twenty-four (24) hours or more prior to the start of a special meeting, then the agenda is amended upon the posting of the amended agenda. [[I.C. § 74-204\(4\)\(a\)](#)]
- If an amendment to an agenda is proposed after an agenda has been posted and less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to a regular meeting or less than twenty-

four (24) hours prior to a special meeting but prior to the start of the meeting, the proposed amended agenda shall be posted but shall not become effective until a motion is made at the meeting and the library board votes to amend the agenda. [[I.C. § 74-204\(4\)\(b\)](#)]

- An agenda may be amended after the start of a meeting upon a motion that states the reason for the amendment and states the good faith reason the agenda item was not included in the original agenda posting [[I.C. § 74-204\(4\)\(c\)](#)]. This should be done only if the additional item cannot wait until the following meeting.

Taking Minutes

Idaho's Open Meetings Law requires that the library board provide for the taking of written minutes of all of its meetings. It is not necessary to make a full transcript or recording of the meeting [[I.C. § 74-205\(1\)](#)]. These minutes are public records and must be made available to the general public within a reasonable time after the meeting. The minutes must include, at a minimum, the following information:

- a. All members of the library board present;
- b. All motions, resolutions, orders, or ordinances proposed and their disposition;
- c. The results of all votes and, upon the request of a member of the governing body, the vote of each member by name.

In addition, [I.C. § 74-205\(2\)](#) provides that minutes of executive sessions must be kept, but they need contain only sufficient detail to identify the purpose and topic of the executive session and do not need to include disclosure of material or matters that compromise the purpose of the executive session. The minutes pertaining to the executive session, however, must include a reference to the specific statutory subsection authorizing the session.

Record-Keeping Requirements for Public Libraries

Meeting minutes are legal records of board business and must be retained indefinitely by the library. I.C. §§ 33-2607(11) and 33-2720(1)(n) require that boards "maintain legal records of all board business."

E-rate paperwork must be retained 10 years from the end of the date of service specified in the paperwork.

The Rule of Thumb for Board Minutes: Be Specific

- Name of Board
- Type of meeting
 - Regular
 - Special
 - Executive session
 - Working session
- Date, time, place of meeting. It is a good idea to leave space for the convening (starting) and adjourning (ending) times of the meeting.
- Name of chairperson or meeting leader and secretary (or their substitutes)
- Members present
 - Minutes should indicate which members were present at any point in the meeting, not just at the point in the meeting when the roll was called
 - If a trustee arrives late or leaves early, this should be noted in the discussion and reflected in the minutes.
 - Along with the “attendees” list, there should be an “apologies of absentees” list. This is a respectful way of labeling the “present” and “absent” lists. The Members Present section also notes whether a quorum was present. The quorum is the number of board members sufficient for conducting business and voting. The quorum for a public library board in Idaho is three (3), but a smaller number may adjourn [I.C. § [33-2606](#) or [33-2719](#)].
- Additional information may be added at the board’s request
- Space for the secretary’s signature. As the minute taker, the secretary always signs his work. An additional signature may be required when the minutes are approved, according to the library’s bylaws.
- The minutes should include a clean copy of the meeting agenda.

Follow the Agenda

When compiling the minutes of a board meeting, it is important to follow the agenda. Using the agenda as the template for the minutes makes it easier for the board's secretary to follow and decreases the possibility of omitting information from the minutes.

Record Motions throughout the Meeting

- Listen attentively to discussions during the meeting.
- It is not necessary to capture discussions in detail.
- When a new motion is made, record the relevant information.
 - The exact wording of the motion;
 - The name of the trustee who made the motion. If the secretary is uncertain who made the motion or how to word the motion, it is all right to ask. Accuracy is important in the minutes;
 - The name of the trustee who seconded the motion (if required in the board's bylaws);
 - The result of the vote
- When a report or announcement is read aloud, a printed copy should be provided to the secretary, who will attach a copy of each report to the minutes before they are approved by the board.
- Meeting minutes are a record of what was done, not of what was said, so the secretary should record summaries of discussions only if asked to do so.
 - It is important to make notes as objective as possible
 - Record facts and points being made, not opinions
 - Use as few adjectives and adverbs as possible, to make the minutes as dry and factual as possible
 - It is important not to refer to trustees by name during the discussion summary

- Transcribe the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting, when events are still fresh in your memory
- Use a computer, if possible, to save time and keep up with what is happening in the meeting
- Format notes into neat paragraphs in accordance with the agenda
- Have the draft minutes ready in time to go out with the board packet before the following meeting
- Once the minutes have been approved by the board, they are a legal record and cannot be revised.

Personnel

Undoubtedly, the single most important decision that the library board will make is the selection of the best qualified library director it can afford to engage.

A good library director will make the work of the board not only easier, but also more motivating and more satisfying. A good director will handle all the procedural problems of the library, so board members will be able to concentrate on the long-term goals and policies of the library.

Failure to find and retain a good director, however, will create the most painful situation a library board can face. Having an unskilled or inept library director will create problems in the day-to-day operations of the library. This will cause resentment on the part of the other staff members. And, most importantly, it will damage the library's relationship with its patrons and reputation in the community. Ultimately, it may force the board to make a painful decision about whether the director should be retained or placed on an improvement plan.

The Board's Working Relationship with the Director

The responsibilities of trustees can be divided into four general areas:

1. Governance and Policy Making
2. Finance
3. Human Resources / Personnel
4. Service and Community Relations

Cooperation is the key. The relationship between the library's Board and Director only works when they support and trust one another.

The duties and responsibilities of the library board are many and at times appear to coincide with those of the library director. Understanding the differences in roles, responsibilities, and accountability assures teamwork and results in better library service for the community.

The public library board in Idaho is a governing, policy-making body, elected or appointed to govern the library, not to run it. The library's director, on the other hand, is appointed by the board to administer the library and to take responsibility for its day-to-day operations.



Policy determination and management are different roles.

Boards do not run their libraries; they ensure that they are run properly.

Boards do not attempt to manage their libraries; they ensure that the libraries are managed properly.

Policy determination relies heavily on the board's participation and knowledge.

Management is the responsibility of the person hired by the library board to administer, direct, or run the library.

Cooperation is the key.



Unhealthy Board–Director Relationships

- The Domineering Director. The director may attempt to dominate the board. In this situation, the director fails to take direction from the board. In some cases, when the board is weak, she even tells the board what to do. Where a strong board is involved, each decision becomes a power struggle between the library's board and director.
- The Dominating Board. The board can attempt to dominate the director. In this situation, the board does not listen to the director. As a result, the director may not be able to let the board know of problems or important issues. Or, the board may become too deeply involved in the day-to-day operations of the library. Staff members become confused about who should be making their assignments, the library's director or its board.

What Does a Healthy Board–Director Relationship Look Like?

The answer is simple: mutual understanding and respect. This healthy relationship is demonstrated in the following ways:

- The board and the director recognize that each has an important role to play in providing library services.
- The board provides the director with a written job description and evaluates the director's work in a constructive way at least annually.
- The board does not interfere with the daily operation of the library. In other words, the board allows the director to do the job he was hired to perform.
- The director keeps the board adequately informed about the operation of the library. She recognizes when a decision goes beyond the authority of the library's staff and takes these issues to the board.
- The board solicits the director's opinions about all issues upon which they will act. They will always show the director the professional courtesy of asking him how a specific decision might impact the day-to-day operation of the library.
- The director carries out policy set by the board even if she does not agree with it. The director, in other words, recognizes that the board has the ultimate legal authority for governing the library.

- When disagreements occur, they are discussed openly and honestly between the library's director and board in regular or special board meetings held pursuant to [Idaho's Open Meetings Law](#). Neither the board members nor the director discusses these problems with other members of the public behind each other's back.

Planning for the Future

The Trustee and Library Planning

Change is a constant. All institutions will either change over time or cease to be relevant. For each institution, the question is not "Will we change?" but "How will we change?" The public library that does not plan for change will still change over time, but the changes will lack focus and may not result in desired outcomes. Change without a plan is change in response to immediate pressures, and not change to meet long-range needs. The library, in other words, will drift.

Change by drift is likely to make the library less and less relevant to its community's real and current needs. Faced with the choice between an agency that is playing a dynamic role in community affairs and one which is adrift in the sea of change, the public is likely to support the agency that is truly meeting its needs.

The library board and library staff can do nothing to stem the tide of societal change, but they can make the library more efficiently responsive to change by developing a strategic plan. Such a plan, which usually covers a two- or three-year period, establishes the library's role or roles in the community, and gives the library an overall direction to pursue. Based on these long-term decisions, specific short-term decisions can be made taking into consideration their long-range implications.

Planning, then, is essential for the public library, and it is a vital part of the function of the library board.

As access to information becomes an increasingly important commodity in our society, people who are unserved by a tax-funded library will be left behind educationally and economically. It is extremely important that communities make decisions about library services from this perspective.

Having a Written Plan Will:

- Make it easier to justify the library's budget to governing authorities;
- Help the board prioritize programs and direct efforts towards tasks that lead to the attainment of objectives.

Library boards continuously guide, shape and build library services for their communities as they make judgments on money, buildings, programs, and staff. The challenge is to make these decisions based on a carefully considered written plan. The purpose of planning is to anticipate both opportunities and problems.

Planning Tips

Planning for the future is neither an easy nor a quick task. It requires time and careful organization to accomplish. Forming special board committees and scheduling a series of planning meetings allow ample time to explore, brainstorm, and dream before making final decisions.

Boards can create advisory committees, sponsor public meetings, encourage open staff discussions, hire outside consultants, and use public relations tools in the planning process. Participation leads to support and understanding of the plan developed. The library director and board are partners planning with the community, not just for the community.

It is important not to overlook the regional planning commission or professional planners who are part of local government. They should be kept informed of library goals and reminded to include library service in the community's plans at every possible opportunity.

Resources

- Data including census figures, community analysis, results of surveys or studies made by the library and/ or other community agencies and institutions:
<http://www.census.gov/>

- Local resources include library staff, community leaders, Friends of the Library, the library's foundation, counties, municipalities, schools, regional planning agencies, colleges, and universities with information to share.
- Groups including counties, municipalities, schools, regional planning agencies, colleges, and universities with information to share
- Community cooperation includes attending public meetings and listening to community needs; making presentations to organized groups; preparing exhibits and displays in the library and other locations.

Planning Process Elements

Elements of Creating a Strategic Plan⁷

Planning to Plan

- Where are we going and how will we get there?
- The outline for the process the planning group will use

Vision

- A preferred future for the library that leads the way to success
- Where we want to go
- The ideal world out there
- A better future
- Paints a picture of:
 - where the library wants to go
 - what it wants to be
- Hopes and dreams
- Comes from the heart, not the head
- Proactive as well as futuristic
- Presents the “Big Picture”
- Uses future tense

⁷ United for Libraries has developed *A Library Board's Practical Guide to Strategic Planning*, available at <http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org/united/files/content/trusteezone/practical-guides/strategic-planning.pdf>.

- Provides motivation and inspiration for the staff and trustees

Mission

- The library business is unique and its mission is distinct from the missions of other service organizations
- Outlines and clarifies the library's purpose
- Defines the focus of the library's business
- Delineates the framework for all strategies and activities
- Identifies the library's sphere of influence and clientele
- Serves as a valuable tool for:
 - Making program and strategy decisions
 - Communicating to the community
- Uses present tense
- Articulates the who, what and why



The library's vision statement is a broad view of how it is going to leave an impact on customers and the greater community.

The library's mission statement, on the other hand, tells a) what the library does, b) how this is done, c) for whom it is done, and d) what value the library brings to the community. A library's mission statement does not have to look like any other library's mission statement. The important thing is to figure out what is important to the library's community and start from there.



Needs Assessment

- Recognition of current situation – Internal & External
 - Community analysis
 - Community engagement
- Summarizes where the library is now
- Forms the foundation on which the plan is built
- Affords an understanding of the influences acting on the library
- Indicates the possible — and the most likely — futures
- Signals the opportunities that most clearly fit the library’s strengths

Strategic Issues

- Strategic issues are those concerns which the organization must address in order to be effective and viable.
- The critical strategic question is not the conventional “What?”, but “Why?” or “How?”
- Strategic issues may be internal or external

Goals

- Goals are broad, general descriptions of “end states” that indicate a strategic issue is being addressed
- For each strategic issue there may be multiple goals

Strategies

- Strategies are broad, general approaches to working toward the identified goals for each strategic issue.
- How do we get there?

Activities

- Measurable and time-restricted plan elements
- Specific actions which we plan to take place in order to implement our general strategy
- What timeline will move us most effectively?

Evaluative Criteria

- Output — Measure whether or to what degree the library carried out the activities that it proposed
- Outcomes — Measure whether the work of the library made any difference in addressing strategic issues
- How will we know what we have accomplished?
- Informally monitor the plan regularly
- Review and revise the plan annually.

The Written Plan

Since planning is a continuous process, based on evaluation and reassessment, a strategic plan is of necessity a flexible document, informed by specific local needs. Most strategic plans include the following essentials:

- A preface, or very brief overview of the planning process with acknowledgments and thanks;
- A description of the library's service area and communities;
- A vision statement, or broad view of how the library is going to have a direct effect or impact on its customers and the greater community;
- A mission statement that tells a) what the library does, b) how this is done, c) for whom it is done, and d) what value the library brings to the community. Your

library's mission statement does not have to look like anyone else's. The important thing is to figure out what is important to your community and start from there;

- Strategic issues, or critical challenges facing the library;
- Goals, or broader statements of what is to be achieved;
- Strategies, or general approaches that will be taken to achieve those goals;
- Activities, or actions that will be taken to implement the strategies;
- Measures of Success / Evaluative Criteria, or how the library will know if it has been successful in its services;
- Implementation and Evaluation, or a description of how the plan will be implemented and how the evaluation process will be used;
- Timeline to achieve goals and evaluate and reassess the plan periodically;
- Publicity plan to build awareness in the community;
- Appendices, including a summary of needs assessment data.

Planning for Library Facilities

As trustees face the challenges of planning library services for the future, increased space and additional locations may become a major consideration. Boards must decide whether to build a new library, renovate or expand current facilities, or find an existing space to be converted into a library.

Construction plans should be considered in the context of the total library plan. Trustees need to study service needs, explore alternatives and project funding, and establish priorities.

Planning Responsibilities

Your Area Field Consultant at the Idaho Commission for Libraries will serve as a resource to help with the complex process of completing a building program. Trustees, staff, consultants, architects, interior designers, city councils, county boards and regional planning departments, and community members all fit into the picture.

Library Staff — The library director and staff actively participate in planning for construction projects by compiling information, surveys, and statistics; preparing building applications and reports; and maintaining project records.

Library Building Consultant — This person is usually an experienced librarian who has participated in several successful building projects. The cost of a building consultant can usually be saved many times over in reductions in construction and operating costs. Working with board and staff, the building consultant can provide any or all of the following services:

- surveying the library's space needs;
- writing the library building program;
- projecting future staff and operating costs;
- preparing a preliminary project budget;
- providing site analysis and recommendations;

- providing advice on funding options;
- providing assistance in selection of the architect;
- reviewing all plans prepared by the architect and providing a written evaluation;
- reviewing needs, specifications and layout for shelving, furniture and equipment;
- providing a final inspection of the facility.

Board of Trustees — The board can handle these tasks as part of the process of building or renovating a library building:

- Determining that a new building is needed;
- Providing leadership in the campaign to keep the community informed and to secure necessary support for the project;
- Appointing a building committee and assigning tasks;
- Selecting and hiring a library building consultant;
- Selecting and hiring an architect;
- Selecting and hiring an interior design specialist;
- Obtaining financing for the project;
- Selecting and purchasing the building site;
- Approving the written building program;
- Approving preliminary and final architectural plans;
- Soliciting and approving bid documents;
- Approving all contracts and any change orders to the contract.
- The board of a city library will need to work with city officials on a building or renovation project. See [I.C. § 33-2607\(4\)\(a\) through \(d\)](#) for details.

Governance and Policy Making

Board of Trustees	Library Director
<p>Determines the goals and objectives of the library and methods of evaluating progress toward meeting those goals and objectives. Reviews goals and objectives annually and evaluates progress.</p>	<p>Provides assistance and direction to the board in setting goals and objectives and determining methods of evaluation. Provides information and opinion on how the library is progressing.</p>
<p>Relates the library and its programs to the community and its needs, discovered through systematic assessment of the community and through systematic analysis of library services.</p>	<p>Assists the board to know the needs of the community and to respond to these needs through library programs and services.</p>
<p>Determines and adopts written policies to govern the operation, use, and programs of the library. Adopts bylaws for board procedures. Reviews policies on a regular basis, especially as part of the orientation of new trustees.</p>	<p>Recommends needed policies to the board and studies examples and sources of information. Carries out policies as adopted by the board, interprets policies to staff and public. Provides the board with recommendations and materials for study.</p>
<p>Knows local, state, and national laws which affect libraries, and plans an active part in initiating and supporting beneficial library legislation.</p>	<p>Administers the library within the framework of the law and the library's goals and objectives, policies, and budget.</p>
<p>Is aware of and makes use of the services and consultants of the Idaho Commission for Libraries.</p>	
<p>Attends regional, state, and national library association meetings and workshops when possible and joins appropriate organizations working for improved libraries. Studies library publications.</p>	
<p>Budgets for continuing education experiences for administration, staff, and trustees.</p>	
<p>Seeks a cooperative relationship with officials of the municipality or other local governing units, keeping in mind the special legal responsibilities of the library board.</p>	<p>Prepares all needed library reports for local unity of government and the Idaho Commission for Libraries. Provides copies to the board.</p>
<p>Attends all board meetings and committee meetings to which assigned. Carries out all special assignments properly.</p>	<p>Attends all board and committee meetings except those meetings or parts of meetings in which the director's salary and tenure are discussed.</p>

Finance

Board of Trustees	Library Director
<p>Is completely informed about the financial status of the library.</p>	<p>Provides regular reports of budget status and expenditures at each board meeting.</p>
<p>Works with the library director to formulate a budget adequate to carry out the library's goals and objectives, within any limitations of state law.</p>	<p>Prepares for board discussion a suggested annual budget in consultation with staff and board. Supplies facts and figures to the board to aid in interpreting the library's current and future financial needs.</p>
<p>Presents the budget to the funding agency, public officials, and the public; explains and defends it.</p>	<p>Follows the budget process as it moves through the funding process. Works with the board in interpreting budget and financial needs of the library to public officials and the public. Provides leadership in supporting the budget.</p>
<p>Works to secure adequate funds for staff and services.</p>	<p>Identifies financial needs of the library and works with the board and staff for adequate funding.</p>
<p>Explores all ways of increasing the library's income through tapping other sources and taking advantage of all available means of cooperation and other libraries.</p>	<p>Calls the board's attention to ways of stretching the budget. Assists the board in cooperating with other libraries. Advises the board of potential partnerships.</p>
<p>Sees that complete and accurate records concerning finances, personnel, property inventory, and annual reports are on file at the library.</p>	

Human Resources / Personnel

Board of Trustees	Library Director
<p>Employs a competent and qualified library director and pays an adequate salary.</p>	<p>Acts as technical advisor to the board. Hires and directs subordinate staff members in line with library HR policies.</p>
<p>Provides adequate compensation and reasonable fringe benefits for all employees. Provides agreeable working conditions and opportunities for professional growth.</p>	<p>Works for needed improvements in working conditions, salary scales, and fringe benefits.</p>
<p>Provides a planned orientation program for new trustees.</p>	<p>Assists in the orientation of new trustees, including introduction to library procedures, departments, and staff.</p>
<p>Develops policies to guide staff selection.</p>	<p>Provides the board with recommendations and materials for study. Applies guidelines in selecting staff. Takes full responsibility for day-to-day administration of the library.</p>
<p>Provides in-service training for the professional development of staff members on effective implementation of library policies. Whenever possible, provides opportunities for additional education and advancement. Considers establishment of career ladders within the library if possible.</p>	

Service and Community Relations

Board of Trustees	Library Director
<p>Interprets the community and its needs to the library director and reflects them in goals, objectives, and policies.</p>	<p>Interprets the community and its needs to the board.</p>
<p>Establishes a library materials selection policy reflecting community needs and including a freedom to read provision.</p>	<p>Provides information and expert advice about this policy, together with recommendations reflecting professional knowledge. Selects and orders books and materials in harmony with the policy's criteria.</p>
<p>Establishes ways of providing service, not just to individuals, but also to organized agencies and institutions within the community in both the public and private sector.</p>	<p>Offers regular and special services to public and private community groups. Seeks effective and innovative ways of providing library services to groups, individuals, and the total community.</p>
<p>Establishes, supports, and participates in a planned community relations program, allocating responsibility for various tasks, per available personnel and talents.</p>	
<p>Advocates for the library and its programs and services at every opportunity.</p>	
<p>Seeks to extend library services to those who have been reluctant to use the library and to those unable to take advantage of customary library programs.</p>	

Rule of Good Practice:

Individual board members do not act alone. An individual's authority to act comes from the board's actions. This precept is important for the library's well-being as well as for that of the board.

The Board's Relationship with Staff

In order for the trustee-director relationship to work, trustees need to adhere to the following principles:

- The staff is directed only by the library director, who interprets board-approved policies to the staff and carries out the total library program as accepted by the board.
- The library board — as a whole — hires, supervises, evaluates, and dismisses only the library director.
- Individual trustees never give orders or instructions to library staff members.
- Trustees wishing to comment on the performance of the staff make these comments directly to the library director.
- Trustees never interfere in the hiring process other than to agree to job descriptions and personnel policies.
- The board is a final recourse for employees who have exhausted accepted appeals channels.
- Chain of command is to be respected without exception.

Library trustees should be aware of these situations:

- Trustees often know staff members very well and may even have a personal relationship with some of them.
- Trustees will often ask for help from staff members they know and will bypass others.
- Trustees answer to the community and are sometimes under great pressure from constituents to hire or to fire certain library staff members.
- Trustees should not be insulated from staff but should be familiar with the library's organizational structure and programs. The library director should provide appropriate opportunities for trustees to be acquainted with the staff.

- The board and director should insist on proper channels for complaints. The mayor and council should respect the city library board's authority and refer all complaints about the library either to the library's director or to its board, as appropriate. Complaints about the library director should go to the library board, not to the mayor or council.

Working Relationship with Friends of the Library

Friends of the Library organizations have a definite purpose in helping libraries provide the best service possible. Friends groups extend the circle of contacts in the community begun by library board members. Often, it is from these loyal believers in and supporters of libraries that board members are chosen. The Friends extend their great enthusiasm, eagerness, and assistance in a variety of ways.

Friends groups work to help fund library programs that are designed to help achieve the library's strategic plan. A library Friends group works to help meet the needs of the library, which in turn works to help meet the needs of the community. It is the responsibility of the board to work closely with the Friends, encouraging them and informing them of the library's policies and programs. Part of this informational program may be to invite an official observer from the Friends group to the meetings of the board. In turn, the board attempts to keep itself informed of upcoming Friends programs.

Some boards appoint one of their members to act as a liaison to the Friends to coordinate the Friends' programs with the library's strategic plan and policies. The library board as a unit and each individual library board member would be wise to avoid, even unintentionally, dominating the Friends group. An independent Friends group that is freely choosing to support the library can be much more effective in gaining widespread community support than one that is acting as a surrogate of the board.

The vital supplementary and supporting role that this concerned group plays in enhancing and enriching the library is reflected in their diverse activities as follows:

- Assisting with services: acting as tour guides within the library; assisting with projects to the handicapped, shut-ins, imprisoned, and hospitalized; offering clerical help; conducting story hours; developing attractive brochures; purchasing equipment; hosting special functions at the library; landscaping and

general maintenance; assisting with scholarships and funding for staff development; and supplying and arranging exhibits.

- Publicizing the library's services: organizing Friends membership drives; informing non-users of library services; drawing attention to the library as the educational, recreational, and social focal point of the community; speaking at public meetings and to individuals about the library's services, programs, activities, resources, and needs.
- Raising special funds: by sponsoring author receptions, musical events, house tours, tractor pulls, rodeos, book sales, antique bazaars, art shows, or plays.
- Other assistance: legislative communication to city and county governing authorities and state and national legislators; special projects; cultural programs; campaign for a new building or expansion or renovation of an existing building.

Informed Friends groups and library board members — working cooperatively with and through the library director — can be of valuable assistance in the total public relations efforts of the library.

Where no Friends of the Library group exists, the board may decide that a Friends group is needed and be instrumental in organizing such a group. If so, an early understanding of the relationship of the Friends to the board and to the staff can be established, reducing the possibility of later jurisdictional problems.

When Friends volunteer to help the library, it is with assistance and cooperation of the library board, librarian, and staff, all of whom should have a part in discussing the needs that might be the subject of work by the Friends. Friends should not expect the staff to have unlimited time available to work on projects; the board and director should discuss and determine how much time, money, and personnel can be woven into the Friends' efforts.

Remember: For the sake of intellectual freedom and patron privacy, it is always inappropriate for volunteers, including trustees, to perform circulation functions — checking materials in or out — or to have any access to the library's patron database.

Library boards have legal governing responsibilities, including approving policy. The library's director carries out the library's policies and has charge of the staff. Library Friends must cooperate with both but interfere with neither. Generally speaking, library staff and board are encouraged to belong to the Friends group, as long as it is of their own free will.

However, neither the library's current staff members nor its board members should be officers in the Friends group, to avoid possible conflict of interest allegations.

Organizing Friends Groups

The library director and board usually decide together that a Friends group is needed. Sometimes, however, interested citizens approach the director to suggest the formation of a Friends group. In either case, the library's board and director should be involved in setting forth the guidelines, roles, and structure of the Friends group.

First, the library's director develops a small planning committee consisting of active and concerned patrons, representatives from civic organizations, community leaders, a library board member liaison, the library director, and a cross-section of the community.

United for Libraries has compiled Fact Sheets to help in creating the needed infrastructure of a non-profit Friends group. These Fact Sheets are found on the United for Libraries site: <http://www.ala.org/united/friends/factsheets>.

Resources

United for Libraries, ALA's association of library trustees, advocates, friends, and foundations: <http://www.ala.org/united/>.

Hiring a Library Director

The selection of a competent library director can be the most important single act undertaken by the board of trustees. In the process of selecting and hiring, trustees should be aware of current practices in the profession, competitive salaries, benefits, and state requirements.

When seeking a director, some boards will place more emphasis on imagination and energy; others, on administrative experience; still others, on education and erudition. Local conditions, such as the library's size, staff, and fiscal resources, are all factors affecting the selection of the library director.

Preliminary Assessment

The board should make a realistic appraisal of the situation. This includes deciding what qualifications the library requires of a library director and what the library and community can offer him. It is important to offer the best possible salary to secure the services of a qualified administrator. The board should also consider any added incentives or challenges offered by the job opportunity.

The board begins with a hard look at the state of the library by addressing some fundamental questions, such as:

- What is the role of the library in the community today?
- Have the community's library needs and expectations changed? Has the library kept pace with those needs and expectations?
- What does the community really want or need in the next director?
- What is the reason for the job opening? An exit interview with the departing director is often useful.
- Are you losing someone upward-bound or to retirement?
- Was the previous director dissatisfied? If so, why?

The answers to these questions will influence the development of the job description. The board may want to redefine the job, elevate the position, and revise qualifications and statements of job responsibilities.

The Job Description

When drafting or revising the job description, it may be helpful to consult the Components of Performance Management section for information on Results Oriented Job Descriptions. Consulting professional literature and the Idaho Commission for Libraries can help ensure that all legal requirements are met.

Discrimination

As with any employer, libraries must abide by federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination in relation to hiring, promotion, and all other working conditions of employment.

Idaho law prohibits discrimination in employment, education, real estate transactions, and public accommodations.

Per the Idaho Commission on Human Rights, illegal discrimination may be based on:

- Race
- Sex
- Color
- National origin
- Religion
- Age (over 40)
- Mental or physical disability
- Reprisal for protected activity

Retaliation against an individual who has engaged in protected activity is unlawful. “Protected activity” means opposing conduct which a person, in good faith, reasonably believes to be unlawful under the anti-discrimination statutes or participating in proceedings of the Idaho Commission on Human Rights, which are set up for the enforcement of the anti-discrimination statutes.

For more information, visit the Idaho Commission on Human Rights at <https://humanrights.idaho.gov/Idaho-Law/Overview>.

Genetic Information Discrimination

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA), which prohibits genetic information discrimination in employment, took effect on November 21, 2009.

Under Title II of GINA, it is illegal to discriminate against employees or applicants because of genetic information. Title II of GINA prohibits the use of genetic information in making employment decisions, restricts employers and other entities covered by Title II (employment agencies, labor organizations, and joint labor-management training and apprenticeship programs — referred to as “covered entities”) from requesting, requiring, or purchasing genetic information, and strictly limits the disclosure of genetic information.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces Title II of GINA (dealing with genetic discrimination in employment). The U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and the Treasury have responsibility for issuing regulations for Title I of GINA, which addresses the use of genetic information in health insurance.

For more information on genetic information discrimination, visit the EEOC at <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/genetic.cfm>.

The library’s stated H.R. policies should demonstrate that the library board makes every effort not to discriminate. District library boards have the responsibility for appropriately reviewing their H.R. policies and adopting corrections as appropriate. City library boards follow city H.R. policies and procedures, when available. See the Employment Laws section for more information.

Search Committee

It is good personnel practice to advertise a job opening to as many potential candidates as possible. A library conducts a search even if there are staff members eligible for promotion. Qualified staff members are encouraged to apply and the board stresses that the goal is to select the best person for the job. All applicants receive consideration and due process in accordance with equal opportunity laws.

A search committee of the board composes a carefully worded advertisement for publication in professional journals and posting on professional library job sites. Ads published by other libraries serve as examples — some strong and some weak. When composing an ad for the library director's job, it is fine to borrow wording from the director's job description. Sticking to the highlights of the job will help keep the ad brief.

- The ad should specify a deadline for submitting applications.
 - This can be an absolute deadline, such as, "Only applications received by January 15 will be considered."
 - Or it can be a preferential deadline, such as, "Applications received by January 15 will receive preference." This means that applications received after January 15 will be considered, but only if none of the applications submitted by the deadline result in the hiring of a new director.
- It is important to request a résumé, references, and a cover letter — even if applicants are required to complete an application form. A standardized application form is designed to be one-size-fits-all, and cannot convey the wealth of information about a candidate that can be contained in a cover letter and résumé.
- For libraries that do not have an H.R. professional, it is a good idea to designate one trustee to receive applications for the director position.

Word of Mouth

Advertising among friends and colleagues helps spread the news of an available position. Send job announcements to LibIdaho and other regional and national listing services enlarge the pool of potential applicants. The Resources section below lists appropriate professional library job posting sites.

Interviewing and Selection

Prior to conducting interviews, the search committee adopts standards for rating applications as well as a list of questions to be asked of each candidate.

- When each candidate is asked to respond to the same set of questions, there is an equal basis for evaluation.
- It is a good idea to ask library staff if they would like to suggest any interview questions.
- The board must be careful to ask only job-related questions, as it is illegal to ask questions about an applicant's age, marital status, family life, health history, arrest record, or outside interests.
- The interview will proceed smoothly and legally when only appropriate topics are discussed and the same list of questions is used for each candidate's interview.
- An evaluation sheet should be used by the interview committee to note the candidate's responses and committee members' impressions. This makes it easier to compare the committee's impressions of each candidate. If your board does not have an evaluation sheet that it uses, you could ask other library boards to share their form. There are also lots of evaluation sheets available on the Web, such as the one used by Case Western Reserve University: https://case.edu/finadmin/humres/employment/attachments/candidate_interview_evaluation_form.pdf.
- The committee will need to send reference release forms to each candidate's former employers and personal references. To increase your chances of receiving a written reply, remember to include a self-addressed, stamped return envelope with each form. A phone call may produce a more candid evaluation, and a copy of the form can be used during the conversation to record responses.

- For more information on hiring a new library director, take a look at <http://www.cosla.org/documents/HiringDirectorResourcePacket1.pdf>.

Other Decisions to Be Made Prior to Interviewing

- Will the new director be offered a contract, schedule, or open-ended agreement?
- How much is the budget for interviewing expenses?
- Will the library be offering a relocation allowance?
- Have all invited candidates been informed of the board's policy on these expenses?

Interview and Selection Process

- Receipt of all applications is acknowledged promptly. Applicants who do not meet established qualifications — or did not qualify as a finalist — are notified.
- References are checked, using a standard form, before making a job offer.
- The number of applicants to be interviewed, usually three to five people, is decided before finalists are invited.
- The order of preference for interviews is determined and letters are sent to scheduled candidates.
- One person is designated to conduct interviews with others assisting. The interview team is kept to a reasonable size, usually three to five people.
- The interview location, accommodations for the candidate, a tour of the library and community are planned well in advance of the interview date(s).
- Allowing adequate time for discussion is important, as the interview is a mutual evaluation process. The committee provides the candidate with a fair and accurate picture of the library, working conditions, and expectations.

- Allowing time between interviews to complete evaluation sheets — while the members' reactions to candidates are still fresh — makes the interview team more productive and efficient.

After All Interviews Have Been Completed

- The candidates most likely to succeed as library director are selected, through discussion and by ranking candidates based on interview evaluations.
- The committee seeks consensus.
- The top candidate is contacted, preferably by telephone, to make a formal offer. The candidate may then ask for some time to consider the offer before responding. It is considered polite for the candidate to respond within 24 hours to accept or decline the offer or to ask for two or three additional days to give a final response to the job offer.
- The telephone call is followed up with an information letter and/or contract which includes details of appointment, duties, salary, benefits, evaluation, and starting date. It is important to include a second copy for the new director's signature and to specify the deadline for returning the document(s).
- All other candidates who interviewed are thanked in writing and informed of the committee's decision only after acceptance has been received from the successful candidate.
- If the committee's first choice declines or is unavailable, the board can then quickly contact the second choice.

New Director

If the new director is not a local candidate, the board will need to schedule an orientation and assist with relocation. Useful information includes help with school and housing and additional information on the library and the community. A subscription to the local newspaper and back copies of the library's newsletter are valuable tools to acclimate the new library director.

News releases and photographic coverage are arranged as part of the new director's welcome. Personal introductions to staff members, trustees, community representatives, and local government officials are scheduled promptly. An open house or reception hosted by the board is a standard courtesy.

A trial period of six months to one year allows time for the board and the director to develop a working relationship and to evaluate library administration. Early in this period some short- and long-term goals and expectations are mutually agreed upon.

Midway through the trial period, an informal review of the director's performance is conducted. There is more information in the section on Director Performance Appraisal. A "final" trial-period evaluation is developed by the board and discussed concerning the decision to retain or dismiss the director. If performance is in doubt, problems are documented carefully. Dissatisfaction is recorded and discussed. The diligent board never retains a director when a majority of its members is convinced that no improvement is possible.

If the board finds itself in this position, they can seek help from an outside impartial consultant.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook, 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association, in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Resources for Posting Director Positions

- **LibIdaho** – Idaho’s library listserv — subscription required — http://www.idaholibraries.org/subscribe_to_libidaho
- **INALJ** — (formerly *I Need a Library Job*) is a one-stop shop for posting and finding library jobs. This service is free but donations are always welcome. — <http://inalj.com/>
- **PNLA** — *The Pacific Northwest Library Association Jobs List* — PNLA is an organization of people who work in, with, and for libraries in Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, and Washington. There is no charge to post employment announcements on the PNLA Jobs page. — <http://www.pnla.org/jobs>
- **ARSL** — *The Association for Rural & Small Libraries Job Postings* — ARSL is the premiere professional organization for trustees and staff of rural and small libraries. There is no charge to post to the Job Listings Page. ARSL members in good standing can also post jobs to the member listserv. There is more information on the ARSL Web site. — <http://arsl.info/category/jobs/>
- **MPLA** — *The Mountain Plains Library Association Jobline* — MPLA is a 12-state association of librarians, library paraprofessionals, and friends of libraries in Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. For libraries outside the MPLA region there is a \$25 fee to post. — <http://www.mpla.us/services/jobline/>
- **Libjobs** – A fee-based job board service provided to corporate, public, academic, and K-12 Libraries. — <http://www.libjobs.com/>
- **ALA JobLIST** — A fee-based service of the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) — <http://joblist.ala.org/jobseeker/search/results/>

Director Performance Appraisal

Boards of trustees are evaluating their library director all the time: by instinct, on what they see in the library and hear from the public as well as the “feel” and reputation of the library. The performance appraisal is closely tied to the successful implementation of the library’s strategic plan. A formal, written performance appraisal is an essential management practice. The evaluation of the library director is the foundation of the evaluation process for the library as a whole.

Purposes of the Performance Appraisal

- To provide the director with a clear understanding of the board’s expectations
- To ensure that the director is aware of how well those expectations are being met
- To serve as a formal vehicle of communication between the board and director
- To identify and give credit for a job well done
- To identify the board’s existing concerns so that appropriate action can be taken
- To review annual accomplishments of the library and ensure the continued effectiveness of the director
- To demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to community stakeholders

Factors in Reviewing the Performance of Library Directors

Directors are accountable to varied and sometimes conflicting constituencies. The board and the director must recognize these groups and agree on the prioritization of the demands of each.

- Elected officials and the appointed governing officer who supervises other municipal department heads
- The library staff members who have diverse personal expectations for their director
- Public pressure groups that exert pressure on the director to respond to their concerns
- Individual members of the board of trustees who have personal priorities for the library and the director.

Good communication, good public relations, a written strategic plan, and clear library policies will all help the board and director deal with any conflicting expectations. The performance appraisal method and process can be designed to include input from all these groups, but the final responsibility rests with the board.

The following are some factors that could be considered in the director's performance appraisal. The list is not all-inclusive, nor is every item necessary for every library. There are probably other factors that each concerned party could add and some factors included that the board may consider irrelevant. These factors are a reference point for the board to develop the type of evaluation that is best for its institution and its situation.

- Board Relationship
- Strategic Planning
- Preparing and Managing the Budget
- Personnel Administration
- Professional Knowledge and Awareness of Best Practices and Trends

- Implementation of Board Decisions
- Collection Development
- Staff Development
- Library Service
- Activity in Professional Organizations
- Policy Recommendations to Board
- Working Relations with Friends, Foundation, Community, City (if a city library)
- Maintenance and Development of Facilities and Vehicles

Performance Management

Performance management is the ongoing collaborative process to support library employees' success and accomplish the strategic mission of the library. It is a year-round partnership between the director and the board and between the director and the staff to create shared understanding about the results to be accomplished and how that will be done. As a part of planning for the future, performance management requires continually asking ourselves:

- What we need to do
- How we need to do it
- How we can do it better

All employees will know what their job is and what impact their daily activities have on the mission and values of the library. Employees are responsible for their work and accountable for results.

A successful performance management process manages real and potential conflict through open and honest communication focusing on the growth and improvement of individuals. The ideal is to communicate openly, frequently, and freely — up, down, and across the library — so that situations are handled and problems solved before they become crises.

Performance management is a cyclical process that involves

- developing the Results Oriented Job Description (ROJD)
- developing the work plan for the coming year
- observing performance
- providing and receiving feedback
- learning from experiences and applying that learning to clarify expectations and improve performance
- planning, coaching, feedback, and development for all employees

Components of Performance Management

ROJD – Results Oriented Job Description

- Focuses on the library’s desired results for the position
- Identifies specific tasks and activities to achieve each result
- Results are the outcomes or consequences of activities
- Aligns with the library mission and strategic plan goals
- Results and goals are commonly used interchangeably
- Most positions will have two or three primary results

Focusing on results instead of tasks allows employees to be more flexible and creative in their jobs. It also helps employees understand how their position fits into the structure of the library.

In addition to the results, an ROJD includes

- The purpose of the position
- The position’s place in the library
- The customers to be served
- The general, typical, or ongoing activities under each result
- How the position relates to
 - Library values
 - Customer service
 - Relationships
 - Collaboration
 - Being a learning organization

Annual Work Plan

In the context of the ROJD results, describes for the next year

- Major activities
 - Projects
 - Accomplishments
- Some items may duplicate those in the ROJD
- Others reflect specific
 - Targets
 - Areas of focus
 - High priorities
 - May be incorporated into the ROJD or may be a separate document
 - Aligns with the library's mission and strategic plan goals

Performance Appraisal

The performance appraisal is the collaborative process between the library's director and board of assessing the work performance and critical work behaviors of the employee. Performance appraisals should be done at the end of the director's entrance probation (six months) and at least annually after that. This appraisal process is used to review the ROJD, the results achieved, and the relationships between the director, the board, staff members, and customers. The performance appraisal is an annual documentation of the regular discussions held throughout the year.

Guidelines

1. The performance management process is ongoing.
2. Within a month after a new employee begins work, the employee and supervisor and, if appropriate, other team members, meet to discuss and agree upon the ROJD and set the work plan for the six-month training period. At the successful completion of this training period, another review of the work plan takes place. The work plan is then reviewed as needed, and at least annually.
3. Feedback is provided to individuals on their performance expectations and how they can improve. Using the ROJD, employees have regular discussions with their supervisor, and when appropriate other team members, for feedback on performance, to share what they've learned and how it's been applied, and identify areas that require problem-solving or additional training. Key areas to consider include:
 - Are expectations being met?
 - How do we know?
 - What are we learning?
 - What proficiencies are being developed?
 - How are these proficiencies being applied to the job to achieve results?
 - What adjustments need to be made to the ROJD?
 - What are recent successes and failures?
 - What was learned and applied from these experiences?
4. The completed performance appraisal document consists of:
 - Employee self-appraisal – See Self Appraisal Form
 - Peer and customer input as appropriate
 - Review of the ROJD and work plan from the completed appraisal period
 - Completion of the performance appraisal form by the board
 - Assessment of overall performance
 - Description of identified employee development, if any

- ROJD and work plan for the next appraisal period agreed upon by the employee and the supervisor
5. Performance appraisals may be used in disciplinary actions and therefore are open for review by some individuals outside the library if legal issues surface.

Performance Appraisal Procedure

The performance appraisal is intended to be a positive, developmental process that includes praise and constructive guidance on how the employee's performance might improve in the future.

Evaluation should be based on the director's demonstrated ability to meet the objectives of the annual library work plan. This is not intended to be the board's subjective appraisal of the director's personality traits. It should take into account the entire range of responsibilities summarized in the director's job description. The board should work with the director to develop an evaluation process that includes stated criteria and a rating system. Neither the evaluation process, nor the criteria used to evaluate performance, nor the content of the evaluation should come as a surprise to the director. The director should know the expectations of work and the criteria that will be used to measure success. The following indicators may serve as criteria to evaluate the performance of a library director in fulfilling the essential functions of the position:

- Ability to use public funds wisely;
- Ability to prepare budgets that can support library services and programs;
- Ability to prepare accurate and clearly written financial reports;
- Ability to meet milestones of both long-range and annual plans;
- Ability to keep the board informed of library concerns and achievements;
- Ability to serve as technical advisor to the board regarding library issues;
- Ability to maintain good relationships with those the library serves, library supporters, library staff, other libraries, and political and professional entities;
- Ability to learn from past mistakes by avoiding performance problems that had been raised in the past.

[United for Libraries](#) offers help on evaluation with the following resources:

- [Organizational Tools for Trustees](#) includes sample library director evaluations;
- [Trip Sheet #6: Evaluating the Library Director](#), Provides an overview of evaluation.

When meeting to work on the library director's annual performance evaluation or to discuss the evaluation with the director does so in executive session. The procedure for going into executive session is given in [section 206\(b\), title 74, Idaho Code](#).

The steps in the annual documentation of performance are as follows:

1. The director completes a performance self-appraisal for the past year considering her work plan and submits it to the board.
2. Peer and/or customer review input is requested, if desired.
3. The board prepares written comments on the employee's performance using the performance appraisal form and reviewing the relevant documents.
4. The board members meet without the director present to formulate the final appraisal form. They attempt to reach consensus on how they, as a body, summarize the appraisal. Some examples:
 - a. <http://www.lclib.lib.wa.us/sites/lclib.lib.wa.us/files/uploads/policy/801f2EemployeePerformanceEvaluation.pdf>
 - b. <http://www.trl.org/About/BoardPolicies/Appraisal%20of%20the%20Library%20Director%20Policy.pdf>
5. The board's written appraisal is given to the director and then discussed in an executive session scheduled during a regular or special board meeting.
6. The director and board discuss the appraisal and any developmental issues that need to be addressed.
7. Once both the board and director have agreed on the appraisal results, the appraisal form is signed and copies go to the employee and his personnel file.

8. At this meeting, or at a subsequent meeting, the board and director agree upon a work plan for the next appraisal period.

Self-Appraisal

What is a self-appraisal?

A self-appraisal is both a process and a document. It is a process of reflecting back on the job over the past year. It is a time to compare what actually happened to what the ROJD and last year's work plan said was expected to happen, to evaluate what worked well, what did not work so well, and what was learned. It is also a time to assess performance against the performance appraisal standards. It is a time to look forward and propose a work plan for the coming year. The self-appraisal is also a written document that describes the result of the reflection process. It makes up one piece of the performance appraisal.

Why is the self-appraisal important?

The appraisal process at the library is a collaboration between employee and supervisor. Because the employee best understands what challenges were encountered and what was learned, his perspective is essential for a complete appraisal. Supervisors can observe and comment on the results of employee actions, but cannot know for certain what was learned. Supervisors can provide direction and coaching, but each employee has the ultimate responsibility for doing the job, making improvements, and accomplishing results.

Who reads the self-appraisal and why?

The self-appraisal is written for both the employee and the supervisor. It will be an important starting point for the appraisal discussion. A director's self-appraisal will be read by members of the library board. It is included with the performance appraisal documents filed in the confidential human resource files.

When is the self-appraisal written?

A self-appraisal is prepared as part of the annual performance appraisal. Employees reflect throughout the year on what is happening with their job, what they are learning, and in which areas they need training and development.

What is the link between the self-appraisal and:

- **The ROJD and work plan?** The ROJD includes a job purpose statement, two to three results to be achieved, and both ongoing activities and activities specific to the year that contribute to each result. The ROJD puts the annual work plan in context, detailing why it is relevant and important for the position. At least once a year, during the performance appraisal, the ROJD is reviewed by employee and supervisor and, if necessary, updated to describe the position more accurately.

Determining the work plan for the coming year is another important part of the annual performance appraisal. Reflecting on what happened the past year is used as a basis for deciding what needs to be learned, improved upon, or undertaken in the coming year.

- **The library's mission and goals?** Employees use these when setting and evaluating their work plan and to identify their role in achieving the team's results.
- **The supervisor's appraisal?** As mentioned above, the employee and supervisor collaborate in doing the performance appraisal. The supervisor will use the employee's self-appraisal in preparing for the appraisal discussion and in writing any additional appraisal comments.

What information does the self-appraisal contain? What does it look like?

The self-appraisal focuses on the accomplishments of the work plan that was set for the year as well as on the employee's performance as it relates to the Performance Evaluation measurements. Briefly describe what happened; what worked; what did not work; what was accomplished; how those accomplishments contributed to the results of the position; how the job changed; and, most importantly, what was learned from the experience.

The purpose of the ROJD is to avoid describing the job and listing activities. It is best to avoid writing a very long, or very short, self-appraisal. For many people, focusing on three or four significant events, accomplishments, or experiences is more effective than going into great detail. Another approach is to comment briefly on some expectations and go into more detail on a few. The employee and supervisor can determine how much detail is appropriate.

The self-appraisal notes how the work of the position changed during the year as circumstances changed; for example, if new computer software was installed or new co-workers were hired. It is fine for the employee and supervisor to change or add to the work plan during the year to reflect changes in the job. The self-appraisal may also include a section of "unexpected" or "additional activities or accomplishments."

The format of a self-appraisal is clear and easy for all appraisal reviewers to understand and to link self-appraisal comments with the employee's work plan and ROJD results. The work plan and self-appraisal elements can be inserted into the ROJD document, under the appropriate result.

Employment Laws

Although all of the employment laws that might affect the library cannot be covered in detail, the following list contains important laws and what they do. These descriptions are not intended to explain the law fully, but to send up some “warning signals” of areas of concern to the library board.

Minimum Wage

- Federal — <http://www.dol.gov/whd/minimumwage.htm>
- State — <https://labor.idaho.gov/dnn/Labor-Laws/W-H-Frequently-Asked-Questions-FAQs>
- Almost all library workers will fall under these minimum wage laws. The library is obliged to pay them at or above minimum wage. To find out more about minimum wage, follow the links above or contact your library’s Human Resources professional or attorney.

Idaho Code Requires that Library Staff Be Paid

Idaho Code § [33-2702\(6\)](#) requires that public library service be delivered by paid staff who have received appropriate training in library skills and management. This requirement applies to both city and district libraries in Idaho. The Idaho Commission for Libraries provides training free of charge. For more information, contact your ICfL area field consultant.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

- This law includes the federal minimum wage as well as requirements for overtime pay and compensatory (comp) time. <https://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/>
- In addition, the FLSA includes child labor provisions, which set certain limitations on the use of juveniles as employees. Libraries that employ students

under 18 years of age as pages, need to be aware of these restrictions.

<https://www.dol.gov/whd/childlabor.htm>

- The FLSA also prohibits employees from contributing volunteer hours doing the same thing that they get paid for.

State and Federal Civil Rights Laws

These laws prohibit employers from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, in hiring, promotion, and other employment policies.

- State — <http://humanrights.idaho.gov/>
- Federal — <http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/qanda.html>

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA)

This law protects certain applicants and employees 40 years of age and older from discrimination on the basis of age in hiring, promotion, discharge, compensation, or terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

<https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/discrimination/agedisc>

The ADEA is enforced by the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#).

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ([42 U.S.C. § 12101](#)) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. The ADA affords similar protections against discrimination to Americans with disabilities as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, and other characteristics illegal. Unlike the Civil Rights Act, the ADA also requires covered employers to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities, and imposes accessibility requirements on public transportation.

<https://www.ada.gov/>

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave. Eligible employees are entitled to:

- Twelve (12) work weeks of leave in a 12-month period for
 - The birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
 - The placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;
 - To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
 - A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job;
 - Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty"; or
- Twenty-six (26) work weeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the service member's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (military caretaker leave).
- Only eligible employees are entitled to take FMLA leave. An eligible employee is one who:
 - Works for a covered employer;
 - Has worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
 - Has at least 1,250 hours of service for the employer during the 12-month period immediately preceding the leave; and

- Works at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles.

More information on the Family and Medical Leave Act is available at <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28.htm>.

On February 23, 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division announced a Final Rule to revise the definition of *spouse* under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) in light of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Windsor*, which found section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) to be unconstitutional. The Final Rule amends the definition of *spouse* so that eligible employees in legal same-sex marriages will be able to take FMLA leave to care for their spouse or family member, regardless of where they live. More information is available at the Wage and Hour Division's FMLA Final Rule Web site: <https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/spouse/index.htm>.

Prohibited Conduct by Public Servants

Both chapter 13, title 18 – Bribery and Corruption and chapter 4, title 74 – Transparent and Ethical Government deal with prohibited conduct on the part of Idaho's public servants. One of these prohibitions is against nepotism, the hiring and employment of one's relatives.

- Bribery and Corrupt Practices – Definitions: I.C. § 18-1351: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH13/SECT18-1351/>
- Using Public Position for Personal Gain: I.C. § 18-1359: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH13/SECT18-1359/>
- Penalties: I.C. § 18-1360: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH13/SECT18-1360/>
- Self-Interested Contracts – Exception: I.C. § 18-1361: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH13/SECT18-1361/>

- Noncompensated Appointed Public Servant – Relatives of Public Servant – Exception: I.C. § 18-1361A:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH13/SECT18-1361A/>
- Cause of Action: I.C. § 18-1362:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title18/T18CH13/SECT18-1362/>
- Transparent and Ethical Government – Ethics in Government – Definitions:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH4/SECT74-403/>
- Required Action in Conflicts: I.C. § 74-404:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH4/SECT74-404/>
- Noncompensated Public Official – Exception: I.C. § 74-405:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH4/SECT74-405/>
- Civil Penalty: I.C. § 74-406:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH4/SECT74-406/>

Idaho Ethics in Government Manual

This guide, published by the Office of the Attorney General of the State of Idaho, explains how statutes govern the ethical behavior of public officers and ensure that public officials remain public servants. This document is available for download at <http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/EthicsInGovernment.pdf>. This document is also available in printed booklet form by contacting the Attorney General's office at 208-334-2400.

Finance

Communities like to think of the public library as the “free library,” but no library is free. The money needed for purchasing materials, paying salaries, maintaining facilities, continuing technology upgrades, participating in statewide resource sharing efforts, paying the telephone bill, and so on must come from somewhere. One of the most important board functions, therefore, is the systematic budgeting for, raising of, and accounting for the library’s funds.

Budgeting

While we tend to think of budgeting simply as the allocation of available money, it is more useful to consider it as a planning process. The library’s strategic plan spells out where the library hopes to go over a period of years. The budget states what the library wants to do this year and addresses the very practical issue of costs.

Because the library board has the legal responsibility for setting the budget, and because the library director and staff have the most knowledge of the day-to-day operations of the library, it is important that both the board and the staff be involved in the budgeting process.

The budgeting process should involve the following steps:

1. **Definition of Goals and Activities.** At this point the staff and board think about reasonable goals and activities for the upcoming year without regard to cost. If the library has a strategic plan, its plan for the specific year is consulted. Other problems or opportunities that have arisen are considered. This “dreaming” phase of the budgeting process results in a list of potential activities for the next year.
2. **Information Gathering.** In this phase of the process, information on the potential costs of maintaining services and reaching new goals is gathered. This is done in a number of different ways. The current year’s expenses are examined, the rate of inflation is considered, and new equipment or services are priced by checking

catalogs or contacting service providers. By the end of this process, the staff and board will have obtained cost estimates for achieving the library's defined activities.

3. Estimating Potential Income. During this stage, which often overlaps the Information-Gathering step, estimates are made of potential income. These include taxes, gifts, grants, revenue from the sale of non-resident library cards⁸, and any other possible sources of funding for the library⁹.
4. Comparing Costs and Income. At this stage, the costs of achieving the goals and activities are compared with the library's potential income. If income exceeds costs, all the goals and activities can be kept. More typically, the costs exceed the potential income, so the process goes to the next step.
5. Adjusting Goals and Activities. This is the hardest part of the budgeting process, because the library board and staff must decide what goals and activities are more or less important than others. Some may have to be deleted altogether

⁸ According to the Idaho State Tax Commission's *Sales and Use Tax Administrative Rules* (IDAPA), tangible goods sold by a public library are subject to Idaho's current rate of sales tax. According to Rule 094.05.a, a non-resident library card is a tangible good that the library sells, and not a fee. I.C. § 63-1311 refers to services which would otherwise be funded by property tax revenues. Since a non-resident library card is neither a service nor funded by property tax revenues, a public hearing is not required to set its sale price. The sale price of a non-resident card is determined by the library's board of trustees, usually as part of the library's circulation policy. Moreover, I.C. § 63-1311A does not require a hearing for the purpose of setting or changing the sale price of tangible goods. See <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title63/T63CH13/SECT63-1311/> and <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title63/T63CH13/SECT63-1311A/>. It is important for the library's staff, trustees, and policies to avoid any reference to a 'non-resident fee'. Rule 094.05.a also considers a resident library card to be a tangible good, subject to sales tax. If a public library charges residents of the library's service area to replace a lost or damaged library card, the library is also required to collect Idaho sales tax at the current rate. If the library does not charge residents for replacement cards, then the library would, of course, collect no sales tax. See <http://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/35/0102.pdf> for more information.

⁹ Overdue fines should not be considered as a source of revenue for the library. Overdue fines should be minimal, as low-income patrons can quickly find themselves shut off from their local library because of unpaid late fees. The public library strives to get materials into the hands of those who need them. The community owns the library's materials, and every effort should be made to avoid barring access to the library. For help with addressing this issue, please contact your ICfL area field consultant.

from the year's budget or may have to be scaled back. This is ideally done through a negotiation process with all concerned. Goals and activities that cannot be included fully in the present year can, of course, be reconsidered with the next year's budget process.

6. Presenting the Budget. Once the budget has been written, it needs to be written out in a form that shows estimates of both income and expenditures.
 1. City library boards then need to present this document to the city council for final approval. For more information, see
 - a. 33-2607(5):
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2607/>
 - b. 33-2609:
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2609/>
 2. District libraries must have a budget hearing that is open to the public. In both cases, board members should be able to explain the in some detail the income and costs shown in the budget. See <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2725/> for more information.

A good budget cannot be written the day before it is due. A full budget process is not something that is completed in just one board meeting. It is best to start thinking about the budget early in the spring, so plenty of time can be spent in both the Goals and Activities Definition and Information Gathering phases. The more time that can be spent on the budget, the more useful it is likely to be.

Financial Statements

What to Look for in Financial Statements

Before each board meeting, library trustees receive a copy of the library's monthly financial statement, which includes information regarding:

- Monthly and yearly income
- Monthly and yearly expenditures
- Cash on hand

Are there yearly patterns of income?

For example, library districts which get money directly from a levy can expect to have high tax income figures immediately after taxes are collected, typically in January and July. If this money does not show up, the board's job is to find out why.

Are there yearly patterns of expenditures?

Typically, utility bills will be higher in the winter. Many major publishers release important new books in the spring or fall, so book expenditures may be higher at those times of year. If the library purchases its magazines through a jobber¹⁰, that large bill will come due once a year and may make the materials expenditures for that month look unusually high.

¹⁰ A jobber is a wholesaler that sells only to retailers, such as bookstores, and to institutions, such as schools and libraries.

Are interest rates the library has been receiving going up or down?

According to Idaho's Public Depository Law (chapter 1, title 57, Idaho Code: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title57/T57CH1/>), governmental entities are allowed to keep their funds only in certain specified kinds of financial institutions and accounts. This law should be read carefully before investing any funds held by the library.

The question of interest and investments is usually more important to the district library, because they typically have more control over their funds than do city libraries. The city library board, however, has a duty to be aware of how the city is investing its funds, and the amount of interest that is being collected on the library's account. It is the library board's responsibility to request that the city council return this interest to the library.

Where the library has direct control of funds, it is important that interest rates be monitored. The library may wish to put its "idle funds" into longer term investments if interest rates are falling. If rates are rising, the library may decide to keep its funds in more liquid kinds of deposits. Careful investment procedures can ensure that the library receives significant extra income through interest on its accounts.

State Treasurers Fund

One important option for investments is the State Treasurer's Local Government Investment Pool. This investment option gives relatively high interest rates combined with liquidity. For more information, contact the State Treasurer's Office, <http://sto.idaho.gov/Services/LGIP/>.

Comparison of Budgeted Figures and Actual Amounts

Each month, the percentage of money remaining in each item of the budget is to be recalculated. Assuming a fairly even pattern of income and expenditures, the same percentage of money should be remaining as the percentage of time left in the year. For example, if the library has budgeted \$108,000 for salaries, after the first month of the fiscal year, \$9,000 should have been spent and \$99,000 (92%) should be left. Where

income or expenditures run on an uneven pattern, these patterns are, of course, to be taken into account.

Here are some questions to ask when comparing actual figures with budgeted amounts:

Is the library receiving the income it expected?

If income is low, the board:

- investigates why the income is less than expected, and
- if necessary, makes adjustments in the budget for expenditures to reflect the actual amount available.

If income is higher than expected, the board:

- decides how this “windfall” will be used, and
- determines whether this surplus is a one-time dividend or if it should be included on the income side of the next year’s budget¹¹.

In a few cases, the board may also have to decide whether the present budget should be re-opened so the extra money can be used in the present fiscal year.

¹¹ For city libraries: Idaho Code § [33-2607\(6\)](#) states that, notwithstanding the provisions of title 50, Idaho Code, the board of each city library shall have the power and duty to control the expenditures of money budgeted for the library. I.C. § [33-2609](#), states that all funds for the library shall be in the custody of the city treasurer unless otherwise provided by city ordinance, and shall be used only for library purposes, only upon properly authenticated vouchers of the board of trustees. I.C. § [33-2610](#) states that donations or gifts for the benefit of the library shall be budgeted along with other library accounts and shall be used only for library purposes. At the end of the fiscal year, then, any unspent money in the library’s budget remains the library’s and is rolled over into the next fiscal year.

Are expenditures what were expected?

Unusually high expenditures compared to budgeted figures need to be explained by the library director, and, if necessary, the board needs to make corrections in the budget to offset these unexpected expenditures.

Low expenditures also need to be explained. For example, if the library's materials budget is being underspent, why is this happening? There may not be enough staff time to do book selection or processing, for instance. If this is the case, the board may wish to move some funds into the staffing budget.

Unusual income, expenditures, or interest rates

Has the board set adequate expenditure guidelines for the staff?

An unusually large non-regular expenditure made without board knowledge may indicate that the board has failed to set adequate guidelines. The board may, for example, want to be consulted before any non-regular expenditure exceeding a certain amount of money or certain percentage of the budget takes place. This amount usually varies depending on the library's budget.

Is the library's cash on hand held in such a way that is secure and yet earning the highest possible interest?

District library boards that keep more than \$1,000 cash on hand have the responsibility to keep their money in accounts, in compliance with Idaho's Public Depository Law: chapter 1, title 57, Idaho Code:

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title57/T57CH1.htm>.

Typically, this can be done by checking the interest rates offered by two or more financial institutions whose accounts are federally insured and which exist within the district. The district should normally deposit its accounts with the institution offering the highest interest rates.

City boards will usually not have direct control over their funds because they will be held by the city treasurer unless otherwise provided by city ordinance. It is the board's responsibility, however, to ensure that the library account is treated fairly by the city,

and an arrangement should be made with the city regarding the interest collected on the library funds.

What to look for in library bills

Does the library board look at the actual bills?

Typically, it is easier for the board to work with a list of bills, rather than the bills themselves. The list shows the vendor from whom the bill has been received, a brief one- or two-word description of what the bill is for, the amount of the bill, and (for district libraries) the check number for the check that will be used to pay the bill. Many libraries list their bills in alphabetical order by vendor name. A sample listing follows:

Check no.	Vendor	Amount
9123	Baker and Taylor (books)	\$553.29
9124	Banker's Life (Insurance)	\$50.00
9125	Brodart (shelving)	\$690.45

While the board will not usually need to look at the bills themselves, the bills are to be made available for the board to examine if they feel the need.

Looking for the unusual

Most library bills are routine, and to ask questions about each bill would be impractical and time consuming. It is the board's responsibility, however, to ask questions about any bill that does not appear to be routine. For example, if a very large, unexpected bill appears, the board has a duty to find out the reason. Similarly, the board may want to know more about a bill from an unusual vendor. A library that makes credit card purchases can create a coded list with each credit card bill to indicate the nature of the expense and the line item(s) affected.

Looking for required expenditures

By law, the library is required to make payments for income tax withholding, social security, and workers' compensation¹². Board members should ask how often these payments are required and check to make sure they are being done.

Payments to staff or board member

Unusual payments made to staff or board members are to be explained at the meeting. For example, if the library is reimbursing a librarian for travel to a workshop, that payment requires an explanation. Putting this kind of explanation in the minutes ensures there will be no appearance of misuse of funds on the part of library staff or board members.

¹² Workers' compensation is a form of insurance providing wage replacement and medical benefits to employees injured in the course of employment in exchange for mandatory relinquishment of the employee's right to sue their employer for the tort of negligence. The Idaho Commission for Libraries does not provide legal advice. The library's director and board should contact the library's Human Resources professional or attorney with questions or concerns regarding workers' compensation.

Financial Statement Sample – Income

Source	Budget	Month Received	Year Received	% Received	Not Received
<i>Property Tax</i>					
<i>Sales Tax</i>					
<i>Gifts</i>					
<i>Grants</i>					
<i>E-rate</i>					
<i>EOR¹³</i>					
<i>Merchandise Sales</i>					
<i>Book Sales</i>					
<i>Interest</i>					
Total					

The income portion of the financial statement gives a clear picture of the sources from which the library expects to receive income. The sources listed here are typical income sources, but the list is not exhaustive. For example, some libraries may have special annual fundraising activities, such as rummage sales or auctions. Such annual events may receive an entry of their own on the financial statement.

¹³ [The Education Opportunity Resource Act \(EOR\) is described in chapter 56, title 33, Idaho Code.](#) The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) is responsible for reimbursing Idaho public libraries for the post-E-rate discount portion of the cost of approved broadband services. Broadband services include bandwidth for direct Internet access and wide-area networks (WANs). The Educational Opportunity Committee (EORC) determines the reimbursement methodology. For more information on EOR funding, please contact Dylan Baker, ICfL’s Broadband Consultant, at Dylan.Baker@libraries.idaho.gov or at 208-334-2150.

For each source, a budgeted amount is estimated at the time that the board makes out the annual budget for the library. This figure will be placed in the “Budget” column.

The next column, “Month Received,” shows the amount received in the past month from each income source.

The “% Received” column is figured by dividing the figures in the “Year Received” column by the “Budget” figures. This column provides a quick check on how actual income is doing against the projected income of the budget for each source. For example, if six months into the fiscal year, the library has already achieved 75 percent of its budgeted figure merchandise sales, it probably means the budget underestimated the amount of income that would be derived from this source. A note of caution, however, is that most income sources do not pay evenly across the year. It may be that the library is used more between October and March than it is between April and September. If this is the case, it would be expected that income from merchandise sales would also be higher during these months. Thus, the 75 percent figure may represent a typical yearly pattern of income collection from merchandise sales, rather than “windfall” income.

The last column, “Unreceived,” shows the budgeted amount not yet received by the library. The figure is derived by subtracting the “Year Received” figure for each source from the “Budget” figures. Again, figures in this column provide a quick check for the board as to how the actual income compares to the expected income from each source.

Financial Statement Sample – Expenditures

<i>Item</i>	Budget	Month Expended	Year Expended	Remaining	% Remaining
<i>Personnel</i>					
<i>Salaries</i>					
<i>FICA</i>					
<i>Pension</i>					
<i>Insurance</i>					
<i>Workers' Comp.</i>					
<i>Continuing Education</i>					
<i>Travel</i>					
<i>Materials</i>					
<i>Books</i>					
<i>eBooks</i>					
<i>Magazines</i>					
<i>eMagazines</i>					
<i>Subscription Databases</i>					
<i>DVDs</i>					
<i>Music CDs</i>					
<i>Processing</i>					
<i>Building</i>					
<i>Heat</i>					
<i>Electricity</i>					

<i>Natural Gas</i>				
<i>Supplies</i>				
<i>Repairs</i>				
<i>Insurance</i>				
Technology				
<i>Maintenance</i>				
<i>Upgrades</i>				
<i>Software</i>				
<i>Subscriptions</i>				
Other				
<i>Equipment</i>				
<i>Library Supplies</i>				
<i>Office Supplies</i>				
<i>Board Expenses</i>				
<i>Treasurer's Bonds</i>				
<i>Programs</i>				
<i>Election Expenses</i>				
<i>Legal Expenses</i>				
TOTAL				

As with the sample income statement, the sample expenditures sheet lists some typical expenses for a small library. The list is not exhaustive, and some of the expenses will not apply to all libraries. For example, the "Treasurer's Bond" and "Election Expenses" listed under the "Other" category applies only to district libraries.

Adding a column for target percentage would also be helpful to compare with the Percent Remaining column.

Similarly, the way the expenditures are categorized is just one of many ways that expenditures might be listed. In larger libraries, for example, expenditures may be listed by "program." In this type of listing, expenses might be listed under such categories as "Adult Services," "Children's Services," "Technical Services," "Bookmobiles," and "Administration".

The "Budget," "Month Expended," and "Year Expended" columns in the expenditures sheet correspond to the first three columns in the Income portion of the report. "Budget" shows how much the library expected to spend; "Month Expended", the amount expended this month; and "Year Expended", how much has been spent over the entire fiscal year.

The "Remaining" column shows how much the library can spend on each category and still remain within the budget. It is figured by subtracting the figures in the "Year Expended" column from the "Budget" column. The "% Remaining" column is figured by dividing the budgeted figures into the amounts remaining for each expenditure item. Like the "% Received" in the Income report, this figure provides the board with a quick check of how actual expenditures are running against the expected expenditures listed in the budget.

Funding

Once the library's budget has been approved, it is then the board's responsibility to ensure that adequate income is available to fund the budget. In the case of levied funds, this means monitoring income derived from taxes and discussing any discrepancies between the levied amount and the collected amount with the appropriate city or county officials.

If the board has established a budget with the assumption that non-tax revenue will be available, it is responsible for developing a program to gain these funds. In some cases, this may mean designing a sophisticated fund-raising program; in other cases, it may mean participating in less formal money-raising activities.

While public libraries in Idaho are funded primarily at the local level, it is important for board members to realize that public funding for library services provided by the state and federal governments can also have important direct and indirect impacts on the local library's services. Local board members can play a vital role in the legislative process. For this reason, another important function of board members is to represent their library's interest as these issues are raised.

Idaho law gives the library board exclusive control of the library's expenditures. This is not only a right, it is a responsibility. Although it is the library's director who has the authority to purchase library materials, supplies, and other necessary goods and services, the library's board has a duty to be aware of all purchases and to monitor the budget throughout the year.

In order to do this, the board establishes a bookkeeping system that includes the following features:

1. A monthly listing of all bills to be paid. The library's bills can only be paid with the approval of the board. It is best if the full board approves all bills before payment. This, of course, requires at least a monthly board meeting.
 - City libraries: Idaho Code §§ [33-2607\(6\)](#), [33-2609](#), and [33-2610](#)
 - District libraries: I.C. §§ [33-2720\(1\)\(e\)](#)
2. A monthly statement that shows:
 - The income for the month by income sources, along with total monthly income
 - The cumulative income for the year by income source along with total yearly income
 - A list of library accounts, including checking and savings accounts, certificates of deposits, and investments, with the amounts of money contained in each and their annual rates of interest
 - Cash on hand
 - The expenditures for the month by budget expenditure category along with total monthly expenditures

- The cumulative expenditures for the year by budget expenditure category along with total expenditures for the year.
3. A procedure for having the library's financial records independently audited or reviewed as required by state and federal law. More information is available at I.C. § 67-450B <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH4SECT67-450B.htm>.

Finance

Board of Trustees	Library Director
Is completely informed about the financial status of the library.	Provides regular reports of budget status and expenditures at each board meeting.
Works with the library director to formulate a budget adequate to carry out the library's goals and objectives, within any limitations of state law.	Prepares a suggested annual budget in consultation with staff and board. Supplies facts and figures to the board to aid in interpreting the library's current and future financial needs.
Presents the budget to the funding agency, public officials, and the general public; explains and defends it.	Follows the budget process as it moves through the funding process. Works with the board in interpreting budget and financial needs of the library to public officials and the public. Provides leadership in supporting the budget.
Works to secure adequate funds for staff and services.	Identifies financial needs of the library and works with the board and staff for adequate funding.
Explores all ways of increasing the library's income, tapping other sources and taking advantage of all available means of cooperation with other libraries.	Calls the board's attention to ways of stretching the budget. Assists the board in cooperating with other libraries.

Sees that complete and accurate records concerning finances, personnel, property inventory, and annual reports are on file at the library.

Policy Development

One of the most important responsibilities of the library board is to establish the policies of the library. Policies can be defined as “a broad course of action selected from alternatives and in light of given conditions, to guide and determine present and future decisions.” Policies differ from procedures in that policies are broad and procedures are specific. Policies tend to be more philosophical; procedures, more technical.

In public libraries, policies are established by the board with the input of the director. Procedures, on the other hand, are developed by the staff in order to carry out the policy set by the board¹⁴. For example, it may be the policy of the library to open at 10:00 a.m. The procedures for opening the library include turning on the lights, unlocking the door, and so forth.

Library policies are guidelines for making decisions

- Broadly stated guidelines for actions and decisions
- General statements for supporting library operations, rules, regulations, and use
- Bases for procedures but not detailed courses of action
- Statements in accordance with purpose and legal basis for library
- Effective tools for transferring decision making to lower levels in the organization
- Effective or operational from formulation date and continued effective until revised or deleted
- Lead to achievements of objectives.

¹⁴ The only procedure that should concern the library’s board is the one for handling a request for reconsideration of library materials made by a patron. “Challenged Materials” or “Request for Reconsideration” is generally the last section of the library’s collection development policy. Trustees who would like to know more about this topic are invited to contact their ICfL area field consultant.

Benefits of written library policies

- They indicate a basic honesty and integrity of the library's intentions.
- They support the library's overall plans, goals, and objectives.
- They become available to everyone in the same form.
- They guide the library director and staff in implementation of board decisions.
- They can be referred to so anyone who wishes can check.
- They can be disseminated to all affected.
- They provide direction and consistency in day-to-day service to the community and in library operations.
- They can be taught more easily to new employees.
- They can reduce uninformed decision-making and crisis responses to problem situations.
- They can be referred to when misunderstandings occur.
- They can compel the board to think more sharply, thus helping achieve further clarity.
- They can protect the rights of, and ensure equitable treatment of, all patrons and staff members.
- They generate the confidence of all persons in the organization concerning the library's management.

To be most effective, policies need to be:

- reflective of the mission and vision statements of the library;
- consistent, so efficiency is maintained;
- flexible, so they can be updated as new needs arise;
- distinguishable from procedures;
- written, so they are easily communicated to staff.

Remember:

- A library policy is a library policy only when it is approved by the board in an open meeting.
- The library's director implements policy set by the board and works with library staff to create procedures to help staff implement board policy.
- The library's director does not make policy. Once the board has approved a library policy, it is then the job of the board to explain and defend the policy to the community. Library trustees cannot explain or defend policies of which they are unaware.
- The library's policies are public records and must be available for public inspection at the library. One easy way to make policies available to all is to create links to them on the library's Web site.
- It is always a good idea to examine the policies of other libraries and "borrow" especially good wording instead of reinventing the wheel.
- The *Idaho Public Records Law Manual* is available for download at <http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/PublicRecordsLaw.pdf>.

The Nuts and Bolts of Creating Policy

The board is responsible for establishing written policies to govern and guide all phases of library operation, both internal and external.

Policy statements are tailored to local conditions and needs, and express a true commitment to service and leadership. For city libraries, it is advisable to inform the city council about policies that are potentially controversial, as they may be questioned by the community and should be cognizant of policy rationale or revisions of policy that could cause public inquiry.

Types of Library Policies

Two major categories:

- External Policies that govern the library's service to the community, to other libraries, to other agencies;
- Internal Policies that govern the management of the library or library system.

Important policies that every library should have:

1. **Board Bylaws.** These are the rules under which the board will operate. Bylaws describe the board's offices and the duty of each office, the rules under which regular and special meetings will be held, the standing committees of the board (if any), and any other permanent operating procedures for the board itself.
2. **Personnel or Human Resources.** This policy includes the duties and powers of the staff, job descriptions, information on evaluation and discipline of staff members, grievance procedures, and description of benefits. Sometimes salary information is also included. City libraries generally follow city H.R. policies and procedures, which need to take into account the fact that the library is governed by its own independent, nonpartisan board and not by the mayor or council.
3. **Collection Development.** This policy, sometimes known as the library's materials selection policy, describes the types of materials that will and will not

be added to the collection, based on community needs and interests. It states the criteria to be used in selecting these materials and who is responsible for materials selection. The Collection Development Policy describes how gift materials are to be handled, how the collection will be weeded, and how challenges¹⁵ to library materials are to be met. This policy often includes a section on Placement of Materials, stressing the fact that all library materials are made available to all library users, regardless of age.

- a. An excellent example of a public library's collection development policy is the one adopted by the board of the Ames (Iowa) Public Library: http://www.amespubliclibrary.org/Docs_PDFs/Policy/CollectionsPolicy.pdf.
 - b. An example of a thoughtfully designed Request for Reconsideration of Materials form is the one adopted by the Ada Community Library, Boise, Idaho: <http://www.adalib.org/system/sites/default/files/pdf/Request%20for%20Reconsideration%20form.doc>.
 - c. Please review ALA's Freedom to Read Statement.
4. **Circulation Policy.** A library's circulation policy — sometimes referred to as its library card and borrowing policy — organizes board-approved guidelines for issuing a library card, including what forms of identification and proof of address are accepted; how many items a patron may have checked out at any one time; how many times materials may be renewed; and how the library's fines and fees work.
- a. The circulation policy of the Oliver Wolcott Library, in Litchfield, Connecticut, references the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, its *Freedom to Read Statement*, and its related intellectual freedom documents: <http://owlibrary.org/pdfs/CirculationPolicy.pdf>.

¹⁵ A challenge, in the context of a library, is the attempt by a person or group of people to have literature restricted or removed from a public library or from a school curriculum. According to the American Library Association (ALA), a successful challenge would result in the removal of those materials, a form of censorship. ALA believes that it is important to monitor challenges made to books as well as actual bannings, as a challenge may lead to self-censorship by those seeking to avoid controversy.

This is a “No Fines” policy that does not charge overdue fines as long as patrons return library materials in good condition.

- b. At the board’s discretion, acceptable forms of photo identification and proof of residency within the library’s service area for the purpose of issuing or renewing a library card may include:
 1. Current driver’s license
 2. Federal-, state-, or tribal-issued identification card
 3. Military identification
 4. University or school ID
 5. Passport
 6. Many libraries will not accept consular ID¹⁶ as a form of identification.
- c. At the board’s discretion, acceptable forms of proof of residence, business ownership, or property ownership within the library’s service area (city limits or library district boundaries) may include:
 1. Current driver’s license
 2. Federal-, state-, or tribal-issued identification card with current address listed
 3. Lease agreement
 4. Mortgage statement
 5. Utility bill or utility account viewed online
 6. Current motor vehicle registration
 7. Voter ID card issued within the past year

¹⁶ Consular identification (CID) cards are issued by some governments to their citizens who are living in foreign countries. Some jurisdictions accept them for some identification purposes. They are not certifications of legal residence within foreign countries, so CID card holders could be legal or illegal aliens.

8. Property verification via the county assessor's office
 9. A postmarked piece of mail with the applicant's name and current address dated within the last 30 days.
 10. Most libraries will not accept a post office box as acceptable proof of residency.
- d. Idaho's Address Confidentiality Program. When someone in Idaho has moved to a new location to escape domestic violence, sexual abuse, or stalking, the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) can help keep his or her new address confidential:
- <http://www.sos.idaho.gov/ACP/index.html>. This is done through the use of a mail-forwarding service and substitute address. In accordance with I.C. § 19-57, all state and local agencies are required to accept the substitute address as the actual address of the individual.
- <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title19/T19CH57/>.

Upon approval of the applicant's ACP application, his or her first-class mail is sent to the secure ACP substitute address (a post office box in Boise) and then forwarded to his or her new home. Enrollees can also use the substitute address for a variety of state and local government requirements, such as:

- Applying for and receiving child support
- Getting an Idaho driver's license
- Enrolling minor children in public schools
- Applying for a marriage license

The ACP can help protect enrollees and their loved ones by keeping their physical address private, where it would appear in public records.

The program's coordinator, explains that individuals who are enrolled in the ACP qualify for a new driver's license that lists a secure ACP substitute address as the bearer's official address. The ACP office can also issue the enrollee a letter that will verify that he or she does physically live in a particular city or library district service area, which will

then make it possible to obtain a library card at the closest public library. Although the new driver's license serves as proof of identity, the letter is the necessary proof of physical address that libraries will also need to see when issuing or renewing a library card.

Questions or concerns about the Address Confidentiality Program may be addressed to Lisa Mason at lmason@sos.idaho.gov.

5. **Sponsorship Policy.** When partnering with local businesses and civic organizations to obtain new collections, equipment, and services for the library, it is important to have in place a sponsorship policy that:
 - a. specifies that it is the library, and not the donor, that will decide on the disposition of the gift
 - b. honors the right of donors to be acknowledged for their gifts to the library, while positioning the library in the forefront and minimizing the commerciality of any gift
 - c. prohibits the library from violating library policy in exchange for gifts of goods or services.
 - d. The American Library Association (ALA) has created a Sample Library Sponsorship Policy, available at http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org/united/files/content/trustees/org_tools/policies/sponsorship.doc.
6. **Operational Policies.** This group of policies will include information about
 - a. when the library will be opened and closed — I.C. § 33-2702(6) requires that publicly funded library service be provided at a facility that is accessible to the public at regularly scheduled hours — <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2702/>
 - b. what the staff should do in case of particular types of emergencies, such as snow days or flooding
 - c. what is and is not acceptable patron behavior in the library, usually discussed in the library's acceptable behavior or patron behavior or acceptable conduct policy

- d. how library staff are to handle instances of unattended children or vulnerable adults — one fine example is the Akron-Summit County Public Library’s Policy on Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2702/>.
7. **Meeting Room Policy.** A library that is fortunate enough to have a meeting room needs a policy to determine its terms of use, including rules and limitations, fees and cleaning deposits, and prioritization of applicants. The American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights states that “Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.” Public use of the library’s meeting rooms cannot be without restriction, as usage must be safe and not undermine the library’s other functions. Library programs generally take priority over public requests for meeting rooms. Many libraries do not permit the sale of merchandise in their meeting rooms except in conjunction with a library-sponsored program. The *Meeting Room Rules & Guidelines* of the Boise Public Library are a good example of a library meeting room policy: http://www.boisepubliclibrary.org/media/6615/7.01a_Meeting_Room_Rules_and_Guidelines.pdf.
8. **Confidentiality of Patron Records.** For the sake of intellectual freedom, patrons need to know that their borrowing, reading, and downloading information is protected.
 - a. I.C. § 74-108(4) prohibits the disclosure of the records of a library, museum, or archive which, when examined alone, or when examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out, requesting, or using an item from the library;
 - b. I.C. § 74-108(5) prohibits the disclosure of the material of a library, museum, or archive that has been contributed by a private person, to the extent of any limitation that is a condition of the contribution. <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH1/SECT74-108/>;
 - c. I.C. § 74-120(a) prohibits the distribution for sale for use as a mailing list or a telephone number list any list of persons without first securing the permission of those on the list; and

- d. I.C. § 74-120(b) prohibits the use of the library’s patron database as a mailing list or telephone number list except by the library without first securing the permission of those on the list.
 - e. When the library’s friends group or foundation — or any other organization or individual — seeks to obtain a mailing list or telephone number list derived from the library’s patron database, the library is obliged to refer the requester(s) to I.C. § 74-120(a) and (b):
<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH1/SECT74-120/>.
9. **Internet Use.** The purpose of an Internet use policy is not only to declare the library’s role in providing public access to the Internet, but also to spell out the patron’s responsibilities when choosing to make use of that access. The First Amendment encompasses the right of public access to information and ideas. The American Library Association’s *Library Bill of Rights* affirms that the library is a forum for information and ideas. At the same time, public libraries are family-oriented institutions charged with making a broad selection of materials available to everyone, including children and teenagers. While library resources, including the Internet, offer thousands of items that families want, like, and need, they also include materials that some parents may find offensive or that they may find inappropriate for their children. Because it is impossible to filter out everything that individuals may find offensive or inappropriate on the Internet, it is important that the library’s Internet use policy stress the right — and the responsibility — of parents and legal guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources. Here are some points to keep in mind when creating or revising the library’s Internet Use Policy:
- a. Effective October 1, 2012, all libraries in Idaho receiving public money¹⁷ and governed by the provisions of chapter [26](#) or [27](#), [title 33](#), Idaho Code, must comply with Idaho Code § [33-2741](#) regarding Internet Use Policies. This section of Idaho Code addresses Internet safety policies and technology protection measures.

¹⁷ According to [33-2702\(6\)](#), Idaho Code, “Public library service” means the provision of planned collections of materials and information services provided by a library established under the provisions of chapter 26 or 27, title 33, Idaho Code, and paid for primarily through tax support provided under these statutes.

1. Publicly funded libraries must have in place a technology protection measure (filter) on its computers (not on its public wireless signal) that are accessible to minors, which may be disabled at the request of a library patron (of any age) to enable access for lawful purposes;
2. Publicly funded libraries must also have in place an Internet Safety Policy, adopted by the library's board of trustees in an open meeting.
 - a. This policy must state an effective date and must be reviewed by the board at least once every three (3) years and must reflect the most recent date of review. **This date must also be reported in the annual statistical report that each public library is required to submit to ICfL.**
 - b. Notice of the availability of this policy must be posted in a conspicuous place within the library for all patrons to observe.
 - c. The full text of this law is available at <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/33CH27/SECT33-2741/>;
3. Here are some checklists for libraries to use in implementing Technology Protection Measures. Idaho Code § 33-2741(1)(a) requires that all public libraries in Idaho receiving public moneys must have in place a technology protection measure, such as filtering tools, during any use of a publicly accessible computer [owned by the library] by a minor. This statute does not apply to computers or personal devices not owned by the library, nor does it apply to the library's public Wi-Fi signal.
 - a. Regarding features of the policy that **shall** be addressed per the law:
 - 1) Does the library have filters in place for publicly accessible computers used by minors?

- 2) Does the library have filters in place for any public computer accessible to minors?
- b. Regarding features of the policy that *may* be addressed per the law:
 - 1) Can the library disable a filter for a legal purpose for anyone, including minors?
4. ICfL has created checklists for libraries to use in creating and reviewing their Internet Safety Policies.
 - a. Regarding features of the policy that *shall* be addressed per the law:
 - 1) Does the policy address minors and adults?
 - 2) Was the policy created under the direction of the library's board of trustees?
 - 3) Was the policy adopted in an open meeting?
 - 4) Does the policy include an effective date or the date when it was last reviewed?
 - 5) Is the policy posted in a conspicuous place within the library for all patrons to observe?
 - b. Regarding features of the policy that *may* be addressed per the law:
 - 1) Does the policy state that it restricts access to Internet or online sites that contain materials described in the law?
 - 2) Does the policy state how it meets the requirements of the law?
 - 3) Does the library have administrative procedures and guidelines in place for library staff to follow in enforcing the policy? Does the library make these procedures available for public review at the library?

- 4) Does the library have procedures in place for patrons and staff to handle complaints about the policy, its enforcement, or about observed patron behavior? Does the library make these procedures available for public review at the library?
5. Since 2001, all public libraries receiving E-rate¹⁸ funding for Internet must comply with CIPA¹⁹ requirements for Internet safety. In addition to complying as noted above for Idaho Code § 33-2741, public libraries receiving E-rate funding should review library Internet safety measures and be able to answer “yes” to the following:
 - a. Do the protection measure and related policy address access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web?
 - b. Do the protection measure and related policy address the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications?

¹⁸ E-rate is the popular name for the Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund, which is administered by the [Universal Service Administrative Company](#) (USAC) under the direction of the [Federal Communications Commission](#) (FCC). This program provides discounts to assist schools and libraries in the United States to obtain affordable Internet access and certain hardware and internal connections components necessary to obtain and make use of Internet access. E-rate is funded through a Universal Service Fee charged to companies that provide interstate and/or international telecommunications services. E-rate is not funded through taxation. To learn more about E-rate, contact Dylan Baker, ICfL’s Broadband Consultant, at 208-334-2150 or Dylan.Baker@libraries.idaho.gov.

¹⁹ [The Children’s Internet Protection Act](#) (CIPA) requires that K-12 schools and libraries in the U.S. use Internet filters and implement other measures to protect children from harmful online content as a condition for federal funding. It was signed into law on December 21, 2000, and was found to be constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court on June 23, 2003.

- c. Do the protection measure and related policy address unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities by minors online?
 - d. Do the protection measure and related policy address unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors?
 - e. Do the protection measure and related policy address the restriction of minors’ access to materials harmful to minors?
 - f. Was the protection measure policy addressed in a public meeting with reasonable public notice?
- b. The Hennepin County [Minnesota] Library’s Internet Public Use Policy spells out scope of access, patron responsibilities, parent and guardian responsibilities, and associated library policies:
<http://www.hclib.org/about/policies/internet-public-use-policy>.
 - c. The Office of the Attorney General of Idaho has published an *Internet Safety Manual* that provides information on Internet safety for children, e-mail scams, spam, online shopping dangers, personal privacy, viruses, and much more. This is a wide-ranging view of the dangers of the Internet, and offers ideas on how parents and their children can avoid being victims. This publication is available for download at
<http://www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/internetSafety/InternetSafety.pdf>
10. **Program Policy.** A library’s program policy states the purpose of programming and how it relates to the library’s mission. It explains what types of programs the library will offer, who can attend, and who is responsible for organizing and delivering them. Public libraries are sometimes victims of their own success. Some library programs become so popular that attendees living outside the library’s service area leave no spaces for the library’s own patrons. This can be a real problem when budget restrictions mean the library is unable to offer multiple sessions of a popular program. It is awkward for everyone when a library must turn away a taxpayer or non-resident card holder, as these are the people who have paid the taxes that fund the library. A program policy can define who may attend programs, who gets first dibs on registration, and may

even require pre-registration using the patron's library card number. The Program Policy of the Akron [Ohio] Public Library is a well written, concise example: <http://www.akron.lib.ia.us/library-information/policies/access/Program%20policy>.

Policy Malpractice

To avoid “policy malpractice,” board members might ask the following questions:

- Is this an instant policy? It should not be. It is important to formulate policy carefully, with input from the director and staff.
- Is this a dictatorial policy? Library policy should be formed with the goal of improving library service to the community, not of fulfilling the personal agenda or individual board members.
- Is this an illegal policy? It is important for boards to be familiar with federal and state laws affecting the library. When in doubt, it is a good idea to contact the library’s ICfL area field consultant.
- Is this a sloppy policy? Your ICfL area field consultant is here to help boards learn to form good policy.
- Is this a contradictory policy? A policy should never be created or revised in isolation. It is important to examine other library policies for contradictions before creating or revising a policy. For example, when revising the library’s collection development policy, it is a good idea to re-examine its circulation policy as well, as there may be some overlapping information that needs to match.

It is always a best practice for the library board to ask its legal counsel to examine a library policy before the board votes to adopt or revise it. The Idaho Commission for Libraries does not provide legal advice. Attorneys are trained to spot language that is illogical or contrary to the law and make suggestions for rewording the document, so please consult with your library’s attorney before voting to approve a new or amended policy.

The Library Policy Manual

Organization

Policies are:

- recorded in the minutes at which they are adopted or revised;
- compiled and organized for ready access in the library's policy manual;
- numbered if that is a local practice;
- labeled with dates of adoption and subsequent revisions, either at the beginning or at the end of the document;
- labeled at the end with the phrase *End of Document*, so the reader will know that there are no more pages to follow;
- reviewed annually and updated and revised as appropriate;

To be implemented effectively, all policies are recorded, compiled, and organized for ready access in a Policy Manual. A loose-leaf binder is a useful format for accommodating new policies and revisions. The contents of a Policy Manual can be categorized and numbered under some form of topical heading, such as *Administration*, *Fiscal*, or *Human Resources*, for easy reference. As each new policy or revision is adopted, the policy should be numbered and the date of adoption noted. Trustees wishing to review a policy can then refer to the appropriate minutes and reports to learn what alternatives were considered and why the specific policy option was adopted.

Distribution

- every trustee
- copies in the library
- available in PDF format on the library's Web site.



It is a best practice for every trustee to have a copy of the Policy Manual and to be completely familiar with the rationale for each statement. A thorough understanding of all policies is essential to the informed and systematic adoption of new policies or revision of existing ones. Trustees may also be called upon to defend or interpret policies to the public or governing officials.

Copies of the Policy Manual are also housed in each of the library's branches. The director is responsible for instructing personnel in the rationale of policies so that staff members can understand the basis for internal procedures.

Policy Review

Policies are not carved in stone! Resources, communities, and goals change and grow. Policies are updated periodically to reflect current community needs and library services.

Policy development and changes are major decisions affecting established practice and policies. Trustees need to allow adequate time for policy consideration and avoid incomplete assessment of possible options. If un-researched recommendations are arbitrarily rubber-stamped by the board without due consideration, the trustees will waste time reconsidering prior decisions, acting in crisis situations, and rebuilding the lost confidence of the staff and community.

During monthly board meetings, boards can review one section or one type of policy. A schedule for review can be drafted at the annual meeting and reviews completed during the year. The policy manual is reviewed at the annual meeting, if this has not been done since the last annual meeting. Reviewing one or two policies a month is light housekeeping. Reviewing every library policy at the board's annual meeting, on the other hand, is a chore and will make for a very long meeting.

Who?

While only trustees have the legal responsibility and authority to set the library's policy, experience shows that the decision process works best when the library director and other staff are involved in researching options, drafting policies, and presenting a report to the board. In medium and large libraries, the staff usually assumes responsibility for submitting policy analysis to the appropriate board committee. In small libraries, trustees may often prepare the analysis of policy options.

Board of Trustees

Library Director

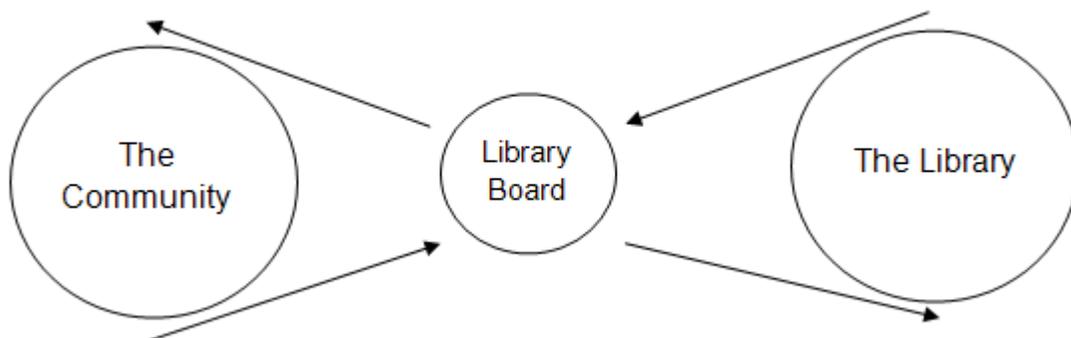
<p>Determines the goals and objectives of the library and methods of evaluating progress toward meeting them. Reviews goals and objectives annually and evaluate progress.</p>	<p>Provides assistance and direction to the board in setting goals and objectives and determining methods of evaluation. Provides information and opinion on how the library is progressing.</p>
<p>Relates the library and its programs to the community and its needs, discovered through systematic study of the community and through systematic analysis of library service.</p>	<p>Assists the board to know the needs of the community and how to respond to these needs through library services.</p>
<p>Determines and adopts written policies to govern the operation, use, and program of the library. Adopts bylaws for board procedures. Reviews policies on a regular basis, especially as part of the orientation of new trustees.</p>	<p>Recommends needed policies to the board and studies examples and sources of information. Carries out the policies as adopted by the board. Interprets policies to the staff and public. Provides the board with recommendations and materials for study.</p>
<p>Seeks a cooperative basis with officials of the municipality or other local governing unit, keeping in mind the special legal responsibilities of a library board.</p>	<p>Administers the library within the framework of the law and the library's goals and objectives, policies, and budget.</p>
<p>Attends all board meetings and committee meetings to which assigned. Carries out all special assignments properly.</p>	<p>Prepares all needed library reports for the local unity of government and the Idaho Commission for Libraries. Provides copies to the board.</p>

Community & Public Relations

The public library board is a major conduit of information between the library and its community. For this reason, the board has two separate, but related, functions in relationship to its community:

- It represents the needs and desires of the community to the library staff; and
- It represents the needs of the library to the community.

These functions are illustrated by the following diagram.



If the board fails to pass information in either direction, then it is failing to perform this part of its job.

Representing the Library

One side of the library board's responsibility in community relations is to represent the library to the community. In order to do this, board members need to be thoroughly familiar with the library. When the board is doing its job, no one in the community, except for the library's staff, knows the library better than its board members.

With that being said, it is important for each trustee to remember that the individual has no power to act for the library in any way, unless authorized by the board itself.

Some tips on how the trustee can get to know the library:

- By using the library! There is no better way for a board member to get to know the library than to make use its services.
- By asking questions. Even a small library is a complex organization. It is not easy to understand everything that goes on in it. The trustee who does not ask questions will never get the real reasons behind how things are done.
- By reading board meeting minutes. A new board member would be wise to read the board minutes for the past five years. These will tell you the major issues that have been discussed, as well as provide a picture of the budget and other important fiscal information.
- By attending continuing education activities. Activities for both board members and for library staff can be useful, as they can give new perspectives and ideas for the library, and they will help trustees see the “big picture” of librarianship and how the local library fits into it. The library’s ICfL area field consultant can provide training and training opportunities for library boards as well as for staff.
- By visiting other libraries. Cooperation between libraries is an important part of library services. A trustee’s understanding of how other libraries operate will help him or her to develop programs for cooperation for the library.

Representing the Community

Just as the library board represents the entire community, its membership needs to be representative of the entire community. Ideally, the membership of the board includes both men and women, young and old, and all of the community’s socioeconomic groups. If there is a significant minority population in the community, they need to be represented. If the library board has input on who will be appointed to it, these factors need to be considered. However, for a number of reasons, ideal library board representation is rarely achieved. When this occurs, it is up to the board members to seek out the needs and opinions of those who are not represented. How can this be done?

Here are a few suggestions:

- Visiting with individual members of the unrepresented group(s). If there are no men on the board, for example, board members need to talk to their husbands, sons, and male friends about library services and reading, what they like to read, and what kind of information they need to carry out their vocational and recreational activities.
- Visiting groups that are made up of the unrepresented. For example, if the board does not have any members who are parents of school age children, board members may wish to accompany the library director on a visit with the PTA or other parent group to see how the library might more adequately serve these community members.
- Visiting with professionals who work with the unrepresented group. The typical library board demographic does not often include people living in poverty, for example. The needs of this population can be determined, however, if someone from the county welfare department, the local food bank, or the ministerial association is asked to address the board. These are people who deal with the problems of people living in poverty on a day-to-day basis, and who might have some ideas about how the library could better serve them.
- Taking a walk around the community for the express purpose of looking at the community. Frequently, we are so involved in our own lives and concerns that we fail to see important things right in front of our eyes. A good project for the library board could be to walk around the town as a group to see what is going on. When groups do this, they are often surprised not only by how much they do not know about their community, but also by the different perspectives that other board members bring to the same observations.
- If the board has the time or money, they may also carry out a more formal study of the community. This involves gathering statistical information, visiting with a wide variety of community agencies and opinion leaders, and writing a formal document that gives community information. Such studies can be very useful, but should not be taken on lightly, as they are a lot of work.

The Importance of Objectivity

Gathering community information is not enough, however. It is also important to put this information to use. This requires that board members look beyond their own interests and opinions to consider the interests and opinions of others.

Here are some hints on how this can be done:

- By listening, listening, and listening some more.
- By never going into a board discussion with one's mind made up. When having strong feelings about a particular issue, it is important to make sure to spend more time listening than talking when the issue is discussed.
- By reviewing all policies annually and more often if the need arises. Policies are not written in stone, and need to change as the needs of the community change.
- By considering every decision the board makes from the perspective of those who are not represented on the board. For example, if the library decides not to buy paperbacks, how will this affect young adults, who typically do not like hardcover books, and who are excluded from serving on the board by their age?²⁰
- By being willing to change. It is important to look for ways to make the library more appealing to those who are not currently using it, while at the same time remembering the needs of its more traditional customers.

²⁰ The trustee of a district library must be a qualified elector, which means any person voting, or offering to vote at an election to create a library district, add territory thereto, or elect trustees. A qualified elector must be, at the time of the election, a resident of the area involved for thirty (30) days prior to the date of the election, registered and an elector within the meaning of [section 2, article VI, of the Constitution of the state of Idaho](#): "Every male or female citizen of the United States, eighteen years old, who has resided in this state, and in the country where he or she offers to vote for the period provided by law, if registered as provided by law, is a qualified elector." Idaho Code does not specify a minimum age for trustees of city libraries.

Public Relations

Relating to the Public

Public relations is much more than the flash, pizzazz, and hoopla typically associated with PR. Publicity and advertising alone are not sufficient to cultivate good relations between the public and the library. Public relations is the person-to-person effort to put libraries into the lives of the people.

Good service to the public is the foundation of good PR. It is everybody's job! Its trustees, director, staff, and even its buildings and resources affect the public image of the library.

Trustees play a crucial role in public relations, as ambassadors of goodwill. Their involvement helps sustain the organization's credibility in the public eye. As the official representatives of the community, trustees are vital to the PR program of the library and have a group responsibility and an individual role in relating to the public.

Do You Know Your Community?

Do you know?

- Which shelves in your library are always empty?
- Which journals are most used, or most often missing?
- Who is not coming into your library?
- Who the local authors, artists, musicians, dancers are?
- What products are made in your community?
- What and how people celebrate?
- Who the decision makers are?

Listening to friends, acquaintances, business associates can happen when

- Taking a different route home
- Stopping to see a friend who is overdue for a visit
- Joining a new organization
- Wearing the library trustee hat everywhere
- Having fun being a trustee
- Supporting the library director
- Talking and being noisy about the library. If there's time to brag about the grandchildren, then there's time to brag about the library! And besides, it isn't bragging if it's true.

Board Responsibility

- To establish public relations policy
- To develop a positive PR plan and schedule for the library
- To recognize PR as a total and continuous function of the library
- To assign members to participate in PR events
- To support staff training and involvement in the PR program
- To evaluate the PR program and public service
- To allocate funds for PR activities and/or volunteer specialists to offer help.

The Individual Trustee

- Is vocal and visible
- Is well-informed, uses the library, and spreads the word
- Listens to the community
- Attends meetings of community organizations to speak and gain information
- Asks the opinion-makers known by trustees if they will be library supporters
- Spots gaps in the library's information program and makes suggestions
- Works closely with municipal and other officials
- Tells people what trustees do, who they are, when they meet, and how they can be reached
- Sells the philosophy and merits of quality library service
- Learns about other libraries and services statewide and nationally
- Supports the Friends of the Library and/or Library Foundation and helps recruit members.
- Knows that he or she has no power to act for the library in any way, unless authorized by the board itself
- Does not voice her or his opposition or criticism, either publicly or privately, after a policy or rule is adopted by a majority vote of the board.
- Conveys the progress, plans, and policies of the library to individuals and groups, while being careful to keep confidential information confidential
- Refrains from giving out information regarding future board actions or plans

Public Relations Policy

A written public relations policy will preclude misunderstandings and prevent problems arising.

Among points which should be clarified:

- Respective public relations responsibilities of the library director and the library trustees. This sets out how they work cooperatively so the right hand, in effect, knows what the left hand is doing and the information each may be transmitting to the public is not at odds.
- Procedure for board approval before any major public relations campaign.
- Media contact procedures.
- Official spokesperson for the library board (generally the chairperson).
- Any clearance procedures prior to member speeches, statements representing board position, *etc.*
- For city libraries, the procedure for alerting the city council about information to be made public by the board before publication, radio or TV airing, or announcement to any community groups. (Courtesy and good working relationships with the city council suggest this procedure.) Another reason: The media may well contact one or more members of the city council for comments, so there logically is a “need to know.”

Every trustee needs to have a copy of the public relations policy in his trustee binder. The library director also receives a copy. The policy is made available to the public at the library as well as on the library’s Web site.

Examples of Public Relations Policies

- The Pittsburg Public Library, Pittsburg, Kansas:
http://www.pplonline.org/docs/Public_Relations.pdf
- Sample Public Relations Policy, posted by the Small Library Committee of the Wisconsin association of Public Librarians:
<https://owlsweb.org/l4l/slpspl/XII>
- The Claverack Free Library, Claverack, New York:
http://claveracklibrary.org/files/2018/02/CFL_Public_Relations_Policy.pdf
- Palatine Public Library District, Palatine, Illinois:
<http://www.palatinelibrary.org/sites/default/files/2018-04/policy-08.pdf>
- Public Libraries of Saginaw, Michigan:
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal/SaginawLibraryPublicRelationsPolicy_191988_7.pdf

Getting the Message Out

Once a trustee knows about the library, it is important that she get that information out to the community.

Tips on ways to tell the public about the library:

- Bringing up the library as a topic of conversation, informally telling friends and acquaintances about library services.
- At the request of the library director, visiting with groups, such as service clubs, to make a presentation about the library.
- The board and director of a city library can make an annual report to the city council on library services. This is done at a time when the library is not asking for anything from the council.
- The board of a city library can — and should — make the annual budget presentation to city council along with the library director.

Some Tips on How to Talk About the Library:

- Being positive about the library at all times is the way to gain friends and influence funding sources. When a board member says something negative about the library, it gives a very poor impression of both the library and the board member. The goal here is to promote the library.
- Negative comments about the library are to go to the library director, not to the public.
- Speaking to the listener's interests, not one's own. Example: When addressing someone who is interested in hunting and fishing, it will do the library little good to talk about the library's fine collection of sewing books.
- Giving out false information will not help the library's cause, so it is important to be sure of the facts. When unsure of the answer to a question, it is best to offer to research the issue and then get back to the listener with the correct answer. If your instincts tell you to seek a second opinion, you can consult sources of information that include professional journals, professional organizations, the Idaho Commission for Libraries, the library's attorney, or your library's risk management provider.
- It is usually not safe to assume that the listener knows more than he or she does. Using library jargon is likely to confuse or offend the listener.
- Listening is just as important as talking. Sometimes more so.

When writing a news release, it is important to:

- Know the cultural interests of the community
- Go to the editor for help
- Feature something special.

When planning a public relations campaign, it is important to:

- Set objectives
- Know the target group

- Find out who will mail library flyers with their routine mailing, for example, electric bill, gas bill, tax bill.

When telling the library's story, it is important to:

- Know the library story, read, talk to neighboring local libraries, talk to other trustees
- Collect those interesting library anecdotes
- Learn to be comfortable speaking to groups

Needs Assessment

A needs assessment process reveals the influences acting on the library. Information collected shapes the services and programs that best fit the library's strengths and budget. Ultimately, it informs a vision for future development.

Results of a needs assessment can be used in a variety of situations:

- Commencing a strategic planning process
- Determining change in a user community
- Making changes in a library's collections, services, *etc.*
- Determining adequacy of facilities, technology, *etc.*
- Establishing satisfactory staffing patterns and library hours.

Essential Data:

- Local information and demographics cited from census and vital statistic records, library statistics, community development plans, and/or other existing data sources. Collect census figures about:
 - economic levels
 - family size
 - ethnic backgrounds
 - ages
 - education
 - occupations
- Internal (library) and external (community) observation results
- Community input
- Analysis of data (*e.g.*, identification of common threads or issues)
- Library vision statement linking data to the library's direction

Data Collection Options:

Careful consideration should be given to which data collection techniques are employed. Using only one technique may provide limited information, while using too many can be expensive and time consuming. The online resources below provide several articles with pros and cons of the various techniques.

- Surveys: mail, telephone, e-mail, SurveyMonkey²¹
- SWOT exercise
 - Strengths
 - Weaknesses
 - Opportunities
 - Threats
- Key informants
- Community forum / Focus group, such as ALA's Turning Outward, World Café
- Census and/or public records
- Citizen advisory groups
- Town meeting
- Being out in the community and listening

Resources

- [Turn Outward to Your Community](#)

²¹ SurveyMonkey is an online survey development software as a service company that provides free, customizable surveys. The service also provides data collection, data analysis, brand management, and consumer marketing. For more information, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>.

- [World Café](#)

Annual Statistical Report

Each year, public library boards are required to make a report of operations for the last fiscal year. Although the board usually delegates this duty to the library's director, it is ultimately the board's responsibility to comply with this requirement. This report is collected and compiled by the Idaho Commission for Libraries.

[Patrick, please expand briefly on this section to describe what information is being collected and how it might be useful to boards when planning, budgeting, and advocating for the library.]

City Libraries

33-2611. REPORTS OF TRUSTEES. The board of trustees shall annually, not later than the first day of January, file with the board of library commissioners a report of the operations of the library for the fiscal year just ended. The report shall be of such form and contain such information as the board of library commissioners may require, but in all cases must include a complete accounting of all financial transactions for the fiscal year being reported. The board shall also report to the city council and mayor as required in section [50-210](#), Idaho Code.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH26/SECT33-2611/>

District Libraries

33-2726. FISCAL YEAR — ANNUAL REPORTS — AUDIT. The fiscal year of each library district shall commence on the first day of October of each year. The board of trustees of each library district shall annually, not later than the first day of January, file with the board of library commissioners a report of the operations of the district for the fiscal year just ended. The report shall be on the form and contain the information that the board of library commissioners requires, but in all cases must include a complete accounting of all financial transactions for the fiscal year being reported.

The board of trustees of each library district shall cause to be made a full and complete audit of the books and accounts of the district as required in section [67-450B](#), Idaho Code.

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2726/>



The library's annual report is a very good tool for reviewing what has happened at the library in the past year and for planning future efforts.

Resources

For more information on annual statistics, contact your ICfL area field consultant.

Review: Whose Duty Is It?

Directions: Per the preceding pages, who is accountable for shouldering the following roles and responsibilities? If it is the board of library trustees, circle Trustees. If it is the library director, circle Director. If it is a duty common to both the library's board and director, circle both words.

1.	Trustees	Director	Determines goals and objectives of the library
2.	Trustees	Director	Acts as technical advisor to the board
3.	Trustees	Director	Provides regular reports of budget status and expenditures
4.	Trustees	Director	Determines and adopts collection development policy
5.	Trustees	Director	Provides for in-service training for staff development
6.	Trustees	Director	Recommends needed policies and provides recommendations and materials for study
7.	Trustees	Director	Reviews policies on a regular basis, especially as part of the orientation of new trustees
8.	Trustees	Director	Is completely informed about the financial status of the library
9.	Trustees	Director	Attends all board meetings
10.	Trustees	Director	Selects materials in harmony with collection development policy
11.	Trustees	Director	Sees that complete and accurate records concerning finances, personnel, property inventory, and annual reports are on file at the library
12.	Trustees	Director	Works for needed improvements for salaries and benefits

13.	Trustees	Director	Is responsible for the day-to-day running of the library
14.	Trustees	Director	Reviews policies regularly
15.	Trustees	Director	Recommends needed policies
16.	Trustees	Director	Establishes ways of providing library services to the community
17.	Trustees	Director	Ensures that the library is well run
18.	Trustees	Director	Prepares annual budget for discussion
19.	Trustees	Director	Explains and defends the budget
20.	Trustees	Director	Carries out policies, interpreting them to the public
21.	Trustees	Director	Identifies financial needs of the library
22.	Trustees	Director	Knows local, state, and national laws affecting the library
23.	Trustees	Director	Manages the library
24.	Trustees	Director	Works to secure adequate funding
25.	Trustees	Director	Attends all committee meetings
26.	Trustees	Director	Follows budget process as it moves through the funding process
27.	Trustees	Director	Provides assistance and direction in setting goals and objectives for the library

Bonus Question: What is the single most important decision that the library board will make?



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