

## **Idaho Commission for Libraries' Guide for Boards of Trustees**

Greetings and welcome to the Idaho library community. 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 an 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

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## Introduction

### 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 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  
(2001 – Acceptance of Librarian of the Year Award, Idaho Library Association)

### Manual Purpose

This guide is a revision of the *Idaho Trustee Manual*. It is the purpose of this guide to provide a convenient and reliable information source for current and prospective trustees and library directors on issues concerning public libraries and boards of trustees. Outcomes:

- ◆ To heighten awareness of trustees' duties and responsibilities
- ◆ To encourage trustees to become better informed
- ◆ To supply information for new and experienced trustees and an introduction to those interested in becoming library trustees

### Use of the Manual

The Trustee Manual is intended to be a growing and developing document. The Idaho Commission for Libraries will publish the manual as an online document. It will be printable and is intended to be easily updated.

The manual will be found in its entirety online at the Idaho Commission for Libraries' website ([www.libraries.idaho.gov/trustees](http://www.libraries.idaho.gov/trustees)). Relevant forms can be found online as well in Word document format for ease of local customization. Also, there are online resources that trustees can access to supplement the manual. See the links throughout the manual.

If there are updates made to the handbook, notification will be sent out on the Idaho library listserv, LibIdaho. The notification will include the link to the online document.

**Tip: To sign up for LibIdaho, please see <http://www.idaholibraries.org/libidaho> for instructions to begin receiving information about Idaho libraries to your e-mail.**

This guide is a starting place to answer your questions and increase your knowledge. For more

information, please contact the Idaho Commission for Libraries' Library Consultant in your area:

Eastern Idaho – Frank Nelson – [frank.nelson@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:frank.nelson@libraries.idaho.gov)

525-7211

Toll free in Idaho – 800-548-6212

Northern Idaho – Jan Wall – [jan.wall@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:jan.wall@libraries.idaho.gov)

882-8882

Toll free in Idaho – 866-212-0646

Southwestern Idaho – Anne Abrams – [anne.abrams@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:anne.abrams@libraries.idaho.gov)

334-2150

Toll free in Idaho – 800-458-3271

## Boardmanship

### 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, 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 board member, 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 have read and understood the by-laws 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 staff 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 library service a community offers and the knowledge, capability and enthusiasm of its board members.

Effective trustees are citizens who have:

- Readiness to devote time and effort to learning about the library in addition to the duties, responsibilities and authority of trusteeship.
- Recognition of the importance of the library as a center of information, culture, recreation and lifelong learning 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.
- Position of leadership in the community, government, business, education, finance, law or related fields.
- Initiative and ability to plan creatively, to establish policies for effective operation of the library and to withstand pressures and prejudices when providing impartial service to the patrons.
- Skill in group collaboration and decision-making, an open mind, intellectual curiosity, respect for the opinions of others and the 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.

### **What does a trustee do?**

#### Knows:

- Type and organization of your library board
- The 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
- The Idaho Commission for Libraries
- National library trends, standards and developments
- The lingo – don't hesitate to ask

#### Attends:

- Every board meeting and assigned committee meeting
- Idaho Library Association, Pacific Northwest Library Association and American Library Association meetings whenever possible
- Other area and local meetings and workshops
- Online training opportunities to enhance boardmanship skills

#### Plans:

- Future growth and priorities of the library
- Policies of the library
- Active community awareness programs
- Orientation for new board members

#### Supports:

- Your librarian and library
- Your local governing body
- The community and citizens you represent
- Local, state and federal legislation

#### Acts:

- To articulate your library's needs
- To seek funding
- To promote your library whenever called upon by the librarian, city council or private citizens

- To develop good personal relations with local, state and federal representatives of government
- To make yourself, your board and your library visible in the community

Remembers:

- The library board acts only as a whole
- The library board must authorize you to act as an individual on behalf of the library
- The board does not run the operations of the library

## Orientation

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

Plan a step-by-step orientation program.

Let the new trustee know how the introductory activities will be handled. Responsibility for planning and implementing the orientation is shared by the board chairperson, board members and the 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.

### Pre-orientation

Whenever possible, orientation sessions should begin immediately. A letter should be sent directly after her/his appointment or election, informing the new trustee of the term of their position; date and time of board meetings; and general responsibilities before the first meeting. The library director should schedule time to allow the new trustee to ask questions, to develop a rapport with her/him and to obtain background information.

### Orientation Kit and Notebook

A new trustee needs local information to review and consult. Information should be compiled for her/him including:

- Annual schedule of board meetings
- List of board members, names, addresses, e-mail addresses and phone numbers
- By-laws of the board
- Organizational chart for library including staff levels, pay scales
- Staff lists, titles, responsibilities, location, job descriptions
- All policies of library and board concerning code of ethics, intellectual freedom, personnel, book selection, collection development, meeting room use, etc.
- Strategic plan
- Most recent library annual report, with prior years for comparison
- Meeting minutes from the preceding year
- Current budget and financial reports
- History of the library and its current goals and objectives
- Local laws, charter and contracts pertaining to 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 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**

Hold the regular board meeting at a slower pace than usual so that newcomers can ask questions and follow the business. Consider having experienced board members briefly recap activities and accomplishments of the past year.

Adjourn the meeting, then spend time reviewing with the new trustee and ask for opinions and observations.

On-going discussions and informal sessions can be a valuable supplement to the on-the-job training which follows orientation. Pay special attention to your new members.

## Ethics

### ETHICS STATEMENT FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEES

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

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

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

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

A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.

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

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

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1985.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985.

Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988.

Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January 1989.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alta/altapubs/PDFaltaethicsstatement.pdf>

The Idaho Attorney General's office puts out the manual – Idaho's Ethics in Government Manual - <http://www2.state.id.us/ag/manuals/ethicsingovernment.pdf> - with information for elected and appointed officials concerning conflicts of interest, nepotism and other ethical issues.

### Resources

State of Idaho's Ethics in Government Manual -

<http://www2.state.id.us/ag/manuals/ethicsingovernment.pdf>

WebJunction Courses:

[Ethical Standards for Library Leadership](#)

[Ethics in the Real World, Library Case Studies](#)

[Making Decisions Ethically](#)

## 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 (ALA) Q & A on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship, *"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."* Furthermore, *"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!'"* [See this link for the full Question and Answer about Intellectual Freedom and Censorship](#)

The American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom (<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/index.cfm>) has been a leader, educator and a supporter of local efforts to ensure that the library remains "...the home of free, inquiring minds." The Idaho Library Association has an Intellectual Freedom Committee and (<http://www.idaholibraries.org/node/97>) website with information and contacts.

The Library Bill of Rights is a document that states the affirming of intellectual freedom. **Library Bill of Rights -**

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.cfm>

*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.*

### **Library Material Challenges**

Boards should have a collection development policy that includes a procedure for working with community members who challenge library materials.

### **Privacy of Patron Information**

Related to Intellectual Freedom and of concern to public library boards of trustees is the privacy of patron information required by Idaho Code. According to IC 9-340E - <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title9/T9CH3SECT9-340E.htm> -

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.

### **Resources**

- [ALA Code of Ethics](#)
- [ALA Core Values of Librarianship](#)
- [ALA Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- [ALA Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials and Facilities](#)
- [ALA Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q & A](#)
- [ALA Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom](#) –
- [Colorado Library Consortium – online tutorial on Intellectual Freedom](#)
- [Idaho’s Public Records Law Manual](#)
- [WebJunction Intellectual Freedom Resources](#)

## Trustee Roles and Governance

There are three types of public libraries in Idaho that are created by Idaho Code: Public libraries (in cities), district libraries (independent taxing entities) and school-community libraries. School-community libraries are no longer allowed to be established as of June 30, 1994 – Title 33 Education, Chapter 27 Public Library Districts, 33-2737 School Community Library Districts - <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2737.htm>.

Each of these types of libraries has a board of trustees to create policy; set and oversee an operating budget; hire, supervise and work as a team with a director; and make sure that their communities are well represented and informed about the library.

In Idaho Code, city libraries are established in Title 33, Chapter 26 Public Libraries (<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2601.htm>) and district libraries are established in Title 33, Chapter 27 (<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27.htm>). The following sections give authority for the creation of public libraries and library districts.

33-2601.POLICY. 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.

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2601.htm>

33-2701.PURPOSE AND POLICY. 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.

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2701.htm>

## Resources

ICFL Library Consultant – <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/staff-contacts-topic-area>

WebJunction Trustee Resources – <http://id.webjunction.org/trustees>  
Wyoming State Library *Trustee Trouble* Video –  
<http://www.wyominglibraries.org/trusteetrouble.html>

## Legal Roles and Responsibilities

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

- Policy Development
- Finance
- Personnel
- Community & Public Relations

It is critical that trustees are aware of their full powers and duties per Idaho Code in order to effectively accomplish their role as a board member.

### City Libraries

Title 33, chapter 26 outlines the powers and duties of public (city) libraries' boards of trustees in:

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 prepare and adopt a budget for review and approval by the city council;
- (6) To control the expenditures of money budgeted for the library;
- (7) 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;
- (8) To hire, supervise and evaluate the library director;
- (9) To establish policies for the purchase and distribution of library materials;
- (10) To attend all meetings of the board of trustees;
- (11) To maintain legal records of all board business;
- (12) To exercise such other powers, not inconsistent with law,

necessary for the orderly and efficient management of the library.  
<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2607.htm>

## **Library Districts**

District library boards of trustees' powers and duties are found in Title 33, chapter 27, section: 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 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.

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2720.htm>

ICFL Library Consultant - <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/staff-contacts-topic-area>  
WebJunction Trustee Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/trustees>  
Wyoming State Library *Trustee Trouble* Video –  
<http://www.wyominglibraries.org/trusteetrouble.html>

## **Trustee Appointments and Elections**

Upon the election or appointment of new board members, notify the Idaho Commission for Libraries so that the new trustees can begin receiving the ICFL newsletters and mailings.

To govern city libraries, "...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."

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2604.htm>

The five members of a library district board are elected by a vote of the people.

33-2715.BOARD OF TRUSTEES -- SELECTION -- NUMBER -- QUALIFICATIONS -- TERM -- OATH -- APPOINTMENT OF FIRST BOARD. [EFFECTIVE UNTIL JANUARY 1, 2011] 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. One (1) trustee shall be elected at each annual trustee election, held on the uniform election date in May. The regular term of a trustee shall be for five (5) 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.

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2715.htm>

For district libraries, 2010 will be the last trustee election that is conducted by the library district. In 2011, the county will conduct trustee elections. As procedures are developed and law changes implemented, this guide will be updated and notice will be given on LibIdaho.

## **Board Vacancies**

Periodically, a board position will become vacant during the middle of a trustee's term. Click on

the link for either city libraries or district libraries to review procedures for dealing with a vacant board position.

**Board Vacancies (Cities) LINK**

**Board Vacancies (Districts) LINK**

**Board Vacancies (Cities) LINK**

Idaho Code (IC) 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.

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2605.htm>

- **When does a vacancy occur?**

Because state law is silent on this issue, it would be wise for a city library board to: (1) ask the City council to address it in an ordinance or resolution for the library, or (2) with the council's approval to write a vacancy clause in the board's by-laws. [LINK to By-laws](#)

As a guideline for the establishment of a policy on vacancies, the board may look at Idaho Code 33-2716 - <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2716.htm> - which deals with vacancies on library district boards. This section identifies a number of reasons for declaring a vacancy. The following are those which could be applicable to a city library board:

1. The death of a trustee.
2. The resignation of a trustee.
3. A trustee is no longer a city resident.
4. Upon appointment, a trustee refuses to serve.
5. Without an excuse acceptable to other board members, a trustee misses two consecutive meetings. (If the board wishes to use this criterion, it should be cleared with the city council.)

- **How long is the replacement's term?**

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

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2605.htm>

## **Board Vacancies (Districts)**

Idaho Code section 33-2716 outlines the process for dealing with vacancies on library district boards of trustees – <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2716.htm>.

- **When does a vacancy occur?**

Idaho Code 33-2716 gives the following reasons for declaring a vacancy:

1. When a nominee is elected but fails to qualify for office.
2. The death of a trustee.
3. The resignation of a trustee.
4. A trustee no longer resides in his trustee zone of residence.
5. A trustee is no longer a resident of the library district.
6. A trustee refuses to serve.
6. Without an excuse acceptable to other board members, a trustee misses two consecutive meetings.
7. A trustee is recalled.

- **How is a replacement made?**

The board first must declare that a vacancy exists. This must be done either at a regular or special board meeting. They then have ninety days to name a replacement. If they do not name a replacement within that time period, the county commissioners of the district's home county must name a replacement.

- **How long is the replacement's term?**

The appointed replacement serves until the next trustee election. At that time a trustee is elected to fill the unexpired term.

## Annual Calendar of Events

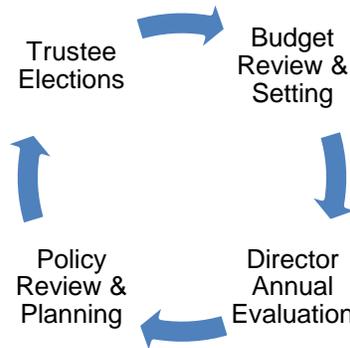
### Annual Cycle of City Library Events:



City library trustees are appointed, not elected. This can happen at various times during the year. In addition, the board sets the date of their annual meeting.

Month	Task
October	Fiscal Year begins
December-January – Due 1/31	<b>Annual Report to the Idaho State Librarian (33-2611 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2611.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH26SECT33-2611.htm</a>)</b>
January – December	City Library Board Annual Meeting – held according to by-laws
January – December	City Library Board holds library director performance appraisal
August	City Budget Hearing
September	Fiscal Year ends

**Annual Cycle of Library District Events:**



Because district library trustees are elected to an independent taxing district, the cycle of the year is guided by Idaho Code statute.

MONTH	TASK
October	Fiscal Year begins
November	<b>Directors notify County Clerk of upcoming elections (IC 34-1405 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1405.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1405.htm</a>)</b>
December-January – Due 1/31	<b>Annual Report to the Idaho State Librarian (33-2726 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2726.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2726.htm</a>)</b>
February	Directors/Boards prepare for upcoming trustee elections (2010 Only)
March	<b>Advertise in newspapers -Trustee Election petition availability (IC 34-1405 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1405.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1405.htm</a> and 34-704 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH7SECT34-704.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH7SECT34-704.htm</a>)</b>  Last day candidate nomination petitions accepted (IC 34-1404 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1404.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1404.htm</a> and 34-704 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH7SECT34-704.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH7SECT34-704.htm</a> )
April	Last day to file as write-in (IC33-2717A - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2717A.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2717A.htm</a> )  <b>Directors to notify County Clerk of Budget Hearing date</b>

	<p><b>by 4/30 (IC 63-802A -</b>  <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title63/T63CH8SECT63-802A.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title63/T63CH8SECT63-802A.htm</a>)</p>
May	<p>Either declare single candidate/no election (IC33-2717 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2717.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2717.htm</a>) or publish Board of Trustee Elections Notices (IC 34-1406 - <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1406.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1406.htm</a>)</p> <p><b>Election (34-106 -</b>  <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH1SECT34-106.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH1SECT34-106.htm</a> <b>and 34-1409 -</b>  <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1409.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title34/T34CH14SECT34-1409.htm</a>)</p>
June	<p><b>Library District Annual Meeting (IC 33-2729 -</b>  <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2729.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2729.htm</a>)</p>
August	<p><b>Budget Hearing (IC 33-2725 -</b>  <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2725.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title33/T33CH27SECT33-2725.htm</a>)</p>
September	<p><b>L2 – Dollar Certification of Budget request to Board of County Commissioners (IC 63-803 -</b>  <a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title63/T63CH8SECT63-803.htm">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title63/T63CH8SECT63-803.htm</a>)</p> <p>Fiscal Year ends</p>

## Board By-Laws

Included in the policies that every library should have are the board's by-laws. These are the rules under which the board will operate. By-laws describe the board 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.

Below are links to examples of by-laws for cities and for districts.

### [Sample By-laws \(City Version\)](#) **LINK**

#### **Resources**

Boise Public Library Board By-Laws -

[http://www.boisepubliclibrary.org/about\\_bpl/Policies\\_and\\_Plans/PolicyManual.pdf](http://www.boisepubliclibrary.org/about_bpl/Policies_and_Plans/PolicyManual.pdf)

Nampa Public Library Board By-Laws -

[http://www.nampalibrary.org/Trustees/Board\\_of\\_Trustees\\_Bylaws.pdf](http://www.nampalibrary.org/Trustees/Board_of_Trustees_Bylaws.pdf)

### [Sample By-laws \(District Version\)](#) **Link**

#### **Resources**

Ada Community Library Board By-Laws - <http://www.adalib.org/files/pdf/trustee-bylaws.pdf>

Latah County Library District Board By-Laws - <http://www.latahlibrary.org/about-us/trustees/By-Laws.pdf>

## **Sample – City By-Laws**

### **By-laws and Rules of The Board of Trustees of the (name of library)**

#### **Article I – Name**

This organization shall be called “The Board of Trustees of the \_\_\_\_\_ Library” existing by virtue of the provision of Title 33, Chapter 26 of the laws of the State of Idaho, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

#### **Article II – Membership**

**Section 1.** Members of the Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the Mayor and City Council in accordance with Idaho Code 33-2604.

**Section 2.** A vacancy shall be reported to the City Council within five days whenever a member dies, resigns, moves out of the city limits, or fails to attend, without an excuse acceptable to the board, two (2) consecutive regular meetings.

#### **Article III – Officers**

**Section 1.** The officers shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer, elected from among the appointed trustees at the annual meeting of the board.

**Section 2.** A nominating committee shall be appointed by the chairperson three months prior to the annual meeting who will present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

**Section 3.** Officers shall serve a term of one year from the annual meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected.

**Section 4.** The chair person shall preside at all meetings of the board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

**Section 5.** The vice chairperson, in the event of the absence or disability of the chairperson, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the chairperson.

**Section 6.** The secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.

**Section 7.** The treasurer shall be the financial officer of the board. He/She will sign all vouchers for bills to be paid by the city, will receive and verify all financial reports from the city, and will perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. In the absence or inability of the treasurer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the board as the board may designate.

#### **Article IV – Meetings**

**Section 1.** The regular meetings shall be held on a uniform day each month, the day and hour to be set by the board at its annual meeting, unless otherwise ordered by the board.

**Section 2.** The annual meeting, which shall be for the purpose of the election of officers and the adoption

of an annual report, shall be held at the time of the regular meeting in (month) of each year.

**Section 3.** The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown so far as circumstances will permit.

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Approval of Bills
- Director's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

**Section 4.** Special meetings may be called by the secretary at the direction of the chairperson or at the request of two members, for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. If the time and place of a special meeting has not been determined at a regular board meeting With all members present, a notice of the time and place of the special meeting shall be sent to all board members. and written notice shall be posted in the library and sent to all news media requesting notification not less than 24 hours before the meeting, unless an emergency exists.

**Section 5.** A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of three members of the board present in person.

**Section 6.** Conduct of meetings: proceedings of all meetings shall be governed by (standard work in parliamentary law, e.g. Robert's Rules of Order.)

#### **Article V – Library Director and Staff**

The Board shall appoint a qualified library director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library on behalf of the board and under its review and direction. The director shall recommend to the board the appointment and specify the duties of other employees and shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of the library property, for an adequate and proper selection of books in keeping with the stated policy of the board, for the efficiency of library service to the public and for its financial operation within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation. In the case of part- time or temporary employees, the director shall have interim authority to appoint without prior approval of the board provided that any such appointment shall be reported to the board at its next regular meeting.

#### **Article VI – Committees**

**Section 1.** The chairperson shall appoint standing committees to be made up of (number) members for .Members of standing committees are appointed at the annual meeting, and serve for one year.

**Section 2.** The chairperson shall appoint committees of one or more members each for such specific purposes as the business of the board may require from time to time. The committee shall be considered to be discharged upon the completion of the purpose for which it was appointed and after the final report is made to the board.

**Section 3.** All committees shall make a progress report to the library board at each of its meetings.

**Section 4.** No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted specific power to act.

## **Article VII – Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority vote of all members of the board at any meeting that has a quorum. provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least (number) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

## **Article VII – General**

**Section 1.** An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The chairperson may vote upon and may move a proposal before the board. No seconds shall be required for the board to consider a motion.

**Section 2.** Any rule or resolution of the board. whether contained in these by-laws or otherwise; may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand. but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which at least three members of the board shall be present and three of those present shall so approve.

## **Sample – District By-Laws**

### **By-laws and Rules of the Board of Trustees of the (name of library district)**

#### **Article I – Name**

This organization shall be called "The Board of Trustees of the Library" existing by virtue of the provision of Title 33, Chapter 27 of the Laws of the State of Idaho, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

#### **Article II – Membership**

**Section 1.** The members of the board shall be those persons appointed or elected to the board in accordance with Idaho Code 33-2715 through 33- 2718. The (name of district) (has or has not) established trustee zones.

**Section 2.** A vacancy shall be declared by the board

(a) when any nominee has failed to qualify for office,

or

(b) within thirty days when any trustee shall

(1) die

(2) resign as a trustee

(3) no longer be a resident of the district (4) refuse to serve as a trustee

(5) without an excuse acceptable to the board, fail to attend two (2) consecutive board meetings.

(6) no longer be a resident of his/her trustee zone of residence.

#### **Article III – Officers**

**Section 1.** The officers of the district shall be a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, and a clerk.

**Section 2.** A nominating committee shall be appointed by the chairperson three months prior to the annual meeting who will present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

**Section 3.** Elected officers shall serve a term of one year from the annual meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected.

**Section 4.** The chairperson shall be elected from the elected or appointed trustees and shall preside at all meetings of the board. authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the board, serve as an ex officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

**Section 5.** The vice chairperson shall be elected from the elected or appointed trustees and in the event of the absence or disability of the chairperson, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the chairperson.

**Section 6.** The secretary for the board shall be the library director. He/She shall have no voting rights. The secretary shall ensure that a true and accurate record of all meetings of the board shall be kept. shall

issue notice of all regular and special meetings. and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.

**Section 7.** The board shall appoint some qualified person. who mayor may not be a member of the board of trustees. to act as treasurer of the library district. The treasurer shall be the disbursing officer of the board, co-sign all checks, and shall perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. He/She shall be bonded for a minimum of \$5,000 or in a greater amount as may be required by a resolution of the board. In the absence of inability of the treasurer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the board as the board may designate. A treasurer who is not a member of the board shall have no vote.

**Section 8.** The board 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 conduct library district elections as specified in Idaho Code, shall prepare and distribute legal notices, and shall have other duties as the board may prescribe.

#### **Article IV – Meetings**

**Section 1.** The regular meetings shall be held on a uniform day each month, the day and hour to be set by the board at its annual meeting, unless otherwise ordered by the board.

**Section 2.** The annual meeting, which shall be for the purpose of administering the oath of office to new or re-elected trustees, the election of officers, establishing a regular meeting date, and the review of , policies, and procedures, shall be held at the time of the first regular meeting following trustee elections of each year.

**Section 3.** The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown so far as circumstances will permit.

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Approval of Bills
- Director's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

**Section 4.** Special meetings may be called by the secretary at the direction of the chairperson, or at the request of two members, for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. Written notice of special meetings will be given to board members at least two (2) days prior to the day of the meeting, and sent to all news media requesting notification not less than 24 hours before the meeting, unless an emergency exists.

**Section 5.** A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of three (3) members of the board present in person, but a smaller number may adjourn.

**Section 6.** Conduct of meetings: proceedings of all meetings shall be governed by (standard work in parliamentary law, e.g. Robert's Rules of Order.)

#### **Article V – Library Director and Staff**

The board shall appoint a qualified library director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of

the library on behalf of the board and under its review and direction. The director shall recommend to the board the appointment and specify the duties of other employees and shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff. for the care and maintenance of the library property. for an adequate and proper selection of books in keeping with the stated policy of the board. for the efficiency of library service to the public and for its financial operation within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation. In the case of part-time or temporary employees. the director shall have interim authority to appoint without prior approval of the board provided that any such appointment shall be reported to the board at its next regular meeting.

## **Article VI – Committees**

**Section 1.** The chairperson shall appoint standing committees to be made up of (number) members for (purposes). Members of standing committees are appointed at the annual meeting. and serve for one year.

**Section 2.** The chairperson shall appoint committees of one or more members each for such specific purposes as the business of the board may require from time to time. The committee shall be considered to be discharged upon the completion of the purpose for which it was appointed and after the final report is made to the board.

**Section 3.** All committees shall make a progress report to the library board at each of its meetings.

**Section 4.** No committee will have other than advisory powers unless. by suitable action of the board. it is granted specific power to act.

## **Article VII -Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority vote of all members of the board at any meeting that has a quorum. provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least (number) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

## **Article VII – General**

**Section 1.** An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The chairperson may vote upon and may move a proposal before the board. No second shall be required for the board to consider a motion.

**Section 2.** Any rule or resolution of the board. whether contained in these by-laws or otherwise. may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which three members of the board shall be present and three of those present shall so approve.

## Golden Rules for Board Members

- Leave the actual management of the library to the library director. It is the librarian's responsibility to select books, employ the staff and supervise day-to-day operations.  
[LINK to governance model and chart](#)
- After a policy or rule is adopted by the majority vote of the library board, do not criticize or re-voice your opposition publicly.
- Respect confidential information that is protected by the Public Records Act. [LINK to IC 9-340E http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title9/T9CH3SECT9-340E.htm](#) Do not divulge information regarding future board actions or plans until such action is officially taken.
- Observe any publicity and information policies of the board and library. Do not give information individually but refer requests to the librarian or appropriate representative to interpret policies.
- Treat the library director and staff members in an objective manner. Under no circumstances should you listen to grievances of staff members or treat individual problems on your own. The library director is in charge of the staff and has administrative control up to the point where a grievance is presented to the library board.
- Do not suggest hiring a relative as library employee, or two members of the same family.
- All rules and policies directed to the library director must be approved by a quorum of the board at a regular meeting. Even the chairperson should abide by this rule.
- Do not hold board meetings without the library director.
- Complaints from the public are the library director's responsibility. Continued dissatisfaction and problems should be taken up at the board meeting only if policy revision is necessary or legal ramifications are involved.
- Assume your full responsibility as a board member. If you are unable to attend meetings regularly and complete work delegated to you, resign so that an active member can be appointed.

## Board Governance Model

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

- Policy Development
- Finance
- Personnel
- Community & Public Relations

The duties and responsibilities of the library board and the library director may appear to overlap. Understanding the differences in function assures teamwork and better library service.

Boards should not run their libraries; they should see that they are run properly. Boards should not attempt to manage their libraries; they must see that the libraries are managed properly.

Policy determination and management are different roles:

- 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.**

See the chart below for an illustration of this concept. At the Leadership level, boards and directors are in partnership to answer the question, "Where are we going and why?" At the Management and Task levels, the activities of the board and the director and staff are separated by a firewall. The board has their duties and the director and staff has their duties. If the board finds themselves discussing what type of printer the library should buy, they may be crossing the firewall. The chart was created by Pat Wagner of Pattern Research, Inc. and used with permission.

**Board, Leadership and Staff Roles  
The Board Governance Model**

<b>The Board</b>	<b>The Library</b>
<p align="center"><b>Board Leadership</b></p> <p align="center"><i>80% at this level</i>            Risk and the Future            Politics and Influence            Mission and Vision            Strategic planning: + two years  <u><b>Where are we going and why?</b></u>            Partner with library director</p>	<p align="center"><b>Director</b></p> <p align="center"><i>80% at this level</i>            Risk and the Future            Politics and Influence            Mission and Vision            Strategic planning: + two years  <u><b>Where are we going and why?</b></u>            Partner with board</p>
<p align="center"><b>Board Management</b></p> <p align="center">Budget approval            Director hiring and evaluation            Policy approval            Committees and meetings            Community relations            Board projects and by-laws  <u><b>Board goals and strategies</b></u></p>	<p align="center"><b>Admin/Staff Management</b></p> <p align="center">Coach and evaluate staff            Organize department            Plan and evaluate projects            Create budgets and policies            Listen to staff and community            Communicate and translate  <u><b>Library goals and strategies</b></u></p>
<p align="center"><b>Tasks</b></p> <p align="center">Active meeting attendance            Minutes and legal details            Sign checks (as appropriate)            Recruitment and training            Research and assignments  <u><b>How the board runs itself</b></u></p>	<p align="center"><b>Tasks (Examples)</b></p> <p align="center">Cataloging, Janitorial,            YA programs, Tech services,            Shelving, Reference,            Literacy, Bookmobile,            Children's Department, Web services  <u><b>How the library runs</b></u></p>

***Remember Your Community!***

From: Pat Wagner, Pattern Research, Inc.  
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# The Board Meeting

## 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 staff to change a policy. When such a change is desired, it must be brought before the whole board.
2. The board only has authority when it makes a group decision in a legally constituted meeting. Discussion of issues by the board in a meeting that does not meet the requirements of the Idaho "open meeting law" (IC 67-2340 to 67-2347) is illegal, and could result in a successful law suit being filed against the board **and** its individual members.

The library board's power, then, only comes into being 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.

The board by-laws provide the general structure for your work. Be certain that all members of the board understand their specific roles, assignments and the expectations for all officers and committees. [LINK to By-Laws](#)

## General Information

- The library director should be present at all board meetings. Elect a new chairperson and other officers annually.
- Rotate leadership responsibilities to create a stronger board. Each trustee should have the opportunity to hold office.
- Plan meetings on a regular, annual schedule as listed in the by-laws. Select specific dates, times and places six to 12 months in advance.

- Inform the chairperson when you are unable to attend and give reason.
- Follow procedures for conducting business meetings as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*. If this seems too formal, the chairperson should devise a specific order of business that maintains an orderly flow for the meetings.
- Keep an archival file of board minutes in the library. Individual board members should retain current minutes in their trustee notebooks.
- Hold working board sessions and committee meetings prior to the formal board meetings where decisions are made. This saves time and provides an opportunity for careful study of the issue.
- Remember! Committees issue recommendations to the board but do not make the decisions. Written committee reports distributed before the board meetings are most effective.
- Follow all the provisions of the Idaho Open Meeting Law, [Idaho Code, 67-2341 to 67-2347](#).

## Two 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 was wasted. When it occurs meeting after meeting, many good members will consider membership of the board a waste of 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 in this situation, because important decisions are made with little discussion or reflection.

## **Guidelines for the Board Chairperson**

### **Before Meetings**

- Plan the meeting carefully: when, where, what, why, who?
- Prepare a timed agenda in advance. Allow adequate time for the items listed.
- Ask staff to mail/ distribute the agenda, related reports, statistics, etc., at least ten days in advance.
- Ask staff to publish or post public notice of meetings.

### **Begin Meeting**

- Start on time with roll call.
- Introduce visitors and/or new board members.
- Discuss action from previous meeting.
- Review, revise and approve agenda.
- Approve minutes.

### **During Meeting**

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

### **End Meeting**

- Review and evaluate meeting progress, decisions, etc.
- 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:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Approval of Bills
- Director's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- 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 should report 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 should be noted in the minutes at the point where the member arrived or left.)

**Approval of Agenda.** Normally this procedure is routine: changing the agenda should not be done lightly, since the posted agenda has informed the public about the issues that will be discussed at the meeting. Changes may be made, however, if a decision 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 should ask for any additions or changes to the agenda. If board members wish to add or change an item, they should explain why this item cannot be held until the next board meeting or why the change should be made. This explanation should go into the minutes. Any addition to the agenda should be approved by a majority of the board and the vote recorded by name. For Open Meeting posting and agenda requirements, see IC67-2343 <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH23SECT67-2343.htm>

**Approval of Minutes.** Members are given an opportunity to review the record of the last meeting and make any changes in the record that is deemed necessary. Records of these changes should be kept. It is not necessary for the secretary to read the minutes out loud. Considerable time can be saved at meetings if the minutes are mailed to the members in advance and members read them before coming to the meeting. If minutes or other materials are mailed in advance, extra copies should be available at the library and at the board meeting for the public.

**Treasurer's Report.** The treasurer reports on the financial condition of the library. The report should be in writing, with the treasurer highlighting important changes verbally. The report

should include the total income and expenditures for the month and the year, the amount of cash on hand, and a report on where this money is being kept, and at what rate of interest. As with the minutes, meeting time can be saved, and members can be better prepared if the financial report is sent out in advance.

**Approval of Bills.** A list of bills should be given to each board member. The actual invoices should be on hand in case there are questions about specific bills. The library director should point out any unusual bills. As with the minutes and the financial reports, the list of bills can be sent out to board members in advance to save meeting time.

**Director's Report.** Monthly statistics should be presented in writing. Anything unusual that occurred in the library in the previous month that does not require board action should be reported. (If something requires board action it should be considered under unfinished or new business.)

**Committee Reports.** Informational reports by standing or special committees are made at this time. Written reports, mailed in advance, should be prepared if committee reports are long or complicated. If committees are requesting action by the board, the chair should be asked in advance to place these items under either unfinished or new business.

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

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

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

**Posting the Agenda.** To comply with the Idaho Open Meeting Law, notices of the meeting must be posted at the library in advance of the meeting. Boards that do not have a regular meeting date must post a notice of each meeting five days in advance. All boards must post an agenda notice 48 hours in advance of the meeting. [See Idaho Open Meeting Law Information](#)

## **Idaho Open Meeting Law**

Public libraries and district libraries have policy making boards. As such the business of public libraries is considered the public's business and must adhere to Idaho's Open Meeting Law – IC 67-2340 to 67-2347.

To comply with the Idaho Open Meeting Law, notices of the meeting must be posted at the library in advance of the meeting.

Meeting Notices – IC 67-2343 <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH23SECT67-2343.htm>:

- Regular Meetings:
  - Post notice 5 calendar days in advance
  - Publish annually
  - Ordinance for cities or counties
- Special / Executive Meetings:
  - 24-hour notice
  - Include statutory authority for executive session-only meeting
- Emergency Meetings:
  - Requires good faith effort to notify governing board members and media if requested

Agendas – IC 67-2343 <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH23SECT67-2343.htm>:

- An agenda is required for each meeting.
  - Posted same as meeting notice
  - Posted 48 hours (or 24 hours for “special” meeting)
  - Only “good faith” amendments
  - Motion and vote required for amendments made within 48 hours of, or during, the meeting to include reason

Executive Sessions – IC 67-2345 <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH23SECT67-2345.htm>

- Most common uses:
  - Personnel selection and evaluation (a) and (b)
  - Acquire interest in real property (c)
  - Consider records exempt from disclosure (d)
  - Discuss litigation – with your attorney (f)
  - Consider claims or potential claims – with your risk manager or insurer (j)

Executive Session Rules:

- May occur during regular or special meetings.
- Require approval of two-thirds by roll call vote & recorded in the minutes.

- Both the motion to go into executive session and the minutes must state the specific statutory authorization for the executive session and the topic.
  - For example: I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 67-2345(1)(a) to consider hiring a public employee (officer, staff member or individual agent).

Violations – IC 67-2347 <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH23SECT67-2347.htm>:

- Failure to comply with the provisions of Idaho Code §§ 67-2340 through 67-2346 renders the action null and void.
- Any member who participates in a meeting that violates these provisions will be subject to a civil penalty.
  - up to \$50
  - up to \$500 for “knowingly” participating
  - up to \$500 if subsequent to previous violation within last 12 months

## **Resources**

Idaho Attorney General's Office Open Meeting Law Manual - <http://www2.state.id.us/ag/manuals/openmeeting.pdf>

## **Guidelines for Effective, Efficient Meetings**

### **Post and Use Ground Rules**

- We participate as equals
- We discuss openly and honestly
- We disagree with grace and tact
- We don't hide disagreements or questions
- We stick to the agenda
- We enjoy each other's company

### **Timed Agenda**

- Agree to go beyond time only by motion

### **Do not read items for "pro forma" approval in meeting**

- Ask members to read these items in advance of the meeting:

- Minutes
- Bills
- Statistics

- Instead, just ask for changes or questions.

### **Use issue sheets to summarize discussion points**

- Record on flip charts to focus discussion

### **Evaluate each meeting**

- Use +/ $\Delta$  - what worked well and what should be changed to work better

**Issue Sheets**

**New Business Issue Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Issue:**

**Decision to be Made:**

**Related Previous Decisions:**

**Alternatives**

**Recommendation:**

## Taking Minutes

### **Rule of Thumb: Be Specific**

- Name/Title of Board
- Type of Meeting:
  - Executive Session
  - ~ - Working Session
  - Committee
  - Regular or Special Meeting
- Date, time, place of meeting
- Members present:
  - Minutes should show which members are present at any point in the meeting, not just who is present at time of roll call. If a member arrives late or leaves early, this should be noted in the discussion.
- Members absent
- Visitors and guests
- Follow the agenda:
  - Items discussed, announcements and reports
  - General description of meeting's content
- Decisions/Actions:
  - What, when, who
  - Record the number of votes if appropriate
  - Put members "on record" as being for or against a decision if they request
- Assignments/Issues and Items:
  - To be held for further consideration
- Next meeting:
  - Next meeting's date, time, place
  - Preliminary agenda items
- Other information (at board's request)

## Planning for the Future

### The Trustee and Library Planning

In a rapidly changing world such as ours, all institutions will change over time. For each institution the question then is not "Will we change?" but "How will we change?"

The public library that does not plan will change. But the change will lack a focus. It will be in response to immediate pressures rather than to meet long-range needs. The library, in other words, will drift.

Change by drift, however, is likely to make the library less and less relevant to its community's real 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 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 in light of 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.

#### Benefits of Written Plans

- Makes it easier to justify your budget with governing authorities
- Helps you prioritize programs and direct efforts towards tasks leading to the attainment of objectives

Library boards continuously guide, shape and build library services for their community 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 is not an easy task. It requires time and careful organization to accomplish. Special board committees should be formed and a series of planning meetings scheduled to 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.

Don't overlook the regional planning commission or professional planners who are part of local government. Be sure to keep them informed of library goals and work with them to include library service in the community's plans at every possible point.

## Resources

WebJunction Strategic Planning Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/strategic-planning/-resources/overview>

WebJunction Organizational Management Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/organizational-management>

Community Needs Assessment Tools - <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/tools/assess/http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/pathway/biblio.html>  
[http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD\\_CDBG\\_CN.asp](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD_CDBG_CN.asp)

Planning for Results – Course -

[http://www.elearnlibraries.com/courses/the\\_new\\_planning\\_for\\_results/](http://www.elearnlibraries.com/courses/the_new_planning_for_results/)

Statistics: library services, circulation, collection, general output measures

<http://libraries.idaho.gov/publications/statistics>

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

People: staff, community leaders, Friends, Idaho Commission for Libraries

<http://libraries.idaho.gov/>

Groups: counties, municipalities, schools, regional planning agencies, colleges and universities with information to share

Community Cooperation: attend public meetings and listen to the needs; make presentations to organized groups; prepare exhibits and displays in the library and other locations

Staff Meetings: input from the "front line"

Professional Consultants (especially moving toward a building program): professional methods and the benefits of experience <http://www.libraryconsultants.org/>

Media: press, radio, and television

Other Libraries: find out what has worked for others, best practices

Library Literature: newsletters, professional journals, etc.

Idaho Library Association <http://www.idaholibraries.org/>

## Planning Process Elements

Below are elements to create a strategic plan:

Planning to Plan: [See Link to Document below](#)

- 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 along with futuristic
- Presents the “Big Picture”
- Uses future tense
- Provides motivation and inspiration for the staff and trustees

Mission:

- The business the library is in that distinguishes it from other service organizations
- The unique business
- Outlines and clarifies the library’s purpose
- The focus of the library’s business
- Frame work for all strategies and activities
- Identifies the library’s sphere of influence and clientele
- A valuable tool for:
  - Making program and strategy decisions
  - Communicating to the community
- Uses present tense
- Tell the who, what and why

Needs Assessment:

- Recognition of present situation – Internal & External
- Where are we now?
- Forms the base on which the plan is built
- Provides an understanding of the influences acting on the library
- Identifies the possible and most likely futures
- Makes apparent 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
- 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 will be several 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:

- Measure whether or not the library carried out the activities that it proposed
- Or – Measure whether the work of the library made any difference in addressing strategic issues
- How will we know what we accomplish?
- Informally monitor the plan regularly
- Review and revise the plan annually

### Resources

WebJunction Strategic Planning Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/strategic-planning/-/resources/overview>

WebJunction Organizational Management Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/organizational-management>

Community Needs Assessment Tools - <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/tools/assess/>  
<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/pathway/biblio.html>  
[http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD\\_CDBG\\_CN.asp](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD_CDBG_CN.asp)

Planning for Results – Course -

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Idaho Library Association <http://www.idaholibraries.org/>

## **The Written Plan**

Since planning is a continuing process based on evaluation and reassessment, a plan is a flexible document seasoned by specific local needs. However, most plans include the following essentials:

- Preface - very brief overview of the planning process with acknowledgments and thank yous
- Description of the library's service area and communities
- A vision statement describing the library's preferred future
- A mission statement of the overall purpose of the library
- Strategic Issues - critical challenges facing the library
- Goals - broader statements of what is to be achieved
- Strategies - general approaches which will be taken to achieve the goals
- Activities - actions that will be taken to implement the strategies
- Measures of Success / Evaluative Criteria - how the library will know if it has been successful in its services
- Implementation & Evaluation - 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 - Summary of needs assessment data, etc.

## **Resources**

WebJunction Strategic Planning Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/strategic-planning/-/resources/overview>

WebJunction Organizational Management Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/organizational-management>

Community Needs Assessment Tools - <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/tools/assess/>  
<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/pathway/biblio.html>  
[http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD\\_CDBG\\_CN.asp](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD_CDBG_CN.asp)

Planning for Results – Course - [http://www.elearnlibraries.com/courses/the\\_new\\_planning\\_for\\_results/](http://www.elearnlibraries.com/courses/the_new_planning_for_results/)

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Library Literature: newsletters, professional journals, etc.

Idaho Library Association <http://www.idaholibraries.org/>

## **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, project funding and establish priorities.

## **Planning Responsibilities**

The Idaho Commission for Libraries' Consultants will serve as your guide to 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; maintaining project records, etc.

**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:

- survey the library's space needs
- write the library building program
- project future staff and operating costs
- prepare a preliminary project budget
- provide site analysis and recommendations
- provide advice on funding options
- provide assistance in selection of the architect
- review all plans prepared by the architect and provide a written evaluation
- review needs, specifications and layout for shelving, furniture and equipment
- provide a final inspection of the facility

## **Board of Trustees:**

- Determining that a new building is needed
- Providing leadership in the campaign to inform the community and 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 site
- Approving the written building program

- Approving preliminary and final architectural plans
- Soliciting and approving bid document
- Approving all contracts and any change orders to the contract

## **Resources**

WebJunction – Facilities Management Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/facilities>

WebJunction – Space Planning Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/space-planning>

WebJunction – Funding and Fundraising - <http://id.webjunction.org/funding>

## Personnel

Undoubtedly, the single most important decision that the library board will make is the employment of the library director.

A good library director will make the work of the board both easier and at the same time more exciting. A good director will handle all the procedural problems of the library, so board members will be able to concentrate on long-term goals and policies of the library.

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

### Resources

WebJunction resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/trustees>

### Trustee Self-assessment: Staff Relations

1. Our board has a written job description for all personnel positions.
2. Our board evaluates the library director annually.
3. I recognize the difference in the role of the library director and my role as a trustee.
4. Our board has written personnel policies.
5. Our board has a grievance procedure for staff complaints.

## **Working Relationship with the Director**

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

- Policy Development
- Finance
- Personnel
- Community & Public Relations

### **Cooperation is the key.**

The duties and responsibilities of the library board and the library director may appear to overlap. Understanding the differences in function assures teamwork and better library service.

Boards should not run their libraries; they should see that they are run properly. Boards should not attempt to manage their libraries; they must see that the libraries are managed properly.

Policy determination and management are different roles:

- 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 Relationship**

- The Dominating Director. The director can try 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 or he even tells the board what to do. Where a strong board is involved, each decision becomes a power struggle between the library board and the director.
- The Dominating Board. The board can try to dominate the director. When this occurs, the board does not listen to the director. Because of this the board may not be informed 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 whom they are to take orders from, the director or the board.

#### **Healthy Board – Director Relationship**

The answer is simple: mutual understanding and respect. This healthy relationship is shown 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 unless specifically asked by the director. In other words, the board allows the director to do the job s/he was hired to perform.
- The director keeps the board adequately informed about the operation of the library. S/he recognizes when a decision goes beyond the authority of the 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 especially ask how a specific decision might impact on the daily operation of the library.
- The director carries out the policy of the board even if s/he does not agree with it. The director, in other words, recognizes that the board has the ultimate legal authority for operating the library.
- When disagreements occur, they are discussed openly and honestly between the board and the director in the board meetings. Neither the board members nor the director discuss these problems with other members of the public behind each other's back.

The following comparative list shows the division between the complementary roles of the board of trustees and the library administrator:

## Personnel

### Board of Trustees

Employ a competent and qualified library director and pay an adequate salary.

Provide adequate compensation and reasonable fringe benefits for all employees.

Provide agreeable working conditions and opportunities for professional growth.

Provide a planned orientation program for new trustees.

Develop policies to guide staff selection.

Provide in-service training for the professional development of staff members on effective implementation of library policies. Whenever possible, provide opportunities for additional education and advancement. Consider establishment of career ladders within the library if possible.

### Library Director

Act as technical advisor to the board. Hire and direct subordinate staff members in line with library personnel policies.

Work for needed improvements in working conditions, salary scales, and fringe benefits.

Assist in the orientation of new trustees, including introduction to library procedures, departments, and staff.

Provide the board with recommendations and material for study. Apply guidelines in selecting staff. Take full responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the library.

### Resources

WebJunction Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/trustees>

## **Tips for Good Working Relationships**

The library's policies should include:

A provision for determining and reviewing staff manual provisions and gaining staff input on hours, salaries, benefits, etc.

Provision for adequate reporting from the library director on human resource problems.

## **Tips for Directors**

- Give all trustees prior knowledge of agenda items.
- Be sure all board packets are delivered on the same day.
- Discuss key issues informally before meeting, either by phone or in person.
- Be sure the individual communications are well-written and avoid jargon.
- Give the same information to all trustees.
- Make recommendations.
- Avoid surprises.
- Do not embarrass trustees in public or in private.
- Keep the faith with your trustees, individually and collectively.
- When there are divided opinions on your administrative staff as to some proposed policy, etc., do not hesitate to share those views with the board.

## **Tips for Board Members**

- Attend all meetings.
- Be prepared. Study the issues before the meeting.
- Do not embarrass the staff in public.
- Tell the director and staff how they are doing.
- Recognize that the directors and staff do not have all the time in the world to prepare a board packet and to prepare for a meeting.
- Accept some responsibility for your own continuing education as a trustee.

- When you ask for extra reports and detailed analysis. do so with the recognition of the cost of such report preparation and analysis.
- Recognize that twelve board meetings a year are insufficient for a board to address the policy needs of a library. Be receptive to the conduct of special study sessions.

## **Resources**

WebJunction Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/trustees>

## **Working Relationship with Staff**

### **Trustees should accept these principles:**

The staff is directed only by the library director, who interprets policies to the staff and carries out the total library program as accepted by the board.

Trustees should never give orders or instructions to the staff.

Trustees should go directly to the library director in case of any comment on the performance of staff.

Trustees should 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 normal appeals channels.

### **Library directors should recognize these situations:**

- Trustees often know staff members very well and have a friendship relationship.
- Trustees will 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 persons.
- Trustees should not be insulated from staff but should know the positions and the programs. The library director should provide opportunities for trustees to be acquainted with the staff.
- The director should insist on proper channels for complaints.

For further information see the link to [Working Relationships with the Director](#).

## **Working Relationship with Friends of the Library**

Friends of the Library organizations have a definite purpose in helping libraries give 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 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 set their own purposes, consistent with the needs of the library. 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 of the Friends' group to the meetings of the board. In turn, the board should attempt 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 plan and policies. The board and every board member individually should make an effort to avoid, even unintentionally, dominating the 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; clerical help; conducting story hours; developing attractive brochures; purchasing equipment; hosting special functions at the library; landscaping and general maintenance; scholarships and staff development assistance; and supplying and arranging exhibits.
- Publicizing the library's services: through Friends' membership drives; informs non-users of library services; draws attention to the library as the educational, recreational and social focal point of the community; speaks at public meetings and to individuals about the library's services, programs, activities, resources, and needs.
- Raising special funds: 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 exist, 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 which might be the subject of work by the Friends. Friends should not expect the staff to have available unlimited time to work on projects; the board and librarian should discuss and determine how much time, money and personnel can be woven into the Friends efforts.

Library boards have legal governing responsibilities, including making policy and recommendations. The librarian carries out the library's policies and has charge of the staff. Friends cooperate with both but interfere with neither. Generally speaking, library staff and board are encouraged to belong to the Friends group.

However, current staff members and board members should not be officers in the Friends group in order to avoid possible conflict of interest allegations.

### **Organizing Friends' Groups**

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

First, the library 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.

Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA) has compiled Fact Sheets to help in creating the needed infrastructure of a non-profit Friends group. The Fact Sheets are found on the ALTAFF site – Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations. ALTAFF is a recently expanded division of the American Library Association joining FOLUSA and the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA).

### **Resources**

Friends of Libraries USA – <http://folusa.org>

Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations – <http://www.ala.org/altaff>

Friends and Foundations Fact Sheets –

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/altaff/friends/factsheets/index.cfm>

WebJunction Friends resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/friends-of-the-library>

## 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 resources, are all factors affecting the selection of the library director.

### Preliminary Assessment

The board should make a realistic appraisal of the situation. They should decide what qualifications the library requires in a library director and what the library has to offer the librarian. Offer the best salary possible to secure the services of a qualified person. Consider any added incentives or challenges offered by the job opportunity.

Begin with a hard look at the current status of the library. Address some fundamental questions, such as:

- What is the role of the library in the community today?
- Have library needs changed? Has the library kept pace?
- What do you really want or need in the next director?
- What is the reason for the job opening? (An exit interview with the departing director is 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.

### Draft the job description

Write or revise the job description. [See Components of Performance Management for information on Results Oriented Job Descriptions](#). Consult professional literature and the Idaho Commission for Libraries to be certain that all legal requirements are met.

### Affirmative Action

Libraries must abide by federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination in relation to hiring, promotion and all other working conditions of employment. [See Employment Laws](#). It is illegal to discriminate against qualified applicants on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, religion, age, country of national origin, individual life style or physical or mental disability. Stated policies should demonstrate that the library board makes every effort not to discriminate. Library boards have responsibility for appropriately reviewing their policies and adopting corrections.

### Search Committee

It is good personnel practice to advertise a job opening to as many potential candidates as possible. Conduct a search even if there are staff members eligible for promotion. Qualified staff members should be encouraged to

apply and the board should stress the goal is to select the best person for the job. All applicants should receive consideration and due process in accordance with equal opportunity laws.

A search committee of the board should compose a carefully worded ad for selected publications. Reading ads published by other libraries will serve as a guide for your ad based on the job description for library director.

- Be sure to specify a deadline for application
- Request resume and references
- Designate one trustee to receive applications.

### **Word-of-mouth**

Advertise among friends and colleagues to spread the news of an available position. Send announcements to LibIdaho and other regional and national listing services. See link below for job posting sites. Keep in mind continuing relations with other libraries who may resent what they perceive as raiding.

### **Interviewing and Selection**

Prior to the conducting of the interviews, the search committee should adopt standards for:

- Application rating system to evaluate applications and resumes.
- List of questions to be posed to each candidate.
  - When each candidate is asked to respond to the same questions, there is an equal basis for evaluation.
  - Ask staff for suggestions.
  - Ask only job related questions, it is illegal to ask questions about an applicant's family life or outside interests.
  - The interview will proceed smoothly and legally when appropriate information is discussed.
- An evaluation sheet to be used by the interview committee to note the candidate's responses and members' impressions.
- Reference forms to send, with self-addressed, stamped return envelope, to former employers and references given. A phone call may produce a more candid evaluation, and the form can be used during the conversation.

Other decisions to be made prior to interviewing:

- Decide if the director will be offered a contract, schedule or open-ended agreement
- Budget for interviewing expenses.
- Determine if the library will offer relocation costs
- Be sure to inform all invited candidates of the board's policy on these expenses

## **Interview and Selection Process**

- Promptly acknowledge receipt of all applications. Notify applicants who do not meet established qualifications.
- Check references for potential candidate using standard form.
- Decide on the number of applicants to be interviewed, usually 3-5 people.
- Determine the order of preference for interviews and send letters to scheduled candidates.
- Designate one person to conduct interviews with others assisting. Keep the interview team to a reasonable size, usually 3-5 people.
- Plan the location for the interview, accommodations for the candidate, a tour of the library and community, etc.
- Allow adequate time for discussion. The interview is a mutual evaluation process. The committee should provide the candidate with a fair, accurate picture of the library, working conditions and expectations.
- Allow time between interviews to complete evaluation sheets while the members' reactions to candidates are still fresh.

## **After All Interviews Are Completed**

- Select the best potential director through discussion and by ranking candidates based on interview evaluations
- Seek consensus of the committee
- Telephone the top candidate to formally offer the position and let him/her consider
- Follow up with information letter and/or contract which include details of appointment, duties, salary, benefits, evaluation, starting date, etc.
- Include a second copy for new director's signature and specify return date
- Write all other candidates interviewed, thanking them and informing them of your decision only after acceptance has been received.
- If the first choice declines or is unavailable, the board can quickly contact the second choice.

## **New Director**

Orient the new director and assist her/him with relocation. Provide help with school and housing information and additional information on the library and the community. A subscription to the local newspaper is a valuable tool to acclimate the new library director.

Welcome the new director. News releases and photographic coverage should be arranged. Personal introductions to staff members, trustees, community representatives and local government officials should be scheduled promptly. An open house or reception hosted by the board is a standard courtesy.

A probationary 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 must be mutually agreed upon.

Midway through the probationary period an informal review of the director's performance should be conducted. **See the section on Director Performance Appraisal.** A "final" evaluation should be developed by the board and

discussed concerning the decision to retain or dismiss the director. If performance is in doubt, problems should be documented carefully. Dissatisfaction should be recorded and discussed. The board should never retain a director if a majority of the members are convinced that no improvement is possible.

If the board finds itself in this position, they should 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**

LibIdaho – Idaho’s library listserv - <http://www.idaholibraries.org/libidaho>

Idaho Commission for Libraries Job Posting sites - <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/library-jobs>

## **Director Performance Appraisal**

Boards of trustees are evaluating their library director all the time: by instinct, what they see in the library, hear from the public, as well as the "feel" and reputation of the library. The performance appraisal of the director is closely tied to the success of the annual library plan. A formal, written performance appraisal is an essential management practice. The evaluation of the library director should be the foundation in the evaluation process for the library as a whole.

### **Purposes of the Performance Appraisal**

- To provide the director with clear understanding of the board's expectations
- To ensure the director is aware of how well the 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 actual concerns so that appropriate action can be taken
- To review annual accomplishments of the library and insure the continued effectiveness of the director
- To demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to community stakeholders

### **Factors in Reviewing the Performance of Directors**

Directors are accountable to varied and sometimes conflicting constituencies. The board and the director must recognize these groups and agree on the priority 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, public relations, a written plan and clear policies will all help the board and director to 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 performance appraisal of the library director. They are not all-inclusive, nor are they all necessary. There are in all probability several factors that each of you could add and some factors included that you may consider irrelevant. These factors are a reference point for you to develop the type of evaluation that is best for your institution and your 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, etc.
- Maintenance and Development of Facilities and Vehicles

## **Performance Management**

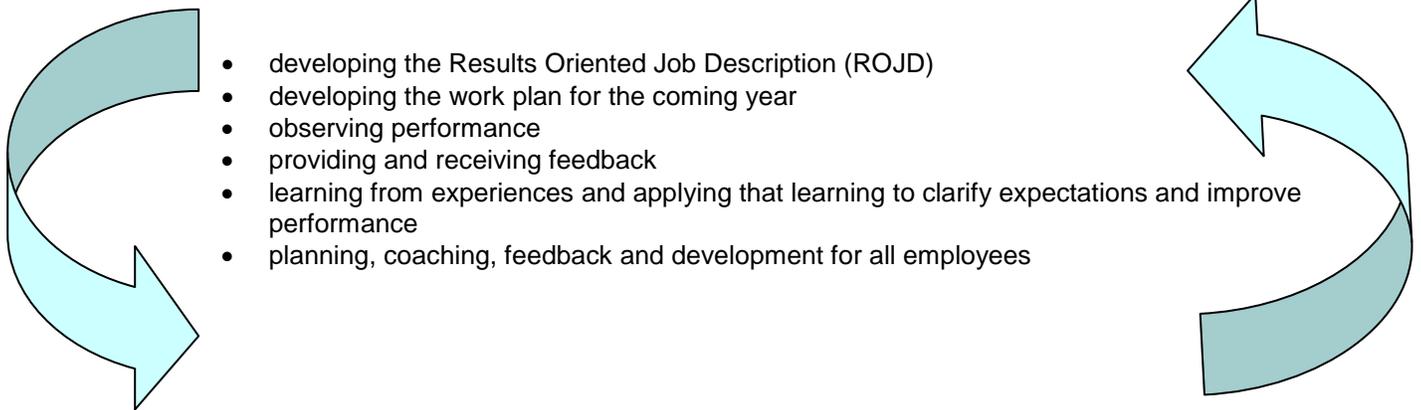
Performance management is the ongoing collaborative process to support library employees' success and accomplish the strategic mission of the library. It is a year-round partnership between the director and the board and between the director and the staff to create shared understanding about the results 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 idea is to communicate openly, frequently and freely – up, down, and across the library – so situations are handled and problems solved before they become crises.

Performance management is a cyclical process that involves:



## **Components of Performance Management**

### **ROJD – Results Oriented Job Description**

The ROJD:

- 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 2 or 3 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 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 (6 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, will meet to discuss and agree upon the ROJD and set the work plan for the six-month probationary period. At the successful completion of this probationary period, another review of the work plan takes place. The work plan is then reviewed as needed, and at least annually.
3. Feedback will be provided to individuals on their performance expectations and how they can improve. Using the ROJD, employees will 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 in 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 LINK](#)
  - 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 for disciplinary actions and therefore are open for review by some individuals outside the library if legal issues surface.

## **Performance Appraisal Procedure**

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

1. The director completes a self-appraisal of her/his performance for the past year considering her/his work plan and submits it to the board.
2. Peer and/or customer review input is requested, if desired.
3. The performance appraisal should be a positive, developmental process that includes praise and constructive guidance.
4. The board prepares written comments on the employee's performance using the performance appraisal form and reviewing the relevant documents.
5. The board members should meet without the director present to formulate the final appraisal form. They should reach a consensus on how they, as a body, summarize the appraisal.
6. The board's written appraisal should be given to the director and then discussed at an executive session scheduled during a board meeting. **See Open Meeting Law**
7. The director and board discuss the appraisal and any developmental issues that need to be addressed.
8. When both the board and director agree to the appraisal results, the appraisal form is signed and copies go to the employee and the personnel file.
9. At this meeting or at another, 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's a time to compare what really happened, to what the ROJD and last year's work plan say was expected to happen, to evaluate what worked well, what didn't work well and what was learned. It's 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 collaborative process between the employee and supervisor. Because the employee best understands what challenges were encountered and what was learned, her/his perspective is essential for a complete appraisal. Supervisors can observe and comment on the results of employee actions, but cannot tell 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 the employee and her/his 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 do I prepare a self-appraisal?

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

What is the link between the self-appraisal and:

- The ROJD and work plan?  
The ROJD should include a job purpose statement, 2 to 3 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, telling 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 more accurately describe the position.  
  
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 should 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 should the self-appraisal contain? What should it look like?

The self-appraisal should focus on the accomplishments of the work plan that was set for the year and on the employee's performance. Briefly describe what happened; what worked; what didn't 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.

Avoid describing the job and listing activities – that is the purpose of the ROJD. Try 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. Or comment briefly on some expectations and go into more detail on a few. The employee and supervisor can determine how much detail is appropriate.

Note 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 okay 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 should be 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 your library cannot be covered in detail, the following list contains important laws and what they do. These descriptions are not intended to fully explain the law, but to send up some "warning signals" of areas that you should be concerned about.

**Minimum Wage –Federal** - <http://www.dol.gov/whd/minimumwage.htm> and **State** - <http://labor.idaho.gov/dnn/LaborLaws/tabid/667/Default.aspx> Almost all library workers will fall under these minimum wage laws. Make sure that you are paying them at minimum wage or more.

**Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)** - <http://www.dol.gov/compliance/laws/comp-flsa.htm> This includes the federal minimum wage, and it also lists requirements for overtime pay and compensatory (comp) time. It also prohibits employees from contributing volunteer hours doing the same thing that they get paid for.

**The Fair Labor Standards Act** - <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/faq/esa/flsa/toc.htm#cl> also includes child labor provisions, which set certain limitations on the use of juveniles as employees. If you use students under 18 years of age as pages, you should be aware of these restrictions.

**State** - <http://humanrights.idaho.gov/> and **Federal Civil Rights Laws** - <http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/qanda.html> prohibit employers from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, in hiring, promotion, and other employment policies.

**Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA)** - <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/discrimination/agedisc.htm> prohibits employers from discriminating on account of age. The protected age group is 40 years old and older.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** - <http://www.ada.gov/> strengthens prohibitions on discrimination against the disabled and requires employers to make their facilities accessible to the disabled and to make reasonable changes in their accommodations for the employment of disabled people.

**The Family Medical Leave Act** - <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/index.htm> allows employees to take up to 12 work weeks of paid or unpaid leave for certain medical or family reasons. It requires that employees taking such leave should be allowed to return to their original job or an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

**Prohibited Conduct By Public Servants** – Idaho Code 18-1351

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title18/T18CH13SECT18-1351.htm> and 18- 1359

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title18/T18CH13SECT18-1359.htm>, 18-1360

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title18/T18CH13SECT18-1360.htm>, 18- 1361

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title18/T18CH13SECT18-1361.htm>, 18- 1361A

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title18/T18CH13SECT18-1361A.htm> and 18-1362

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title18/T18CH13SECT18-1362.htm> lists prohibited conduct on the part of Idaho public servants. One of the prohibitions is against nepotism, the hiring and employment of a person's relatives.

## **Resources**

WebJunction supervising legal information - <http://id.webjunction.org/supervision>

## Finance

We like to think of the public library as the "free library," but no library is free. The money needed for buying materials, paying salaries, maintaining facilities, continuing technology upgrades, participating in statewide resource sharing efforts, paying the phone bill, and much more must come from somewhere. One of the most important board functions, therefore, is to systematically budget, raise and account for their library's funds.

**See Budgeting –**

### Funding

Once a budget has been accepted, it is the board's responsibility to insure that adequate income to fund the budget is available. 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 have a vital role in the legislative process. So 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. **See Roles & Responsibilities.** This is not only a right; it is a responsibility. While the board should delegate to the staff the power to make purchases of library materials, supplies and other necessary goods and services, it should be aware of all purchases and should monitor the budget throughout the year.

In order to do this, the board should establish bookkeeping systems that includes the following features:

1. A monthly listing of all bills to be paid. Bills should not be paid until approved by the board. It is best if the full board approves all bills before payment. This necessitates that the board meet monthly.
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, etc., 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 to have the library's financial records independently audited or reviewed as required by state and federal law (See IC 67-450B <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title67/T67CH4SECT67-450B.htm>).

## Finance

### Board of Trustees

Be completely informed about the financial status of the library.

Work with the library director to formulate a budget adequate to carry out the library's goals and objectives, within any limitations of state law.

Present the budget to the funding agency, public officials and the general public; explain and defend it.

Work to secure adequate funds for staff and services.

Explore all ways of increasing the library's income, tapping other sources and taking advantage of all available means of cooperation with other libraries.

### Library Director

Provide regular reports of budget status and expenditures at each board meeting.

Prepare a suggested annual budget in consultation with staff and board. Supply facts and figures to the board to aid in interpreting the library's current and future financial needs.

Follow the budget process as it moves through the funding process. Work with the board in interpreting budget and financial needs of the library to public officials and the public. Provide leadership in supporting the budget.

Identify financial needs of the library and work with the board and staff for adequate funding.

Call the board's attention to ways of stretching the budget. Assist the board in cooperating with other libraries.

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

## Resources

WebJunction Budget & Finance Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/budget-finance>

[WebJunction Courses – Budget & Finance](#)

[http://id.webjunction.org/catalog?p\\_p\\_id=OCLC\\_COURSE\\_CATALOG&p\\_p\\_lifecycle=0&p\\_p\\_state=normal&p\\_p\\_mode=view&p\\_p\\_col\\_id=column-2&p\\_p\\_col\\_count=1&OCLC\\_COURSE\\_CATALOG\\_struts\\_action=%2Fcoursecatalog%2Flist&OCLC\\_COURSE\\_CATALOG\\_categoryId=LibMgmt\\_Budg&OCLC\\_COURSE\\_CATALOG\\_categoryTitle=Budget+%26+Finance&OCLC\\_COURSE\\_CATALOG\\_catalogIds=Idaho\\_Private&OCLC\\_COURSE\\_CATALOG\\_redirect=%2Fcatalog](http://id.webjunction.org/catalog?p_p_id=OCLC_COURSE_CATALOG&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=1&OCLC_COURSE_CATALOG_struts_action=%2Fcoursecatalog%2Flist&OCLC_COURSE_CATALOG_categoryId=LibMgmt_Budg&OCLC_COURSE_CATALOG_categoryTitle=Budget+%26+Finance&OCLC_COURSE_CATALOG_catalogIds=Idaho_Private&OCLC_COURSE_CATALOG_redirect=%2Fcatalog)

## 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 several 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 the library director and staff have the most knowledge of the day-to-day operation 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 should 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 should be consulted. Other problems or opportunities that have arisen should be considered. This "dreaming" phase of the budgeting process should result 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 should 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, fines, fees, grants and any other possible sources of funding for the library.
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 from the year's budget or may have to be scaled back. This is best 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. City library boards then need to present this document to the city council. District libraries must have a budget

hearing that is open to the public. In both cases, board members should be able to fully explain the income and costs shown in the budget.

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.

## **Resources**

Developing the Library Budget - [http://id.webjunction.org/budget-finance/-/articles/content/3723447?\\_OCLC\\_ARTICLES\\_getContentFromWJ=true](http://id.webjunction.org/budget-finance/-/articles/content/3723447?_OCLC_ARTICLES_getContentFromWJ=true)

Budget Presentation Example - [http://id.webjunction.org/budget-finance/-/articles/content/3768278?\\_OCLC\\_ARTICLES\\_getContentFromWJ=true](http://id.webjunction.org/budget-finance/-/articles/content/3768278?_OCLC_ARTICLES_getContentFromWJ=true)

## **Financial Statements**

### **What to Look for in Financial Statements**

Every month library trustees should receive a copy of the library's monthly financial statement. The statement should include information about:

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

Are there yearly patterns of income?

For example, 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 doesn't show up, the board should find out why.

Are there yearly patterns of expenditures?

Typically, utility bills will be higher in the winter, for example. Many major publishers put out many 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 jobber, that large bill will come due once a year and may make the materials expenditures for that month look unusually high.

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

According to the Public Depository Law (IC 57-101 through 57-145 <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title57/T57CH1.htm>), 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, should be aware of how the city is investing its funds, and the amount of interest that is being collected on the library account. If possible, the city library should ask the city council to return this interest to the library.

Where the library has direct control of funds, it is vitally important that interest rates be watched. The library may want to put its "idle funds" into longer term investments if interest rates are falling. If they are rising, it may want to keep its funds in more liquid kinds of deposits. Careful investment procedures can insure 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 should be figured. 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, of course, these patterns must be taken into account. Here are some questions that should be asked in comparing actual figures with budgeted amounts:

### **Is the library receiving the income it expected?**

If income is low, the board needs to:

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

If income is higher than expected, the board needs to

- decide how this "windfall" will be used, and
- determine whether this surplus is a one-time dividend or if it should be included on the income side of the next year's budget

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.

### **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 book budget is being under spent, 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 want to move some funds into the staff budget.

### **Unusual income, expenditures, or interest rates**

Are there any strings attached to unusual income?

Often large gifts are not really "free." They may come with conditions which will not be good for the library in the long run. For example, if the library is required to set aside room or shelving for a special collection in order to receive money for the collection, does the library have the room to do this? Will it still have the room five, ten, or twenty years from now?

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 the Public Depository Law (Idaho Code Section 57, Chapter 1 <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. It is the board's responsibility, however, to insure 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**

Should the library board look at the bills themselves?

Typically, it is easier for the board to work with a list of bills, rather than the bills themselves. The list should show 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 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:

<u>Check no.</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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 should be available for the board to examine if they feel the need.

Look 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 should find out what it is about. Similarly, the board may want to know more about a bill from an unusual vendor.

Look for required expenditures.

By law, the library is required to make payments for income tax withholding, social security and workers

compensation. 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 should be explained at the meeting. For example, if the library is reimbursing a librarian for travel to a workshop, that payment should be explained. Putting this kind of explanation in the minutes insures there will be no appearance of staff or board members misusing library funds.

**Financial Statement Sample – Income**

Source	Budget	Month Received	Year Received	% Received	Not Received
Property Tax					
Sales Tax					
Gifts					
Fines					
Fees					
Book Sales					
Interest					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

The income portion of the financial statement should give a clear picture of the sources from which the library expects to receive income. The sources listed here are typical income sources, but they are 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.

For each source, a budgeted amount should be 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 “Year Received” column shows the cumulative amount of income from each source for the entire fiscal year up to and including the present month. For example, the figures for October in both the month columns and the year columns should be equal. The “Year Received” column in the November report should be the sum of the October “Year Received” column and the November “Month Received” column.

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 for fines, 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 fines would also be higher during these months. Thus, the 75 percent figure may represent a typical yearly pattern of income collection from fines, 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**

Item	Budget	Month Expended	Year Expended	Remaining	% Remaining
<b>Personnel</b>					
Salaries					
FICA					
Pension					
Insurance					
Work. Comp.					
Cont. Educ.					
Travel					
<b>Materials</b>					
Books					
Magazines					
Online Resources					
Audio-Visual					
Processing					
<b>Building</b>					
Heat					
Electric					
Supplies					
Repairs					
Insurance					
<b>Technology</b>					
Maintenance					
Upgrades					
Software					
<b>Other</b>					
Equipment					
Library Sup.					
Office Sup.					
Board Exp.					
Treas. Bond					
Programs					
Election Exp.					
Legal Exp.					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

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.

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" shows the amount expended this month: and "Year Expended" shows how much has been spent over the whole 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.

**Financial Statement Sample – Cash on Hand**

Account	Amount	Interest Rate	Maturity Date
<b>Checking Accts</b>			
(Institutions)			
<b>Savings Acct(s)</b>			
(Institutions)			
<b>Cert of Deposit</b>			
(Institutions)			
<b>Petty Cash</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

The Cash on Hand portion of the financial report tells the board exactly where the library's money is being kept, the amount of interest it is earning, if the library has any term investments, (such as certificates of deposit), and how soon the money will be available without an interest penalty.

The categories of accounts are not exhaustive, but these are the typical kinds of accounts used by most libraries. Under each kind of account, the names of the specific financial institutions where money is held should be listed.

In the "Amount" column, the exact amount, to the penny, that is held in each account, should be listed. These amounts should be calculated for the last day of the month, and should show the amounts in each account after bills have been paid and income deposited.

The interest column shows the amount of interest being earned on each account. The library should check on rates of interest for savings and checking accounts periodically to insure it is earning good rates. Before purchasing certificates of deposits and other longer term investments the library should check with several institutions within their service area to get the best possible rates.

Maturity dates only apply to investments that must be kept with the institution for a set period of time. This kind of investment should only be made if the library is certain that the money will not be needed before the maturity date.

Petty cash is the money the library holds in the library itself to make change or to make small purchases for items needed immediately. A strict account of petty cash should be kept.

## Policy Development

One of the most important functions 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 staff. Procedures, on the other hand, are developed by the staff to carry out the policy. For example, it may be the policy of the library to open at 10 a.m. Procedures include turning on the lights, unlocking the door and so forth.

### **Policies are guidelines for making decisions**

- Broadly stated guidelines for actions and decisions.
- General statement for supporting library operations, rules, regulations and use
- Basis for procedures but not detailed courses of action
- Statement in accordance with purpose and legal basis for library
- Effective tools for transferring decision making to lower levels in the organization
- Effective or operational the day it is formulated and continued effective until it is revised or deleted
- Leads to achievements of objectives

### **Benefits of written policies:**

- They indicate a basic honesty and integrity of the library's intentions
- They support the overall library 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 who are 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 force the board to think more sharply, thus helping achieve further clarity
- They can protect the rights and assure fair treatment of all patrons and staff members

- They generate confidence of all persons in the organization concerning the library's management

**To be most effective, policies should be:**

- reflective of the objectives and plans of the library
- consistent, so efficiency is maintained
- flexible, so they can be changed as new needs arise
- distinguishable from procedures
- written, so they are easily communicated to staff

**Resources**

ICRMP (Idaho County Risk Management Program) Policy Resources –

<http://icrmp.com/Library/Forms.aspx>

WebJunction Policy & Procedures Resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/policies-procedures>

## **Nuts and Bolts of Creating Policy**

Policy making is one of the board's most important functions. The board is responsible for establishing written policies to govern and guide all phases of library operation, both internal and external.

Policy statements must be 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. Governing authorities 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, govern service to the community, other libraries, agencies, etc.
- Internal Policies, govern the management of the library system.

### **Important policies that every library should have:**

1. Board By-Laws. These are the rules under which the board will operate. It describes the board 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. 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.
3. Collection Development. This describes the kinds of materials that will and will not be added to the collection, based on community needs and interests. It will give the criteria that will be used in selecting these materials and will tell who is responsible for this selecting. It will explain how gift materials will be handled, how the collection will be weeded and how challenges to materials will be met.
4. Operational Policies. This group of policies will include information about when the library will be opened and closed, circulation procedures and loan periods. They will explain who has the right to use the library and what fines or fees will be charged. They will also explain what the staff should do in case of particular kinds of emergencies, and will describe what is and is not acceptable patron behavior in the library.
5. Program Policies. These policies explain what kind of programs, both for children and adults, the library will have; they will describe who can attend these programs and who is responsible for organizing them and putting them on. If the library has a meeting room or special equipment for meetings, it will describe who can use these resources.

## **Policy Malpractice**

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

- Is this an instant policy?
- Is this a dictatorial policy?
- Is this an illegal policy?
- Is this a sloppy policy?
- Is this a contradictory policy?

## **Library Policy Manual**

### **Organization**

Policies should be:

- recorded
- compiled and organized for ready access in a policy manual
- numbered and date of adoption noted
- reviewed annually and updated and revised as appropriate

To be effectively implemented, all policies should be recorded, compiled and organized for ready access in a Policy Manual. A loose-leaf binder is a useful format to accommodate new policies and revisions. The contents of a Policy Manual are probably best categorized and numbered under some form of topical heading 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

Every trustee should have a copy of the Policy Manual and be completely familiar with the rationale for each statement. A thorough understanding of all policies is essential in order to knowledgeably adopt new policies or revise existing ones. Trustees may also be called upon to defend or interpret policies to the public or governing officials.

Copies of the Policy Manual should also be housed in all libraries. The director is responsible for instructing personnel in the rationale of policies so that staff members understand the basis for procedures.

## **Policy Review**

Policy development and changes are major decisions affecting established practice and policies. Trustees should allow adequate time for policy consideration and avoid incomplete assessment of possible options. If unresearched 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 lost confidence of the staff and community.

Remember, policies are not carved in stone! Resources, communities and goals change and grow. Policies must reflect current needs and services.

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 should be reviewed at the annual meeting, if not done prior.

### **Who?**

While only trustees have the legal responsibility and authority to make 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.

## Policy Making

### Board of Trustees

Determine the goals and objectives of the library and methods of evaluating progress toward meeting them. Review goals and objectives annually and evaluate progress.

Relate 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.

Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation, use, and program of the library. Adopt bylaws for board procedures. Review policies on a regular basis, especially as part of the orientation of new trustees.

Seek a cooperative basis with officials of the municipality or other local governing unit, keeping in mind the special legal responsibilities of a library board

Attend all board meetings and committee meetings to which you are assigned. Carry out all special assignments properly.

### Library Director

Provide assistance and direction to the board in setting goals and objectives and determining methods of evaluation. Provide information and opinion on how the library is progressing.

Assist the board to know the needs of the community and how to respond to these needs through library services.

Recommend needed policies to the board and study examples and sources of information. Carry out the policies as adopted by the board. Interpret policies to the staff and public. Provide the board with recommendations and materials for study.

Administer the library within the framework of the law and the library's goals and objectives, policies and budget.

Prepare all needed library reports for the local unity of government and the Idaho Commission for Libraries. Provide copies to the board.

## **Resources**

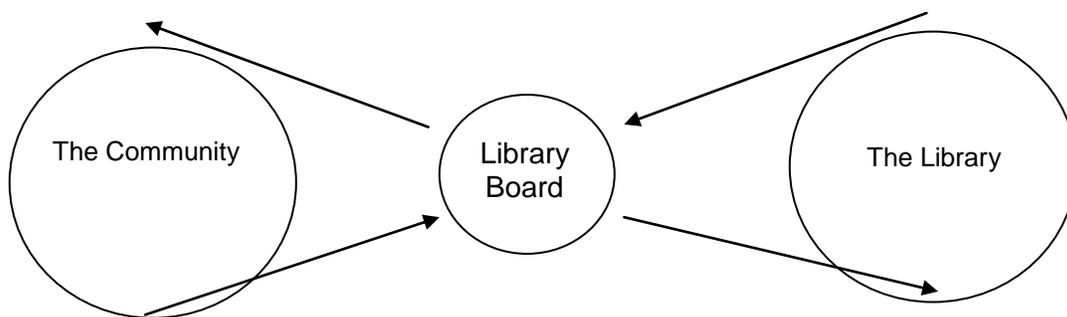
ICRMP Policy Examples –  
WebJunction Policy Development Resources

## Community & Public Relations

The public library board is a major conduit of information between the library and its community. Thus the library 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 do 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. This means that board members should be thoroughly familiar with the library. In fact, outside of the library staff, no one in the community should know the library better than its board members.

Here are some tips on how to get to know your library:

- Use your library! There is no better way for a board member to get to know the library than to actually use its services.
- Ask questions. Even a small library is a complex organization. It is not easy to understand everything that goes on in it. If you don't ask questions, you will never get the real reasons behind how things are done.
- Read your minutes. If you are a new board member, read the board minutes for the past five years. These will tell you the major issues that have been discussed, as well as give a picture of the budget and other important fiscal information.

- Attend continuing education activities. Activities for both board members and for library staff can be useful, as they can give you new perspectives and ideas for your library, and they will help you to see the "big picture" of librarianship and how your library fits into it.
- Visit other libraries. Cooperation between libraries is an important part of library services. Your understanding of how other libraries operate will help you to develop programs for cooperation for your library.

## Representing the Community

Because the library board represents the community, its membership should be representative of the community. Ideally, the membership of the board should include both men and women, young and old, rich and poor. If there is a significant minority population in the community, they should be represented. If the library board has input on who will be appointed to it, these factors should be considered.

However, for a number of reasons, the 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.

- **Visit with individual members of the unrepresented group.** If there are no men on the board, for example, board members should talk to their husbands, sons, and male friends about library services and reading. Ask them what they like to read and what kind of information they need to carry out their vocational and recreational activities.
- **Visit 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 might want 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 people.
- **Visit with the professionals who work with the unrepresented group.** Typically, library boards have few poor people on them, for example. The needs of the poor can be determined, however, if someone from the county welfare department or the ministerial association is asked to address the board. These are people who deal with the problems of the poor on a day-to-day basis, and who might have some ideas about how the library could serve them.
- **Take a walk around your community for the expressed 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 your 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 don't know about their community, but also by the different perspectives that other board members bring to the same facts.
- **If the board has the time or money, they may also carry out a more formal study of their 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. They are a lot of work. [See Planning for the Future and Needs Assessment.](#)

### **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:

- Listen, listen, and listen some more.
- Never go into a board discussion with your mind made up. If you have strong feelings about a particular issue, make sure you spend more time listening than talking when the issue is discussed.
- Review all policies annually and more often if the need arises. Policies are not written in stone, but should change as the needs of the community change.
- Consider every decision you make 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 hardback books, and who are excluded from serving on the board by their age?
- Be willing to change. Look for ways to make the library more appealing for those who are not currently using it, while at the same time remembering the needs of the more traditional users.

## Service and Community Relations

### Board of Trustees

Interpret the community and its needs to the library director and reflect them in goals, objectives, and policies.

Establish a library materials selection policy, reflecting community needs and including a freedom to read provision.

Establish ways of providing service, not just to individuals, but to organized agencies and institutions within the community in both the public and private sector.

### Library Director

Interpret the community and its needs to the board.

Supply information and expert advice on such a policy, together with recommendations reflecting professional knowledge. Select and order books and materials in harmony with the policy criteria.

Offer regular and special services to public and private community groups. Seek effective and innovative ways of providing library services to groups, individuals, and the total community.

Establish, support, and participate in a planned community relations program, allocating responsibility for various tasks according to available personnel and talents.

Seek to extend library service to those who have been reluctant to use the library and to those unable to take advantage of customary library programs.

### Resources

WebJunction Public Relations resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/public-relations>

WebJunction Community Relations & Advocacy resources - <http://id.webjunction.org/community-relations>

## **Public Relations**

### **Relating to the Public**

Public relations is much more than the flash, pizzazz and hoopla typically associated with PR. Publicity and advertising are not sufficient alone 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 for good PR. It is everybody's job! The trustees, director, staff, even the 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. Trustees have a group responsibility and an individual role in relating to the public.

### **Board Responsibility**

- Establish public relations policy
- Develop a positive PR plan and schedule for the library
- Recognize PR as a total and continuous function of the library
- Assign members to participation in PR events
- Support staff training and involvement in PR program
- Evaluate the PR program and public service
- Allocate funds for PR activities and/or volunteer specialists to offer help

### **Individual Trustees**

- Be vocal and visible
- Be well-informed, use the library and spread the word
- Listen to the community
- Attend meetings of community organizations to speak and gain information
- Convey the progress, plans and policies of the library to individuals and groups
- Ask the opinion-makers known by trustees if they will be library supporters
- Spot gaps in the library's information program and make suggestions
- Work closely with municipal and other officials
- Tell people what trustees do, who they are, when they meet and how they can be reached
- Sell the philosophy and merits of quality library service
- Learn about other libraries and services statewide and nationally
- Support Friends of the Library and recruit members

## **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 will set 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/president).
- 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 should have a copy of the public relations policy in his or her trustee manual. The library director should have a copy, the governing body should be informed of the policy and a copy put on file available to the public.

## **Sample Public Relations Policy**

In recognition of the \_\_\_\_\_ Library's responsibility to maintain continuing communication with present and potential users of the library's services and resources so as to assure effective and maximum usage by all citizens, the Board of Trustees of the \_\_\_\_\_ Library adopts the following resolution as policy.

The goals of the Library's public relations program are:

- to promote community awareness of library service
- to stimulate interest in and usage of the Library
- to develop public interest in and usage of the Library and its role in the community.
  - An annual plan of specific objectives and activities shall be developed, sufficient funds shall be allocated to carry out the program and the program shall be evaluated periodically throughout the year.

- Training sessions, workshops and other aids shall be made available to library staff members to assure courteous, efficient and friendly contact with library patrons and the general public.
- Personal and informational group contacts shall be maintained with government officials, opinion leaders, service clubs, civic associations and other community organizations by library staff and board members.
- Surveys of the community shall be made as needed to assure the Library's responsiveness to the interests and needs of all citizens.
- Local media shall be utilized extensively to keep the public aware of and informed about the Library's resources and services.
- Newsletters, brochures and other promotional materials shall be produced and distributed through the library regular mailings and other methods of reaching the public.

## **Getting the Message Out**

Once you know about the library, it is important to get that information out to the community.

### **Tips on ways to tell the public about the library:**

- Bring up the library as a topic of conversation. Informally tell your friends and acquaintances about library services.
- With the library director, visit with groups, such as service clubs, to make a presentation about the library.
- If you are a city library, the board and director should make an annual report to the city council on library services.
- This should be done at a time when the library is not asking for anything from the council.
- If you are a city library, the board makes the annual budget presentation with the library director.

### **Some Tips on How to Talk About the Library**

- Speak to your listener's interests, not your own. It will do the library little good, for example, if when you are speaking to someone who is interested in hunting and fishing, you talk about the library's fine collection of sewing books.
- Don't give out false information. Make sure of your facts. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the person that you will find the answer and get back to them.
- Don't assume that your listener knows more than s/he does. Don't use library jargon.
- Make sure you listen as well as talk.
- Be positive about the library. Don't air the library's dirty linen in public. If you don't like something the library is doing, take it to the library director or board. When a board member says something negative about the library, it gives a very poor impression of both the library and the board member. Remember that your purpose is to promote the library.

## 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 collection, services, etc.
- Determining adequacy of facilities, technology, etc.
- Establishing satisfactory staffing patterns and library hours

### Essential Data:

- Local information and demographics cited from Census/ 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) & external (community) scanning results
- Community input
- Analysis of data (ex: 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
- SWOT exercise
- Key informants
- Community forum/Focus group
- Census and/or public records
- Citizen advisory groups
- Town meeting
- Being out in the community and listening

## Resources

- ICFL Library Consultant
- New Pathways to Planning  
<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/pathway/biblio.html>
- Needs Assessment Strategies  
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/tools/assess/>
- Montana Department of Commerce Needs Assessment Tools  
[http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD\\_CDBG\\_CN.asp](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD_CDBG_CN.asp)
- Library Research Service  
Resources for Community Analysis – Colorado and National  
<http://www.lrs.org/public/community.php>
  - Community Survey Form  
[http://www.lrs.org/public/ca\\_form.php](http://www.lrs.org/public/ca_form.php)

WebJunction article – Community Analysis and Knowledge Management -  
<http://id.webjunction.org/rural/articles/content/438171>

Statistics: library services, circulation, collection, general output measures  
<http://libraries.idaho.gov/publications/statistics>

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

People: staff, community leaders, Friends, Idaho Commission for Libraries  
<http://libraries.idaho.gov/>

Groups: counties, municipalities, schools, regional planning agencies, colleges and universities with information to share

Community Cooperation: attend public meetings and listen to the needs; make presentations to organized groups; prepare exhibits and displays in the library and other locations

Staff Meetings: input from the "front line"

Professional Consultants (especially moving toward a building program): professional methods and the benefits of experience <http://www.libraryconsultants.org/>

Media: press, radio, and television

Other Libraries: find out what has worked for others, best practices

Library Literature: newsletters, professional journals, etc.

Idaho Library Association <http://www.idaholibraries.org/>

## **Do You Know Your Community?**

### **Do you know?**

- Which shelves in your library are always empty?
- Which journals are most used --or lost?
- 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?

### **Listen to your friends, acquaintances, business associates:**

- Drive home a different way
- Stop and see a friend you haven't seen for years
- Join a new organization
- Wear your library trustee hat everywhere
- Have fun being a trustee
- Support your library director
- Talk: be noisy about your library

### **How to write a news release:**

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

### **How to plan a public relations campaign:**

- Set objectives
- Know your target group
- Find out who will mail your library flyers with their routine mailing

### **How to tell the library story:**

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

## Annual Statistical Report

Each year, public libraries are required to make a report of operations for the last fiscal year. This report is collected and compiled by the Idaho Commission for Libraries.

**City Libraries - IC 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.

**District Libraries – IC 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.

The report is a very good tool for reviewing what has happened at the library in the past year and helps with planning future efforts as well.

## **Resources – Found at the Bottom of Each Section**

ICFL information about the report and data collected in years past -  
<http://libraries.idaho.gov/landing/idaho-public-library-statistics>