

Massachusetts Public Library

Trustee Handbook

A publication of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Board of Library Commissioners



Massachusetts **Libraries**
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS



From the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners:

On behalf of the Board of Library Commissioners, I am pleased to present the Massachusetts Public Library Trustees Handbook to the thousands of library trustees throughout the Commonwealth.

Because you're a library trustee, we assume you love libraries as much as we do! However, it's not enough to love libraries; libraries need leadership and dedication if they are to remain one of the cornerstones of our democracy and serve as a community's "third place" after home, work or school. Your job as a trustee is one that is both an honor and a responsibility that requires true dedication.

We also believe in the power of libraries, and effective trustees are an important part of that power. Your knowledge of the laws that govern libraries, your understanding of best practices, library funding and advocacy, and the major issues that impact libraries are essential to your effectiveness. That's why we created this trustee handbook.

A big part of your job is to become a tireless advocate for your library. Part of that advocacy requires extensive knowledge about your library, how libraries interrelate across the state, how the funding authorities work, and how to ask for funding. You'll learn much of that in this handbook.

The Trustee Handbook Committee's diligence and expertise cannot be underestimated. They have created a comprehensive, user-friendly handbook. You should be able to find the information you need; if not, the MBLC's staff is available for consultation.

We hope that you will use this handbook to help you to learn more about libraries, to answer questions you may have, help you to help solve problems and become a dedicated, knowledgeable board member providing leadership that strengthens the library that you love and enables it to reach its full potential.

Mary Ann Cluggish, Chairman (2016–2018)
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)

I join Commissioner Cluggish in applauding the work of the Trustee Handbook Committee, and in reinforcing the significance of the role of a trustee at a public library in Massachusetts. Your leadership and involvement as a trustee is so very important. Whether you are a new or experienced trustee, it is our hope that this handbook will be an invaluable resource to you!

Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chairman (2018 –)
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)



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The Handbook Revision Committee wishes to thank the Commissioners and the staff of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for their support in this project, especially: Liz Babbitt, Celeste Bruno, James Lonergan, Lauren Stara, Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, Ruth Urell, Rosemary Waltos, Sharon Zitser. Additional thanks to Dianne Carty and April Mazza.

Note: Some portions of this Handbook have been adapted from the COSLA *Public Library Trustee Manual: A Template for Use by State Library Agencies and Public Libraries*, published in July 2016. (<http://www.cosla.org/>)

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CHAPTER ONE

Becoming A Trustee

Public libraries have played a key role in Massachusetts' cultural and economic development for more than 150 years. Libraries serve as a focus for intellectual growth, research and learning for people of all ages. Through libraries, cities and towns provide collective access to books and other resources which no individual could hope to afford.

The public library is a center of lifelong learning for everyone in the community, providing access to the ideas of the past and the present, as citizens determine their futures. Information is collected, organized, and disseminated with the goal of providing free and public access for every person regardless of age, race, physical ability, gender, or creed. The institution of the public library serves the noble role of the great equalizer, allowing all citizens the opportunity to improve their lives through self-education.

In the 21st century, libraries must continue to serve as intellectual and cultural centers for their communities by maintaining strong collections of books, periodicals, and other types of media, in both physical and digital formats. At the same time, they must also provide access to an expanding world of information and keep pace with changes in information technology. It is clear that libraries play a critical role in preparing Massachusetts residents to meet the challenges of the future.

Cambridge Public Library



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A library board of trustees, in some communities referred to as a board of directors or incorporators, is a group of citizen volunteers to whom the governing of a public library is entrusted. Board members are the vital link between the library and the community. Trustees are library advocates and leaders in developing service willingly, responsibly, and creatively for all members of the public.

Each trustee brings to the board certain strengths, skills, knowledge, and personal experience which uniquely serve the library. Expert knowledge in a professional or technical discipline is valuable for specific undertakings. Some boards must rely almost entirely on their members for advice in such fields as construction, law and finance. Others may make extensive use of consultants, advisory boards, volunteers, and municipal departments.

The board as a whole should represent a broad spectrum of the community. A board consisting of diverse viewpoints assures that the library will serve the total community. Issues and decisions involved in the governing of the modern public library are varied and complex. Certain competencies necessary to accomplish the board's goals should, ideally, be present in the total composition of the board.

Successful trustees maintain a working relationship with the community, local government, library staff and fellow trustees. Trustees take their responsibilities as public officials beyond the library board room. An effective trustee is one who participates intelligently in the entire political process: understanding municipal finance, local budgetary pressures, personnel concerns, and the administrative practices of the municipality as a whole. A library board which recognizes that the library is not an island, but part of a larger municipal structure, will build stronger partnerships within the community it serves.

What constitutes an effective Board?

An effective board of library trustees consists of informed and dedicated citizens representing a cross-section of the population who govern the library for the benefit of the community.

The board fulfills ethical, legal, and fiduciary responsibilities by:

- ☐ Employing a qualified library director and understanding the director's role and responsibilities
- ☐ Setting service-oriented library policies which uphold the principles of equal access to information and the free exchange of ideas
- ☐ Demonstrating strong interest in the library and the community, and in what ways they relate to each other
- ☐ Guiding the management and maintenance of library facilities and assets, and expending financial resources judiciously
- ☐ Working to secure an appropriate funding level for facilities, technology, hours of operation, collections, and staff
- ☐ Knowing and observing applicable municipal, state, and federal laws and regulations
- ☐ Working with the community to identify information needs and to develop and implement a written plan for the maintenance and improvement of library services
- ☐ Seeking and applying resources and training which expand trustee skill

Collectively, a board of trustees should have:

- ☐ Knowledge of the community served
- ☐ Business management/financial experience
- ☐ Legal knowledge
- ☐ Diversity in age, race, and sex
- ☐ Varied personal backgrounds
- ☐ Advocacy skills
- ☐ Political astuteness



SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

For elected trustee boards, the selection of trustees, the size of the board, the terms of membership and the powers and duties of trustees are covered in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, sections 10-13. The filling of board vacancies is covered in Chapter 41, section 11. If there is any question regarding selection and appointment of trustees, municipal counsel should be consulted. Keep in mind that certain types of public libraries, such as city, corporation and association libraries, may not be governed by these laws. Chapter 2 of this *Handbook* describes in fuller detail the varying types of public libraries in Massachusetts.

The size of your board and terms of membership may be determined by one or more of the following:

- 1) Massachusetts law, which specifies (for towns only) a board number divisible by three except where local terms or conditions of a bequest accepted by the municipality stipulate otherwise
- 2) Municipal charter (see chapter 3 for a discussion of local charters)
- 3) Incorporation document and/or bylaws

The caliber of trustees determines the progress of the library. Be prepared to identify potential trustees who are active, informed, and interested library supporters. Trustees must devote a great deal of time and commitment to fulfill their duty. A Sample Position Description for library trustees is available in Appendix 1A.

METHODS OF TRUSTEE SELECTION

The vast majority of Massachusetts public libraries are governed by boards of trustees. More than half of all public library trustees in Massachusetts are elected to their position. However, different mechanisms exist for different types of public libraries. For example, a public library which is governed by a private association may select its trustees through appointment by the executive board or full association membership. Trustees serving city libraries may be appointed by the mayor and may act in an advisory capacity, rather than as a governing board. Trustees are selected by one of the following methods:

Appointed trustees are selected by a public official or group of municipal officials.

Elected trustees are selected by the registered voters of the municipality in a municipal election.

Self-perpetuating trustees are selected by the board or members of the library corporation or association, usually from the corporation or association membership, but occasionally from the municipality at large.

Ex-officio trustees are selected by virtue of holding a specified public office or a specified political, committee, social or religious affiliation in the municipality. For example, the legal authorization for some boards of trustees may require that their membership include the principal of the local high school, a member of the Board of Selectmen, a religious leader or a member of a prominent family. Typically, ex-officio trustees do not have voting rights.

Libraries occasionally have boards whose members are selected by a combination of methods, e.g., some appointed and some ex-officio.

Trustee Tip

If a board finds that its small number of members inhibits its ability to be productive, try actively recruiting non-board members to serve on committees. Remember, not all committee members need to be board members. It is possible to change the size of the board if other strategies prove ineffective; however, trustees should seek municipal counsel if they wish to alter the size of the board.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

Board members must serve staggered terms in order to provide continuity of service. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, section 10, elected trustees serve three-year terms. Most appointed trustees also serve three-year terms. If a vacancy occurs prior to the expiration of a trustee's term, the vacant position should be filled in accordance with board and municipal bylaws and MGL ch. 41, sec. 11. Usually a new trustee is appointed to complete the unexpired term.

How long should a trustee serve?

No trustee should serve on the board indefinitely, no matter how dedicated and no matter how effective the trustee is. Continuity of service provides the wisdom of experience, but change provides the essential infusion of new ideas. Both are needed. Some boards include terms limits in their bylaws. It is the responsibility of board members to recruit and encourage qualified potential trustees.

Trustee Tip

While trustees should not serve on the library board indefinitely, there are many ways a former trustee may continue to contribute to the library organization:

- *Help with fundraising/serve on the library foundation*
- *Join a committee*
- *Volunteer for a short-term or long-term project*
- *Participate in a one-time event or project*
- *Provide positive public relations by continuing to be a good spokesperson and positive advocate for the library*
- *Offer occasional expertise in areas such as law, finance, or public relations*
- *Become an active member of the Friends of the Library*

ORIENTATION OF THE NEW TRUSTEE

Very few new library board members come to the position of trustee with the library knowledge they need to contribute effectively to board activities. The specialized library knowledge that is necessary to be an effective trustee cannot be readily acquired by the lay person who is interested in libraries but has never been directly involved in library planning. Welcome new members to the board by providing the information they need to feel comfortable with their new role and begin work. Like new employees, productive trustees should learn how the organization functions and what is expected of them.

Plan a step-by-step orientation program designed jointly by the library director and the board. 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 of the orientation will obviously vary with the style of the board, its size, and the type of library system. However, the importance of a written orientation plan cannot be overemphasized.

In addition to a local orientation program, new trustees should be encouraged to attend a Trustee Orientation from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

These Orientations are typically held in the spring and fall at locations around the state, and cover topics of importance to all library boards, such as relevant state laws, board organization and the role of the trustee, and support and resources for trustees.

See <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees/events/orientations> for more information about these Orientations.

ORIENTATION KIT AND BOARD MANUAL

A new trustee needs local information, about the library and the municipality, to review and consult. At a bare minimum, the library director should provide each trustee with a copy of the library's bylaws and any local ordinances which affect the library, its strategic plan and annual updates, its policy manual, and its current budget. A list of all funding sources, and the percentage of revenue which each source represents, is also an important tool for the new trustee.

Suggested contents for a thorough local trustee manual can be found in the MBLC Trustee Resource Guide, here: <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees>

New trustees should also be given a copy of, or directed to, this *Handbook* and the *Trusty Trustee Pocket Guide*, both available here: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/advisory/trustees/index.php>.

INTRODUCTORY BOARD MEETING

The first time a board meets as a new group with new trustees, an experienced board member should briefly recap the activities and accomplishments of the past year. The new trustee should also read through the prior year's board minutes to familiarize themselves with the board's most current decisions and actions.

A CHECKLIST FOR THE NEW TRUSTEE:

Ten important things you should have:

- ☐ Board's bylaws and schedule of board meetings
- ☐ Packets from three previous meetings
- ☐ Current library budget, recent annual report and monthly reports
- ☐ Copies of Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest (Ethics) Law
- ☐ Contact sheet for board members and director
- ☐ Library's mission, goals and strategic plan
- ☐ Library's policies and procedures
- ☐ List of staff names and positions
- ☐ Tour of library and introduction to staff
- ☐ Information about Friends of the Library and/or Library Foundation

Note: If you were not given these items up front, ask your director or board chair for copies.

Three essential things you should know:

- ☐ What is your role/relationship to the library as an organization?
- ☐ What is your role as an elected or appointed official in your town or city?
- ☐ What state laws and community policies affect the library?

GOLDEN RULES FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Eight Essential Tips for Success:

1. Be an active, informed, and responsible trustee.
2. Understand roles and responsibilities. The library director manages the library, the staff, and daily operations. The trustees support and evaluate the director.
3. Include the library director in all board meetings and library related issues.
4. When there is a majority vote by the board, accept it. Do not criticize it publicly.
5. Respect confidential information and keep it confidential.
6. Be the library's eyes and ears. Listen to the people in your community, communicate with your town officials, and be an active advocate for the library.
7. If a staff member or library user has a complaint, refer them to the library director. Do not try to handle problems on your own.
8. Acknowledge successes of the staff and library director. Be their champions.

Trustee Tip

HOW TO BECOME A VALUED BOARD MEMBER

- *Listen! Listen effectively to what other board members are saying. Listen and think before speaking. Listen and be open to considering compromise. Listen and reflect on advice from fellow board members. Listen and learn.*
- *Be supportive of all board decisions, even those you did not agree with and those made by previous boards. Be a team player after votes are taken. Keep closed session discussions confidential.*
- *Come to board meetings prepared.*
- *Have an open mind and intellectual curiosity.*
- *Be a representative of the people who elected you.*



DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee boards make general operating and administrative policies. The library director supervises the internal management, daily operation and procedures of the library. The board acts as an agent of public trust governing the library. The library director exercises professional judgment under the direction and the review of the board to implement the goals, objectives, and policies set by the board. The trustee board and the library director work together as partners.

Trustee responsibilities are generally divided into six major categories:



A governing board is legally responsible for administrative policy making in areas such as budget, personnel and contracts, as specified by state law and local ordinances.

Trustees, library personnel and government officials must clearly understand the role and duties of the board. Trustees and library staff will face conflict and ineffectiveness if that role is perceived differently by the various groups involved.

WHO DOES WHAT?

Cooperation is the key! Understanding the different responsibilities of the trustee board and the library director is essential to avoid confusion and potential problems. The board and the director should review this list together.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Works closely with municipal officials.
- Responsible for custody and management of the library
(unless otherwise provided by municipal charter or special legislation).

Library Director:

- Prepares all necessary reports.

Board and Director Together:

- Seek municipal legal counsel when needed.
 - Follow all local, state, and federal laws and regulations which affect public libraries.
-

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Hires and evaluates the director unless otherwise dictated by state or local laws.
- Adopts library policies and plans, and board bylaws and procedures.
- Approves and supports budget.
- Reviews reports; stays informed; represents the community.
- Notifies appropriate authorities of board vacancies.

Library Director:

- Is responsible for administration of library services, personnel and facilities.
- Prepares reports and other relevant documents.
- Keeps trustees informed of progress and problems.
- Researches and recommends policies.
- Provides assistance and direction to the board.
- Administers policies; interprets policies to staff and public.

Board and Director Together:

- Develop and review priorities for the library.
-

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Reviews director's budget request; makes recommendations and officially adopts budget.
- Actively supports and advocates for budget.
- Reports annually to municipal officials on trustee controlled funds.
- Keeps informed of the financial status, funding sources, and needs of the library.

Library Director:

- Prepares and develops the budget.
- Maintains complete and accurate records of finances and inventory.
- Keeps board apprised of library's financial situation.

Board and Director Together:

- Present and defend budget requests to municipal funding authorities.
 - Attend all budget hearings.
 - Seek additional sources of funding (grants, private, other).
-

STRATEGIC PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Approves strategic plan.

Library Director:

- Implements goals and objectives of approved plan.

Board and Director Together:

- Actively participate in strategic planning.
 - Involve community in the planning process.
 - Conduct community analysis and survey of library services.
 - Review and evaluate the plan.
-

HUMAN RESOURCES RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Hires and evaluates director unless otherwise dictated by state or local laws.
- Determines and advocates for optimal salary and benefits for employees.
- Adheres to personnel policies.
- Conducts annual review of board performance.

Library Director:

- Hires, supervises and evaluates staff.
- Recommends optimal salary and working conditions.

Board and Director Together:

- Observe all local, state, and federal laws that relate to current employment practices.
- Orient new trustees.

CONTINUING EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Creates and adopts a policy that demonstrates a commitment to the importance of continuing educations for all staff and trustees.

Library Director:

- Informs board and staff of continuing education needs and opportunities.

Board and Director Together:

- Provide and encourage ongoing learning opportunities for staff and trustees.
- Encourage and financially support membership and active participation in professional organizations.

Board Organization



BYLAWS

Every library board should have its own written set of bylaws: the framework, rules, and regulations covering the meetings and operation of the board. Bylaws should be drafted and revised as needed so as not to conflict with any local, state or federal laws or regulations. Be aware that some libraries do not have bylaws that are specific to the library: instead, they use the laws laid out in their municipal charter, act of special legislation, or original municipal articles of incorporation. Trustees should each have their own copy of all the bylaws and rules which govern their library. It is each trustee's responsibility to read and familiarize themselves with the library's governing documents.

Bylaws typically include:

- ☐ Name of the organization
- ☐ Purpose and objective
- ☐ Constituency served
- ☐ Method of board and officer selection, duties, appointments, and term
- ☐ Time, place, and responsibility for regular meeting
- ☐ Method for calling special meetings
- ☐ What constitutes a quorum
- ☐ Appointment and duties of any standing committees or ad hoc committees
- ☐ Required reports and yearly timetables
- ☐ Provision for amending the bylaws
- ☐ Meeting attendance requirements
- ☐ Removal/replacement of trustees
- ☐ Provision for filling vacancies

Sample bylaws are available on the MBLC's Trustee Resource Guide:

<http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees/home>

TYPES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Most public libraries have a governing board of trustees whose selection is determined by state law, municipal articles of incorporation or regulations. Corporation and association libraries are the exceptions.

There are three types of governance existing in Massachusetts public libraries:

Association/Corporation Libraries are established as nonprofit corporations, often in connection with a will, deed, or bequest, to provide free library services to the public.

Governance is set out in the original instrument of articles of incorporation. These libraries may receive state, local, and private funding. In many cases some funding is also derived from the original endowment.

City Libraries may be formed by a city on its own initiative. Libraries are governed as specified in the charter of the municipality or by special acts of the state legislature. Funding is provided primarily through state and local appropriations.

Town Libraries may be established by resolution of the town governing body. They are typically governed by an elected board of trustees whose number is divisible by three, though special acts such as charter changes may allow for the appointment of trustees. Funding is provided primarily through local and state appropriations.



DUTIES OF OFFICERS

All boards of trustees recognize the need for officers with clearly defined duties and powers for each office, written into the bylaws and well understood by everyone.

MGL ch. 78, sec. 10 mandates that library boards annually select a chairperson and a secretary. Board position descriptions can and should be designed to meet the specific needs of the individual library. Many small boards only have a chair and a secretary, with all other duties shared among all board members. Following are typical responsibilities of key board officers.

Chairperson/ President

- ☐ Plans and presides over board meetings. Works with the library director to prepare the agenda and distributes the agenda in advance. Plans and conducts meetings to assure productive sessions which steadily move the board toward its internal goals and objectives as well as the library goals and objectives. A chairperson's knowledge of, and commitment to, parliamentary procedure, plus an understanding of group dynamics, can make the difference between a meeting which keeps the discussion focused on the major action issues to be considered, or a rambling, semi-social session.
- ☐ Keeps the board operating effectively, while working well with all board members and other key contacts.
- ☐ Works closely and cooperatively with the library director.
- ☐ Ensures that all board members contribute to the board and at board discussions. Never loses sight of the fact that the chairperson is only one member of the board, not empowered alone to set policy for the board or the library.
- ☐ Is the chief spokesperson representing the discussions and decisions of the board both orally and in correspondence. When speaking of board action, always credits the full board.

- ☐ Appoints committees for specific assignments. Designates (from the board) committee chairs who have commitment and ability to lead a committee to reach the board's assigned objective within the assigned time, and looks for potential committee members (from within or outside of the board) who may have special expertise. Monitors the progress of the committee and provides help if needed, without dominating. May serve as ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.
- ☐ Serves as diplomatic troubleshooter to identify potential problems and issues which require advance board study and action.

Some boards limit the chairperson's term of office to one year, to facilitate rotation of leadership responsibilities. This can create a stronger board and lessen the potential for one person to dominate the board.

Secretary

- ☐ It is important for the secretary to have a general knowledge of the board's statutory authority, bylaws and operating policies as well as parliamentary procedure. The secretary should understand that minutes of a public body must be a clear, concise, factual record for possible later reference or legal evidence showing what specific action was taken, why it was taken, when and by whom.
- ☐ Issues and posts for public notice advance agendas of meetings following specific legal requirements for open meetings.
- ☐ Prepares the official board minutes and keeps on public file.
- ☐ Keeps member attendance record.
- ☐ Presides at meetings in absence of chairperson and vice-chairperson.
- ☐ Handles all official correspondence on behalf of the board.

The library director should be an active participant at board meetings and it is thus not advisable that they serve as board secretary. The board may make secretary to the board a part of a staff person's job description. The job description change should be mutually agreed to in advance and in writing precisely stating which responsibilities will be, and which will not be, assumed by the staff member.

Vice Chairperson/ Vice President

- ☐ Presides in the absence of the chairperson or whenever the chairperson temporarily vacates the position. Automatically becomes the chairperson in the event of resignation or death of the chairperson, unless otherwise provided in the bylaws.

Treasurer

Duties vary but may include:

- ☐ Understands financial accounting.
- ☐ Serves as chairperson of the board finance committee.
- ☐ Assists the library director in preparing the annual budget and presenting the budget to the board for approval, and in making appropriate financial reports available to the board on a timely basis.
- ☐ May be signatory in warrants sent to town for expenses.
- ☐ Reviews the annual audit and answers board members' questions about the audit.

Trustee Tip

The treasurer's role varies from library to library. Bylaws should outline the specific job duties. Board members of association/corporation libraries will have more responsibilities as the organization must file federal and state tax returns and reports.

EFFECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

Effective boards hold effective meetings, and effective meetings are important not only for the sake of transparency and maintaining good relations with the community, but also to ensure efficient and effective decision-making on the part of the board. It is the responsibility of the board chair or president to ensure that meetings are run effectively. Establishing ground rules as a board may help meetings to run more smoothly.

Blueprints for Board Meetings

- ☐ Post notices of all meetings (including committee meetings) at least two business days in advance. Check with your Town Clerk for specific municipal requirements for meetings.
- ☐ Set meeting dates, times and places six to twelve months in advance, in coordination with the library director, who attends all board meetings and provides a report to the board. Some boards have a set schedule of board meetings included in their bylaws.
- ☐ Other library staff may be invited to attend meetings to provide reports. The communication between the board of trustees and staff members can reward the library organization with an increased level of cooperation and understanding.
- ☐ Distribute the agenda and related materials several days in advance.
- ☐ Adopt and follow a procedural guide, such as *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. (See "Parliamentary Know-How" in Appendix 2A.)
- ☐ Be prepared and productive. Adhere to the agenda.
- ☐ Distribute draft minutes to board members and the director.
- ☐ Keep and make available meeting minutes (in accordance with open meeting and public records laws). Some towns require a copy at town clerk's office.
- ☐ Rotate leadership responsibilities to create a stronger board.
- ☐ Understand and follow all aspects of Open Meeting Law.
(See chapter 3 of the *Handbook* for a discussion of Open Meeting Law.)

It is vital that all trustees attend all board meetings. If you must miss one, inform the chairperson and the director in advance.

BEFORE MEETINGS THE BOARD CHAIR SHOULD:

Prepare the agenda in advance in consultation with library director.

A sample agenda is included in Appendix 2B.

Allow adequate time for items listed.

Distribute the agenda and related reports several days in advance.

Publish or post public notice of meetings in the manner required by the Open Meeting Law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, sections 18-25) and local regulations.

This requirement may not apply to association or corporation libraries.

Trustee Tip

A well-run business meeting depends on a carefully planned agenda. Items of business must be listed on the meeting notice. The library director's report may be submitted in advance to save meeting time.

DURING MEETINGS:

Follow the agenda and established order of business as stated in the bylaws.

Focus on the issues at hand.

It is the responsibility of the chair to keep discussion on track.

AFTER MEETINGS:

Send draft minutes to all board members.

Follow-up on action items.

Begin planning for next meeting.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of meetings are considered public records, and must be kept and made available in accordance with the Public Records Law (MGL ch. 66) and the Open Meeting Law. Minutes of open sessions must be made available upon request within 10 days, whether they are in draft or final approved form. Many boards now post meeting minutes on the library's website. As of 2017, the Public Records Law requires that municipalities designate a Records Access Officer (RAO) to handle requests for public records. Contact your town clerk for more information on specific municipal requirements regarding meeting minutes. A duplicate copy of meeting minutes may be kept off site in case of a disaster, such as a fire or flood, which might damage or destroy the original documents. Individual board members should retain current minutes in their trustee manuals.

Guidelines for recording minutes:

- ☐ Be specific
- ☐ Include the date, time and place of the meeting
- ☐ Note members present and/or absent, and any member(s) who participated remotely and the legal reason for their remote participation
- ☐ Follow the agenda: items discussed, announcements and reports
- ☐ Be sure that all motions are recorded, as well as the name of the person making the motion and that of the person seconding the motion
- ☐ Record decisions/actions/assignments: what, when, who, number of votes if appropriate; note members for or against a decision
- ☐ Describe in general the meeting's content
- ☐ Include signature of person who recorded minutes
- ☐ See the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law Guide for guidance on minutes of executive (closed) sessions

Remember that recorded minutes of each board meeting constitute a public archival record of the institution's history. These minutes document the actual business of the library and will be kept for posterity. Therefore, great care should be made to insure that the minutes accurately reflect the board's proceedings and that all errors are corrected. Consider the overall tone of the minutes: while it is not necessary to write in excessive formality, neither should the tone convey a casualness that belies the serious nature of the board's duties and responsibilities.

Sample meeting minutes are included in Appendix 2C.

BOARD COMMITTEES

A great deal of change can be discussed and formulated in committee and then forwarded to the full board for consideration and action or approval. Board committees are advisory bodies that can make recommendations to the entire board. The board's bylaws may outline committee structure. There are usually two types of committees in a library board structure. The first is standing (permanent) committees, which deal with the ongoing and long range plans of the board. The other type is ad hoc committees: short-term committees formed as needed for specific tasks or objectives. Sometimes, instead of forming an ad hoc committee, the board will feel that some of its business is close enough to the purpose of the standing committee that the committee can form a sub-committee. The number of committees will vary depending on the size of the board, but no board is too small for committee work. Some committees may include non-Board members. Note that, in general, board committees are subject to the Open Meeting Law. Some examples of board committees are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Finance | ☐ Building and Grounds |
| ☐ Policy | ☐ Personnel |
| ☐ Nominating/Board Development | ☐ Development/Fundraising |

Trustee Tip

Committees issue recommendations to the board but do not make the decisions. Written committee reports distributed before the board meetings are the most effective vehicle for communicating the committee's stance. All committees should be aware of and follow open meeting law.

BOARD CALENDAR

An invaluable tool for good planning is a comprehensive and regularly updated calendar of significant events, including but not limited to board meetings. The Director should develop one calendar for the board and another for themselves in support of the trustees' calendar. Each standing committee and subcommittee should develop its own calendar to keep on track with its assigned duties. (See Sample Board Calendar in Appendix 2D.)

EVALUATION: KEEPING AN EYE ON PROGRESS

Evaluation is a broad area of responsibility inherent in all trustee duties, particularly in planning and policy making. Evaluation is the continuous process of looking at all phases of library operation to assure the machinery is running well. Most boards lack a formal method of systematic evaluation, instead reacting to instinct, public opinion, staff pressures, or building conditions. In effect, a decision is made to change, shift, retract, or hire without researching the facts or following the library director's recommendations.

Boards can be more effective if their decision making is based upon systematic annual evaluations as well as continuous informal monitoring of library progress. Areas for annual evaluations should include the following:

- 1) Overall progress of the library program and planning
- 2) Performance of the director
- 3) Self-evaluation of the board's effectiveness
(the board as a whole and as individuals)

Evaluating the Library

Trustees should work with the library director and staff to develop evaluation criteria, form, and process to monitor the level of library services. Evaluation must be part of the library's strategic planning. Please refer to chapter 5 of this *Handbook* for a fuller discussion of planning. You might develop a checklist of evaluative questions divided into several major areas:

- Trustees
- Materials and Collections
- Budget and Funding
- Buildings
- Staffing Levels and Accomplishments
- Administration
- Public Services
- Community Relations and Public Image

Evaluating the Director

Please refer to chapter 6 of this *Handbook* for an in depth discussion of the evaluation of the director.

Board of Trustees: Self-Evaluation

Just as evaluating the library director's performance is an important and necessary function of every library board, each trustee and the board as a whole should take some time for self-reflection to evaluate their own performance. How well does the board function as a whole? How well do you, as an individual trustee, fulfill your responsibilities? Sample Board report cards to guide the board in its self-evaluation process are included in the Appendix 2E; but the board may adopt its own system or adapt from other sources. For a more thorough look at board self-evaluation, see United for Libraries' *A Library Board's Practical Guide To Board Self Evaluation*.

Legal Responsibilities

TRUSTEES AND THE LAW

The public library is a municipal asset which its board members hold in trust for the public. As a library trustee, you have been entrusted with the welfare of an important community institution capable of serving everyone in your community. As guardians of the public trust, a trustee's first loyalty is to the library and the community it serves. All public library trustees must recognize and accept their legal position as public officers and governing agents of the library. Library trustees have legal and fiduciary obligations to ensure that all public libraries provide the highest quality of library service. If library trustees violate their trust or fiduciary duty, they may be subject to legal consequences. The duties and responsibilities of trusteeship attach automatically by the affirmative act of the trustee in acceptance of the public office.

Throughout this *Handbook*, specific laws and regulations are cited under many sections. Each area of trustee responsibility requires a wide range of collective knowledge and experience. Trustees need to be aware of the relevant legal requirements, strive to act within the laws, and seek expert assistance as appropriate. When legal issues arise, the trustee board should seek guidance from Town Counsel, as appropriate, or consult with an attorney familiar with laws applicable to libraries.

Chapter 1 of this *Handbook* under the section Who Does What? delineates the differing roles of trustees and the library director regarding the legal responsibilities for care of the library. Trustees should rely heavily on their director's expertise and knowledge of local, state, and federal laws which affect the library. However, trustees hold a higher responsibility to the public to assure that all policies and practices conform with all legal requirements, whether local, state, or federal.

GENERAL DUTIES OF PUBLIC OFFICERS:

- ☐ Understand and obey federal, state, county and local laws
- ☐ Accept office, including all its powers and obligations
- ☐ Diligence in the job
- ☐ Choice of subordinates
- ☐ Management of property for constituency
- ☐ Fiduciary responsibility

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS- CHAPTER 78

Chapter 78 of the Massachusetts General Laws is the statutory authority for public libraries in Massachusetts. All trustees should read through Chapter 78 and become familiar with its provisions and scope of authority. Certain provisions of the law, especially sections 7 through 13, apply directly to trustees' and librarians' powers and responsibilities. The full text of Chapter 78 is available here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter78>.

Key sections of Chapter 78

SECTION 7 allows for the **establishment of public libraries** by cities or towns and describes the requirements for **public record keeping**. It states: "That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record..." It is important for trustees to know what constitutes a public record, to develop a policy for the library which conforms with the law, and to understand and enforce such policy. The Secretary of the Commonwealth has produced a helpful *Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law* (<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/prepdf/guide.pdf>).

SECTION 8 addresses **serving non-residents**, and should be consulted if needed in conjunction with the State Aid to Public Libraries program regulations. (See chapter 7 of this *Handbook* for a description of the State Aid program.)

SECTION 10 describes the ***process by which trustees are selected***, when no overriding governance structure such as a town or city charter or other special legislation is in place, and also mandates that the board designate a chairperson and a secretary annually.

SECTION 11 states “The board shall have the custody and management of the library and reading room and of all property owned by the town relating thereto.” This section is the only provision in the law which explicitly states the ***trustees’ powers and duties***.

SECTION 12 mandates that the library board make an ***annual report*** to the town.

SECTION 33 states that each library must have a ***written policy for the selection of library materials and the use of materials*** and facilities. (See chapter 4 of this *Handbook* for a discussion of policies.)

SECTION 34 addresses ***employment contracts for library employees***.

A note about Corporation/Association Libraries: Sections 1 and 13 of Chapter 78 specifically address association and corporation libraries, giving them more autonomy and self-governance than town libraries. It is important for all library boards to know the history of their library, and how Chapter 78 and other state laws apply to the library based on its founding documents.

TOWN AND CITY CHARTERS and HOME RULE PETITIONS

Some Massachusetts municipalities are governed by special legislation or a charter, components of which may or may not relate directly to the library. It is critical for trustees to know if their municipality has such a charter or has plans to implement one, and if so, how its provisions affect their library. While trustees have traditionally looked to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78 to delineate the rights and responsibilities of trustees to exert “custody and management” over public libraries, a local charter will take precedence over Massachusetts General Laws.

If your community is planning a charter change or adoption, make sure that at least one trustee becomes familiar with the charter reform process, and is informed every step of the way about proposed changes. A proactive board is a well-informed board which serves as a partner in the change process. It is much easier to keep unfortunate changes out of the charter than to try to fix problems after the fact. The following are issues which may not constitute the main thrust of the changes to the charter, but may somehow “sneak” in if trustees don’t pay careful attention:

- ☐ Who will the director report to? In some towns, the town administrator has the authority to appoint department heads. Make sure that the power of the library board is not eroded; in other words, make sure it is spelled out in the charter that the board of trustees governs the library and appoints the director.
- ☐ Will the library be grouped with other town departments for purposes of efficiency? The library could lose its status as a separate department, becoming combined with other departments which do not share common missions or organizational/operational methods.
- ☐ Will all human resource functions be centralized? Under whose control? Trustees should help develop a municipal plan for the transfer of employees between departments. Make sure the library director has responsibility for the hiring, dismissal, and supervision of library personnel.
- ☐ Any charter proposal should contain provisions specifying the duties and powers of the board of trustees. Make sure the board has control of the library’s budget, personnel issues, and policy making authority.
- ☐ Another issue that might be introduced is the number and kind of trustees. Monitor for proposals that would change the way trustees are elected or appointed. Who has the authority to appoint trustees? Will there be ex-officio trustees (those appointed by virtue of their office, i.e. selectmen and clergy) who may change the constitution of the library board?

If your municipality is considering a charter or home rule change, it is imperative for your board to be involved and aware of the seriousness of the issues at stake. If charter reform, home rule petition or other effort is underway to revamp municipal power and decision-making, the library should get involved from the start to advocate for wording which exempts the library from being under the control of another municipal department or officer.

Trustee Tip

Successful boards of trustees know what's happening in their communities and are active players in the local political process. Remember that it is your responsibility as a trustee to advocate for the best possible library services and practices. Library boards that stay active and involved in community affairs yearround are better positioned to make their case for the library than boards that wait until "crunch time" to get involved.

OPEN MEETING LAW

Public bodies, which generally include public library trustee boards, are required to comply with the Open Meeting Law (MGL ch. 30A, sec. 18-25), as enforced by the state Attorney General's office. As noted in the AG's *Open Meeting Law Guide*, *"The purpose of the Open Meeting Law is to ensure transparency in the deliberations on which public policy is based. Because the democratic process depends on the public having knowledge about the considerations underlying governmental action, the Open Meeting Law requires, with some exceptions, that meetings of public bodies be open to the public."*

All library trustees should be familiar with the Open Meeting Law, which mandates meeting notices be posted prior to meetings of public boards, requires records or "minutes" of meetings to be kept, and delineates certain instances in which portions of meetings may be closed to the public. The Attorney General's office has some helpful resources on their website, including the extremely useful *Open Meeting Law Guide*, at <http://www.mass.gov/ago/government-resources/open-meeting-law/>.

Questions concerning the Open Meeting Law should be directed to the local Town Clerk or the Attorney General's Division of Open Government.

Certain library boards, such as boards of some association libraries that are not municipal departments, *may* not be considered public bodies under the Open Meeting Law. If such a board is uncertain of whether it must comply with Open Meeting Law, the board should contact the Attorney General's office directly for a determination. Some association/corporation libraries may be required to follow Open Meeting Law under agreement with the municipality that they serve. It is strongly recommended that *all* library boards follow the tenets of the Open Meeting Law, even if they are not required to by law. A board that practices openness and transparency will be better able to maintain a good relationship with the municipality and seek support from its community.

ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW

All public library trustees who are elected by the community or appointed to their board by town/city officials are considered municipal employees under MGL ch. 268A, and are subject to the State's Conflict of Interest law. Trustees should receive a summary of the law annually, and every other year must complete a mandatory online training.

The State Ethics Commission has many helpful training materials on their website (<http://www.mass.gov/ethics/>), including a *Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law* for Municipal Employees, and *Explanations of the Law* specifically for Public Library Employees, including trustees. Should issues such as conflicts of interest, disagreements regarding employment practices, harassment, or public dissatisfaction with the library arise, trustees and staff members may choose to contact the State Ethics Commission at (617) 371-9500. The Commission also offers guidance through an Attorney of the Day to individuals who may be facing a conflict of interest.

Trustee boards should develop and abide by an ethics/Conflict of Interest policy, as conflicts will arise. This is especially true for association and corporation libraries, whose board members are self-perpetuating and may not otherwise be bound by the Conflict of Interest law. A sample conflict of interest policy can be found at <http://www.ala.org/united/trustees/policies>.

Trustees should be aware that the library profession has its own guidelines for ethical behavior (see ***Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*** in Appendix 1B). Additionally, United for Libraries, the American Library Association division for Trustees and Friends, has an official *Public Library Trustees Ethics Statement*: <http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/trustees/orgtools/Ethics%20Statement.pdf>

LIABILITY

There is a certain amount of potential liability involved with being a library trustee. It is advisable to discuss this matter at library board meetings and with municipal officials to make sure that you are adequately insured. While public officials may be immune to individual liability for actions performed in good faith within the scope of their office, personal liability may be possible for things such as public records and open meeting law violations, injuries or damages due to carelessness, and ethics violations.

It is important for trustees to have an understanding of the library's liability in case of emergencies and accidental injury. Inquire from the local municipality about liability insurance coverage for directors, trustees, volunteers, and patrons of the library. The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) is an excellent source of information regarding municipal policies and practices. You can contact them at (617) 426-7272 or view their website at <http://www.mma.org>. If you have any questions or concerns about the library's liability, consult your local municipal counsel.

Library boards must also avoid taking actions that violate rights guaranteed by the federal constitution of federal law. Special care must be exercised in actions that concern discrimination laws, employment laws, and First Amendment rights. Before taking any actions that may jeopardize these rights, it is strongly recommended that the board seek the advice of an attorney.

MASSACHUSETTS LAWS PERTAINING TO LIBRARIES

It is advisable for trustees and the library director to acquire a familiarity with local, state and federal laws which may have an impact on library management by consulting with local municipal officials and other authorities.

Although there are many Massachusetts laws which could apply to library management, the following is a selective list of Massachusetts laws which have a broad impact on the board of trustees and which are particularly relevant to the general administration of Massachusetts public libraries. Full text of Massachusetts General Laws may be accessed online at <http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/Search>.

A Selective List of Massachusetts Laws with Relevance to Libraries:

- **Accessibility of Public Buildings by Handicapped Persons** (ch.22 §13A)
- **Anti-Discrimination Law** (ch.151B)
- **Charitable Corporations** (ch.180 §§1-11C, 26-26B)
- **Confidentiality of Library Records** (ch.78 §7 ; ch.4 §7(26) ; ch.66 §10)
- **Conflict of Interest** (ch.268A §§17-25)
- **Crimes in/against libraries:**
 - Destruction or Mutilation of library Materials (ch.266 §§99, 100)
 - Theft of Library Materials (ch.266 §§99, 99A)
 - Disturbance of Libraries (ch.272 §41)
 - Harmful to Minors Act (ch.272 §§28, 31)
- **Funds:**
 - General Receipt of Funds (ch.44 §53)
 - Receipt of Grants or Gifts (ch.44 §53A)
 - Replacement Funds (for lost or damaged materials) (ch.44 §53)
 - Revolving Funds (ch.44 §53E1/2)
 - Trust Funds (ch.44 §§54, 55B)

- 
- ❑ **Labor Relations: Public Employees** (ch.150E)
 - ❑ **Liability** (ch.258)
 - ❑ **Public Libraries:**
 - ❑ Establishment of Free Public Libraries (ch.78 §§1, 7-13)
 - ❑ Trustees of Town Libraries (ch.78 §§10-13)
 - ❑ Association/Corporation Libraries (ch.78 §§1, 13)
 - ❑ Board of Library Commissioners (ch.78 §§14-15, 19)
 - ❑ State Aid to Cities and Towns for Free Public Libraries (ch.78 §§19A,B)
 - ❑ Joint Libraries (ch.78 §11)
 - ❑ Written Policy for Selection of Materials (ch.78 §33)
 - ❑ Written Employment Contracts with Library Directors (ch.78 §34)
 - ❑ **Open Meeting Law** (ch.30A §§18-25)
 - ❑ **Public Records** (ch.66 §§1-18)

Policy Making

WHAT IS POLICY?

Briefly stated, policy is:

- ☐ A broadly stated guideline for actions and decisions
- ☐ Any governing document which describes a principle or plan
- ☐ A general statement for supporting library operations, rules, regulations, and use
- ☐ The basis for procedures, but not a detailed course of action
- ☐ A statement in accordance with the purpose and legal structure of the library

Policy making is one of the board's most important functions. The board establishes written policies to govern and guide all phases of library operation. Library policies should evolve to reflect the library's mission/vision statement(s), current strategic plan, and/or long-range goals. Policy statements must reflect local conditions and needs, and express a true commitment to service and leadership. Some policies may be controversial. Board members should be aware of policy rationale or revisions of policy that could generate public inquiry, in order to respond to questions from the community. Trustees may be called upon to defend or interpret policies to the public or governing officials.

Every trustee should have a copy of the library's 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.

Benefits of Policy:

- ☐ Supports the library's overall plans, goals and objectives
- ☐ Guides library director and staff in implementation of board decisions
- ☐ Provides direction and consistency in library operations and day-to-day service to community
- ☐ Positions board to handle problems more effectively
- ☐ Aims to protect the rights and fair treatment of all patrons and staff members

Policies vs. Procedures

It is important to note the distinction between policies and procedures. A *policy* makes clear how your library will conduct itself in relation to providing a service or responding to requests. Policies are the managing principles that guide decisions. A *procedure* spells out the specific steps (who, what, when, and how) the library will take to carry out a service and respond to requests. While policies are created and approved by the board, procedures are generally set by the library director and/or staff.

LIBRARY POLICY MANUAL

To be effectively implemented, all policies should be recorded, compiled and organized for ready access in a policy manual. 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 an established policy can then refer to the appropriate minutes and reports to learn what alternatives were considered and why the specific policy option was adopted.

Copies of the policy manual should be housed in the library, and staff should be encouraged to review them periodically. The director should instruct personnel in the rationale of policies, so that staff members understand the basis for procedures and board decisions. Key policies should be publicly posted for library users, within the library and on the library's website, and all policies should be available to library users by request.

What Should You Do If Your Library Does Not Have A Policy Manual?

Propose at the next board meeting that someone, for example the library director and a trustee, review all of the board minutes and list all board decisions (with the date of adoption) and categorize them into topical headings. Decisions constitute the basis for policy and are the board's policy even if not so called. Once a comprehensive listing is compiled, the appropriate committees of the board should review the statements collected and determine if each should stand alone or be worked into a larger policy on the same topic.

POLICY MAINTENANCE

Annually, policies should be reviewed if not in total, at least on a rotating basis; some boards have found it helpful to review one policy each month. Reviewing policies on a routine basis helps to assure that policies stay current and relevant. An outdated policy may be just as problematic as no policy at all. For example, does your library have a policy that addresses VHS tapes but not one that addresses use of library wireless internet access? Ideally policy revisions and creation of new policies should be proactive rather than reactive.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Policy development and decisions regarding policy impact all aspects of the library. Trustees should allow adequate time for comprehensive policy creation, assessment, and revision. Strong, well-developed policies help guide library staff and trustees in daily operations and in crisis situations. While trustees have the legal responsibility and authority to make policy, best practices indicate that the decision process works best when the library director and other staff are involved in researching options, preparing draft policies and presenting them for board consideration.

Policy Development Process Includes:

- ☐ A statement of the condition or problem, past or present, which requires policy consideration
- ☐ A statement telling how any policy will contribute to the accomplishment of the library's goals and objectives
- ☐ A statement of all existing policies related to or affected by the policy decision
- ☐ A listing of policy options available, with an analysis of:
 - ☐ Long and short range effects of enacting the new policy
 - ☐ Potential side effects, positive or negative, of passing each policy
 - ☐ Relevant legal ramifications
 - ☐ Cost in terms of library resources: staff, budget, collection and buildings
- ☐ A recommendation accompanied by a summary of the corresponding rationale for changes in related policies
- ☐ Draft of concisely worded proposed policy
- ☐ Review by municipal counsel, if appropriate

When creating and revising policies, keep in mind that they should be legally defensible; that is, they must be able to stand up in a court of law, in the event that a policy should be challenged. A legally defensible policy must: comply with local, state and federal laws; be consistent with the library's mission and goals; and be clear, understandable and reasonable. Once policies have been established, they must be publicly available, and applied equally to all without discrimination.



KEY POLICY AREAS

Some policies govern service to the community. Other policies govern the day-to-day management of the library. Below is a list of key policy areas. Local needs and situations will determine the content and details of the policy manual. The Massachusetts Library System maintains a Policy Collection at <http://guides.masslibsystem.org/mapolicycollection>. Consult this Policy Collection for samples of policies that may be appropriate for your library.

PUBLIC SERVICE POLICIES reflect the library services and resources available to the community and should be available to the public online and/or in print. Individual policies can include: eligibility for use/library card, circulation, technology and internet use, patron behavior, meeting rooms, etc.

TRUSTEE BOARD POLICIES are largely covered in the board's bylaws and concern the manner in which the board should operate as well as the responsibilities of trustees individually and collectively. Additional board policies that may not be covered in the bylaws might include travel and other expenses; membership and participation in professional library organizations; library funds, investments and other financial matters; and an ethics policy.

VOLUNTEERS POLICIES cover the roles, responsibilities and supervision of library volunteers.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES may include organization authority and responsibility, financial and records management, and others. In many cases, these may be governed by the municipality and may not come under the purview of the Board of Trustees.

FACILITIES POLICIES direct the maintenance and use of the library building, grounds, and physical assets. Individual policies can include emergency plans (snow days, power loss, accidents), disaster plans, and use of equipment.

MEETING ROOM POLICY is imperative if the library has a meeting room. This policy covers who may use the room, for what purposes, and under what circumstances. A thorough and clear meeting room use policy is the best way to prevent misuse of the space and avoid the negative publicity that can arise from a group being denied use of the meeting room without a sound policy backing such a decision.

PERSONNEL POLICIES must comply with all pertinent state requirements and the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 which prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in any term, condition or privilege of employment. Any matter which is set by the local municipality is NOT policy and thus not included here. Personnel policies may include:

- ☐ Training and continuing education
- ☐ Professional affiliations
- ☐ Attendance at professional meetings
- ☐ Use of substitute staff

Note: While most libraries are covered under the personnel policies of their municipalities, association/corporation libraries may, in some cases, set their own personnel policies.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT / MATERIALS POLICIES are the only category of policy mandated for public libraries by state law. Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, section 33, requires each library's board of trustees to establish a written policy for the selection of library materials and the use of materials and facilities in accordance with standards adopted by the American Library Association. The law also states that no employee shall be dismissed for the selection of library materials when the selection is made in good faith and in accordance with policy.

Although the law only mandates that each library have a selection policy, a comprehensive collection development policy should address the following: scope and emphasis of the collection, responsibility for selection, collection maintenance, withdrawal and disposal of materials, donated materials, and reconsideration of materials, etc.

GIFTS AND SPECIAL MATERIALS POLICIES should cover conditions of acceptance, retention, and administration (acknowledgment, recognition, record keeping) of a wide variety of gifted or donated materials, such as: property, physical objects, historical or religious materials, special collections, and writings of local authors, as well as monetary gifts and gifts for memorial purposes.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Collection development and materials policies are guided by the principles of intellectual freedom. These stem from the First Amendment of the Constitution, which affirms a citizen's right to hold individual beliefs and to express them. Freedom of speech and freedom of the press also apply to its counterpart, the right to unrestricted access to the expressions and beliefs of others. These concepts are expressed and supported by the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* (see Appendix 4A), which all library boards should adopt. More information is available through the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom: <http://www.ala.org/offices/oif>.

The Role of The Public Library Trustees

Public libraries play a unique role in the preservation of democracy by providing an open, non-judgmental institution where individuals can pursue their interests and gain an understanding of diverse opinions. Trustees play an essential role in safeguarding the intellectual liberty of the public, and they must recognize, understand, and support freedom of access. The test of a trustee's commitment comes when they are called upon to allow and defend the expression of ideas that may be in opposition to personal beliefs of right or wrong.

Censorship campaigns have been waged against ideas and works throughout history for many different reasons: politics, sex, religion, science, civil rights, and race. History has often shown that what is censored at one time or by one person may be a classic in another time or for another person. Trustees have an obligation to assure that the public library provides readers with a variety of materials representing a continuum of viewpoints: liberal, conservative and "middle of the road", regardless of special interest pressure groups.

Be Prepared

The politically astute board and library director should prepare comprehensive collection development and public service policies to guide the selection of materials and address potential censorship attempts. Trustees must recognize the right of citizens to question any board actions and be willing to listen and to explain the policies of the library. The board should be open and concerned without accommodating censorship demands.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

Dealing With Concerns about Library Resources

As with any public service, libraries receive complaints and expressions of concern. One of the librarian's responsibilities is to handle these complaints in a respectful and fair manner. The complaints that librarians often worry about the most are those dealing with library resources or free access policies. The key to successfully handling these complaints is to be sure the library staff and the governing authorities are all knowledgeable about the library's policies, complaint procedures and implementation.

As normal operating procedure each library should:

Maintain a materials selection policy. It should be in written form and approved by the appropriate governing authority. It should apply to all library materials equally.

Maintain a library service policy. This should cover registration policies, programming and services in the library that involve access issues.

Maintain a clearly defined process for handling complaints. The complaint must be filed in writing and the complainant must be identified before action is taken. A decision should be deferred until the board has had the opportunity to fully consider possible actions. The process should be followed, whether the complaint originates internally or externally. (A sample form is included in Appendix 4B.)

Maintain familiarity with any local municipal and state legislation pertaining to intellectual freedom and First Amendment rights.

Following these practices will not preclude receiving complaints, but should provide a base from which to operate when concerns are expressed. When a complaint is made, follow one or more of the steps listed below:

1. Listen calmly and courteously to the complaint. Remember the person has a right to express a concern. In the event the person is not satisfied, advise the complainant of the library policy and procedures for handling statements of concern. If a person chooses to fill out a form about their concern, make sure a prompt written reply related to the concern is sent.

2. It is essential to notify the administration and the library board of the complaint. Present full, written information giving the nature of the complaint and identifying the source.
3. When appropriate, seek the support of the local media. Freedom to read and freedom of the press go hand in hand.
4. When appropriate, inform local civic organizations of the facts and enlist their support. Meet negative pressure with positive pressure.
5. Assert the principles of the *ALA Library Bill of Rights* as a professional responsibility. Laws governing obscenity, subversive material, and other questionable matter are subject to interpretation by courts. Library materials found to meet the standards set in the materials selection policy should not be removed from public access until after an adversary hearing resulting in a final judicial determination.
6. Contact the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom and the Massachusetts Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee to inform them of the complaint and to enlist their support and the assistance of other agencies.

The principles and procedures discussed above apply to all kinds of resource-related complaints or attempts to censor and are supported by groups such as the National Education Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the American Library Association. While the practices provide positive means for preparing for and processing complaints, they serve the more general purpose of supporting the *ALA Library Bill of Rights*, particularly Article III which states: "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

Support and Information Sources

Sample policies and guidelines for dealing with complaints are available through the Massachusetts Library System, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, and the American Library Association Office for Intellectual Freedom. Collection development policies often address challenges to and reconsideration of library materials. (See the Massachusetts Library System's policy collection at <http://guides.masslibsystem.org/mapolicycollection> for samples). ALA also has resources and support to deal with challenges to libraries, available at <http://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport>.

Planning

Four Essential Areas of Planning for Public Libraries

- **Strategic Planning**--Trustees, library director with input from staff, and community representatives decide how best to move the library forward based on the community's needs. Includes articulated goals, objectives and activities.
- **Technology Planning**--Trustees work to secure adequate funding to ensure that the library can provide access to appropriate and current technologies; and support the director's efforts to keep staff current in technology skills.
- **Disaster Planning**--Trustees support the library director and staff in creating guidelines/ documents that address two areas: how the library will support the community in an emergency and how the library will handle an emergency involving the building.
- **Facilities Planning**--Trustees, library director, special committee and others review the current facility to determine if it meets current and future needs of the community. If a new facility is needed, a process outlined by the MBLC is followed that assists with determining and articulating the need.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Why Does a Library Need a Strategic Plan?

Because analyzing current and future needs and trends is essential to the very existence of public libraries. Planning answers the question: *What is the role of the library in the community?*

Learning what the community wants from its library and determining how best to provide it is a shared role of library directors and trustees that includes involvement from the staff and the community of stakeholders, residents and non-residents, library users and non-users.

Strategic planning (sometimes called “long range planning”) is important because it:

- ☐ Gives a clear sense of purpose
- ☐ Provides goals, objectives and actions to work towards
- ☐ Allows the library to develop the budget as it relates to the plan
- ☐ Helps the library gain recognition, funding and staffing when goals are accomplished
- ☐ Provides an opportunity for measurable evaluation and assessment
- ☐ Allows the library to apply for grants administered by the MBLC

Planning answers five basic questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to go based on our community’s needs?
3. How do we get there?
4. What timetable will move us most effectively?
5. How can progress be measured?



MBLC REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANS

In order to apply for a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) or a Massachusetts Public Library Construction Grant — both of which are administered by the MBLC — libraries are required to have completed a planning process and have a current written plan (referred to as either a Long Range or Strategic Plan) on file at the MBLC.

Deadlines for eligibility in an upcoming MBLC grant round:

- ☐ Strategic Plans are due by **October 1** (if a current one is not already on file).
- ☐ Action plans must be submitted *annually* by **December 1**.

While plans are not required by the MBLC except as a prerequisite for grants (i.e., they are not a requirement for the State Aid certification), all public libraries should consider strategic planning for the reasons listed above.

Required Planning Components

MBLC looks for the following elements in long range plans that are submitted for eligibility in the grant programs:

A. Mission and Vision Statements:

A **Mission Statement** is a concise declaration of the purpose of the library. It explains your reason for existence, what you do (major services) and for whom (target population).

A **Vision Statement** is a brief, inspiring declaration of what you want your library to be. It is created by a consensus of library stakeholders who should be able to remember, recite and work towards it.

B. Assessment of user needs:

A description of the community and its population, and the needs of the community the library serves. It includes information based on an analysis of the population, survey results, and a description of the library's existing services in relation to the community's needs. Libraries might want to look to their parent institution's strategic plans to see what needs have been identified for the broader community or school population.

C. Multi-year goals and objectives:

Goals are broad statements describing desirable end results toward which the library will work over the long term, encompassing a vision of what services should be available. A goal is not measurable and may never be fully reached but will probably not change over a three to five year period. Together with objectives, goals define a course of action for meeting the needs of a community

Objectives are specific, short range statements of results to be achieved in the implementation of a goal. They define how a task will be done, who will do it, and when and under what conditions. Objectives are measurable, include time frames for completion of tasks, and may or may not change over a three to five year period depending upon progress made.

D. Brief description of methodology:

A description of the plan's methodology should include the identification of the planning process, such as the *Strategic Planning for Results* process, and any modifications to it. Include a description of who participated, to what extent, what data was gathered and how, and during what period the plan was developed.

E. Approval of governing board:

As documented by signatures of all responsible parties, this assures that the trustees or other governing unit has reviewed and voted to accept the plan.

F. Annual action plan:

Outlines the steps/activities that will be used to accomplish one or more objective in a given year. It includes a timeline and/or other measures that tell when the activities will take place and how the objectives will be met.

Note: The annual action plan must be submitted to the MBLC by December 1st each year.

Every fall the library director and trustees review and revise the annual action plan to ensure that it reflects activities that will take place in the next fiscal year to achieve the strategic plan's goals and objectives.

Trustee Tip

Six areas to add for a more comprehensive plan:

1. Give details of services, programs, personnel, collections and facilities desired
2. Identify priorities
3. Project costs with breakdown by objectives
4. List resources needed to implement the plan
5. Assign responsibilities for implementing the plan – who will do what
6. Create a publicity campaign to accompany changes

■ APPROACHES TO PLANNING

While no specific methodology is required, two commonly used options are offered below:

1. Massachusetts Library System's preferred planning methodology: a 2-3 meeting process which includes S.O.A.R (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) and community visioning exercises. (See http://guides.masslibsystem.org/ld.php?content_id=40570666)
2. Sandra Nelson's *Strategic Planning for Results* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2008), which outlines key components needed for planning.

Other methodologies are available as well. Which process a library should use is an individual decision of the library, and may depend on the experience/skills of the planning committee, resources the library is able to put towards the planning process, and the preference of the planning consultant, if a consultant is used.

For the most current information on planning visit the websites of the Massachusetts Library System (<http://guides.masslibsystem.org/strategicplanning>) and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (<https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/planning/index.php>).



TOOLS FOR PLANNING

Boards can create advisory committees, sponsor public meetings, encourage staff discussions, hire consultants and use public relations tools in the planning process. This is an opportunity to reach out to the community and listen to their needs. It builds support for the library.

The library director and board are partners in planning *with* the community, not *for* the community. Involve users, non-users, elected officials, students, and neighbors, as well as library Friends, staff and board members to ensure broad based participation.

Keep in mind that there are some financial costs associated with the planning process. Contact the Massachusetts Library System (<http://www.masslibsystem.org>) for more information.

The following are tools which may be useful in the planning process:

- ☐ **Community Input:** Attend public meetings and listen to the needs; make presentations to groups; inform the community of what the library does and ask what they think it should be doing now and in the future. How can it best help meet the community's goals?
- ☐ **Statistics:** ARIS (MBLC's Annual Report Information Survey), services, circulation, collection, online database usage, people counters.

- ☐ **Data:** census figures, community analysis, library and/or other community agencies and institutions' surveys.
- ☐ **Annual and monthly reports:** Library activities and services; include ideas and suggestions.
- ☐ **Library Supporters:** Staff, community leaders, Friends, Massachusetts Library System staff, Networks, MLA, and MBLC consultants.
- ☐ **Non-Library Entities:** Municipalities, schools, regional planning agencies, colleges and universities with information to share.
- ☐ **Staff:** Participation by the library staff assures commitment to a realistic plan.
- ☐ **Professional consultants** (especially if working toward a building program).
- ☐ **Media:** Press, radio, television, and online. Find those willing to help you spread the word.
- ☐ **Other libraries' experience:** Neighboring libraries with proven programs.
- ☐ **Library literature:** Websites, blogs, newsletters, journals, articles.
- ☐ **Workshops and conferences:** Addressing the future of public libraries.



TECHNOLOGY PLANNING

Technology is now an integral piece of nearly every aspect of providing library programs, products and services, and as such must be viewed by library trustees as it relates to planning, budgeting and policy. Trustees should inform themselves of the required levels of funding and staffing to support technology services, and support the library director in his/her efforts to maintain core competencies for all staff. Due to the nature of public library service, access to technology should be considered. Trustees can help by advocating for a useful, current website, which promotes access to information via the internet and subscription databases. In order for these levels of service to be met, adequate hardware, software, networking, security and equipment must be maintained. Finally, trustees must understand and work to provide facilities that support existing and emerging technology.

Technology planning is often integrated into strategic planning and incorporated into other areas of planning as well. The following resources and tools are available to help assess and develop plans for technology:

Technology Planning Guide from the Massachusetts Library System:

<http://guides.masslibsystem.org/technologyplanning>

The Edge Initiative:

<http://www.libraryedge.org/>

The Aspen Institute's Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library:

http://guides.masslibsystem.org/ld.php?content_id=30054358

DISASTER PLANNING

Creating a Disaster Plan

Every library should develop a disaster preparedness plan. Disaster plans really have four components – participation, integration, phased implementation, and cooperation – and they address the issues of preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. For a disaster plan to be effective and accepted, participation by staff at all administrative levels is crucial, both in the creation and in the implementation of the plan. An effective disaster plan reflects hard choices regarding salvage priorities, final authority in directing the recovery activities, and capital expenditures. Broad-based input and discussion will result in a plan that the staff and community will support and implement.

The plan *must* be integrated into the ongoing operations of a library, just like cataloging, reference and acquisitions. By incorporating this planning into the day-to-day operation of the library, the staff becomes aware of issues and situations that might prove to be hazardous to the collections, staff and/or building, thus creating a greater likelihood of the plan being accepted and implemented.

Any step taken to protect the collections from a disaster is a valid achievement towards the goal of disaster preparedness. A phased implementation of activities, such as conducting a risk assessment, scheduling regular roof inspections, employing preventative maintenance, identifying salvage priorities and moving collections out of harm's way, are legitimate steps towards the creation of a disaster preparedness plan.

Working cooperatively with other institutions within your municipality in the development of such a plan increases everyone's knowledge of disaster issues, helps to maintain momentum, and potentially provides assistance in the event of a disaster. This also includes working with the municipal emergency management director to familiarize them with your building and collections, and to be included in the municipality's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

Disaster preparedness planning will assist in building a comprehensive overview on how to prepare for various emergencies. Many institutions have found the process daunting, especially since there are so many components to an effective plan. The staff of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners will provide as much assistance as possible.

To assist institutions in developing a disaster preparedness plan, the Northeast Document Conservation Center, together with the MBLC, created “*dPlan: An Online Disaster Planning Tool*” (<http://www.dplan.org/>). While the work necessary to collect the information for the institutional plan has not necessarily been reduced, *dPlan* provides staff with templates to complete along with a significant amount of information about disaster planning. With these templates, *dPlan* also prompts staff to investigate and gather information that they might not have considered before. The process allows staff to complete those portions of the plan over time. This way institutional staff can create their own disaster preparedness plan. At the end of the process, *dPlan* allows the institution to print a plan in an organized and easily usable format.

On a larger scale, COSTEP MA (Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness in Massachusetts, <https://mblc.state.ma.us/costepma/>) is a collaborative of cultural and historical institutions and agencies as well as first responder and emergency management professionals from federal, state, and municipal governments. The purpose of COSTEP MA is to build and foster a statewide emergency planning process that serves the cultural and emergency management communities and addresses disaster prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. The process will ensure an ongoing dialogue that promotes mutual understanding and coordination between these communities, both of which are committed to protecting our Commonwealth’s cultural heritage.

Supporting the Community During a Disaster

The role that libraries play in their community during an emergency/disaster situation is invaluable. If their services have not been compromised, libraries can provide community members with a place to research and contact various emergency support agencies such as FEMA, MEMA, SBA, or other support groups. The library itself can serve as a shelter for community members, whether temporarily providing electrical charging stations, cooling/warming stations during times of extreme weather or temperature situations, or providing space for emergency agencies when on location in the community (also known as Disaster Recovery Centers or DRCs).

This reinforces the need for libraries to create their own disaster plan. By providing the structure and instructions for response during a given emergency situation, libraries can protect both their collections and their community. Having cultural institutions such as libraries operating after a disaster can help a community to get back on its feet faster than it otherwise would.

For more information regarding disaster planning, contact the MBLC or visit <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/disaster-assistance/index.php>.

LIBRARY FACILITIES PLANNING

The library's physical plant is key to both a successful and efficient operation of the library and the effective implementation of a library's mission. Trustees and staff should continually be asking the question: ***Does the current building support and enrich programs and services for the community?*** The library facility should be viewed in total, as often in correcting minor problems, major ones are created. Therefore, it is essential that a comprehensive facilities plan for improvements be established and implemented.

If a review of the facility indicates inadequacies, the trustees should lead the initiative to have them corrected either by maintenance, remodeling, renovation, additions or new construction. Chapter 11 of this *Handbook* discusses in greater detail new construction and renovation.

Conducting a Facilities Review: Factors to Consider

- ☐ Adequacy of major service areas, i.e., circulation, children's, young adult
- ☐ Physical accessibility for all people
- ☐ Shelving capacity
- ☐ Energy efficiency
- ☐ Adequacy of staff work areas and storage
- ☐ Ability to meet state, federal and local standards and codes
- ☐ Maintenance on a regular basis
- ☐ Adequacy of program space
- ☐ Ability to offer new technologies
- ☐ Lighting
- ☐ Signage
- ☐ Security
- ☐ Parking
- ☐ Reasonableness of location of library for optimal community access
- ☐ Appropriateness of structure and ability to house modern library services.

Once the review has been completed, the trustees and staff should develop a plan to correct the identified deficiencies. These could range from the preparation of a budget request for painting to the development of a major building program. Many corrections can be made to facilities without implementing a major construction project and can be requested through the normal municipal budget process. It is important for trustees to support and advocate building maintenance so that the facility does not deteriorate, resulting in the need for an even greater municipal appropriation.

What are trustees' responsibilities?

Provide support and assistance to the library director and staff in reviewing the present library facilities and developing a building program plan.

Obtain an appropriation and/or identify sources of funds necessary to support the implementation of written recommendations included in the program plan.

Represent community needs and interests and ensure that they are included in the development of the library facility.

Promote and develop a library facility that optimally supports the library's programs and services.

Commit to an annual review and reevaluation of the building and its facilities.

Information and assistance related to building program plans are available at the MBLC.

HIRING A LIBRARY DIRECTOR

One of the most important responsibilities of a board of trustees is to hire the library director. Not only does it directly affect the future of the library, it also forces the board to step back and take a look at itself and the library. This informal evaluation process can result in new perspectives regarding the library's role in the community. Trustees should be aware of current practices in the profession, the current needs and direction of the library, requirements under State law, and competitive salaries and benefits.

Note: Boards do not become involved in hiring other library personnel; staff hiring responsibility belongs to the director.

The MBLC's Director Search Process packet

(<http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees/director-search>) is an excellent and comprehensive guide to the hiring of a Library Director, and includes interview topics, a rating system, job descriptions and examples of forms that are essential to the successful director search. Additional resources to assist trustees with the hiring process are available at the MBLC and the Massachusetts Library System. The library's current strategic plan can also be a good resource.

Before hiring a new library director, the board should make a realistic appraisal of the state of the library. Identify the professional skills which will be needed to address and correct whatever deficiencies are identified. Trustees 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 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 we really want or need in the next director?
- ☐ What is the reason for the job opening? Are you losing someone upward bound or to retirement? Was the previous director dissatisfied? If so, why? An exit interview with the departing director is a useful tool to help answer these questions honestly.

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 the job responsibilities.

EMPLOYMENT LAW

Affirmative Action

Libraries must abide by federal and state laws as well as local regulations that prohibit discrimination in relation to hiring, promotion and all other working conditions of employment. It is illegal to discriminate on the basis of sex, gender identity, race, creed, color, religion, age, country of national origin, individual lifestyle and physical handicap. Stated policies should demonstrate that the library board does not discriminate. Library boards have responsibility for determining deficiencies in their policies and adopting corrections. (See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of policies.)

Due Process for the Library Director

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, section 34, provides for written employment contracts with library directors. The written contract must at least outline the basic conditions of employment, including the establishment of a probationary period. The contract must also establish the procedure for specifying cause for dismissal after the probationary period. Trustees are encouraged to consult with the appropriate municipal official to identify local and state regulations and procedures governing employment practices. Sample contracts may be obtained from the Massachusetts Library System or the Board of Library Commissioners.

Minimum Educational Qualifications for Library Director

All public library directors in Massachusetts must hold or apply for upon appointment a certificate of librarianship issued by the Board of Library Commissioners. Library directors in municipalities with a population of 10,000 and over must possess a master's Degree in Library Science. Library directors in municipalities of under 10,000 must possess a bachelor's degree. These minimum education requirements must be met in order to receive state funds under the State Aid to Public Libraries program.

A library may appoint an acting (temporary) director for a period of up to three years. An acting director's qualifications do not have to comply with the educational minimum requirements as set forth in the above paragraph. The library will be eligible to receive State Aid to Public Libraries awards as long as a permanent director with the appropriate credentials is appointed within the three-year period. Bibliotemps® (<http://www.bibliotemps.com/>) is a temporary employment service run by the Massachusetts Library System, and it can assist the library looking for a temporary director.

Educational requirements for the permanent director are regulated by the Board of Library Commissioners, as recorded in 605 CMR (Code of Massachusetts Regulations) 4.01(4):

<https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/laws-and-regulations/605cmr4.php>.

Questions concerning these requirements, including details of the librarian certification program outlined in 605 CMR 3.00, should be directed to the State Aid Unit at the Board of Library Commissioners.

Note: When a board appoints a permanent or acting library director, it must notify the Massachusetts Library System and the MBLC to ensure compliance with the personnel requirements and keep current with personnel changes. Forms pertaining to director changes, as required by the State Aid program, are available here:

<https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-arls/forms.php>



THE JOB DESCRIPTION

What Do Public Library Directors Do?

Before hiring a library director, the entire board should have a good grasp of what a public library director does. The library director is the department head of a municipal service, whose responsibilities include:

- ☐ Acts as professional/technical advisor to the library board of trustees on policy, finances, planning, library performance, laws affecting libraries
- ☐ Hires and supervises personnel
- ☐ Implements board policy, interprets library policy for the public
- ☐ Administers the library budget
- ☐ Develops the library collection (including: books, DVDs, CDs, magazines, newspapers, subscriptions to electronic resources, and other unconventional items such as puppets, games, and more)
- ☐ Manages library services and programs
- ☐ Directs and provides outreach services to the community
- ☐ Manages and maintains the library facility/building, computer technology, the library's automation system and other library equipment
- ☐ Represents the library in the community and promotes the library and its services
- ☐ Teaches the community how to access, evaluate and use information resources

In small libraries with few or no other staff, the library director serves customers directly, providing reference and readers' advisory, conducting storytime and other programming, and even performing circulation functions such as checking out books.

Reviewing the Job Description

Before beginning the search process, the board should review and revise as necessary the job description for the library director (or write one, if a formal description does not already exist). When writing or revising the job description, remember you may call the Massachusetts Library System for assistance. Sample job descriptions are available through the MLS Policy Collection as well, at <http://guides.masslibsystem.org/content.php?pid=325381&sid=2948877>.

Issues that should be addressed in job description include:

- ☐ General areas of responsibility
- ☐ Specific duties
- ☐ Salary and fringe benefits
- ☐ Period of probation
- ☐ Desirable areas of expertise
- ☐ Minimum qualifications and experience
- ☐ Physical requirements, if any

Additional information:

- ☐ Current description of community
- ☐ Description of library's overall program and plan
- ☐ Significant trends or changes anticipated.

BEGINNING THE SEARCH PROCESS

Developing a Timeline

A timeline should be established for the sake of efficiency and to assure that the search process concludes in a timely manner, though some flexibility should be built into it. The timeline should include:

- ☐ appointment of the search committee
- ☐ review of the job description and writing the job announcement
- ☐ date for posting of job announcement and deadline for applications
- ☐ time to review applications and decide on persons to interview
- ☐ potential dates for interviews
- ☐ time for the board to make a decision and offer the job to the candidate, and time for the candidate to respond
- ☐ anticipated starting date for the new director

Selecting a Search Committee

Give some thought to who will be involved in the recruitment process. The Open Meeting Law permits a preliminary screening committee to review applications and conduct preliminary interviews in executive (closed) sessions. The screening committee must contain less than a quorum of the full board, but may include members from outside of the board. The library board is not required to create a preliminary screening committee. However, if the full board conducts the review of applicants itself, it may not do so in executive session. In any case, *the final round of interviews must be conducted in an open meeting session.*

A committee structured to represent the board is the most effective means of hiring a new director. Keep the search committee to a reasonable size. Members of the board who are not part of the search committee may have the opportunity to meet the candidates informally and tour the library with them. Consider non-board members who may serve on the search and interview committee.

For example:

- ☐ A knowledgeable staff representative
- ☐ A municipal official
- ☐ A Friends of the Library officer
- ☐ A community representative
- ☐ A library director from a neighboring community.

Advertising

It is essential to advertise a job opening to as many potential candidates as possible, even if there are staff members eligible for promotion. Qualified staff members should be encouraged to apply and the board should stress that 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.

The search committee should compose a job posting. Look at job postings from other libraries for guidance. Specify a deadline for application and request a resume and references. Some municipalities may require that applicants complete a specific application form as well. The committee should designate one member to receive applications.

To encourage the best candidate pool, send announcements to professional library publications and websites, including the MBLC website http://mblc.state.ma.us/jobs/submit_jobs/index.php and the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science Jobline <http://simmons.edu/gslis/careers/jobs/jobline/>, as well as in neighboring library systems and throughout the state. For an even broader pool of applications, consider submitting the job posting to ALA JobLIST (the American Library Association's Job search tool: <http://joblist.ala.org/>).

INTERVIEWING AND SELECTION

The selection of a competent library director can be the most important single act undertaken by the board of trustees. Knowledgeable consultants at the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library System can provide you with sound advice. When seeking a director some boards will place more emphasis on imagination and energy, others on administrative experience, still others on education and scholarship. Local conditions such as the library's mission, size, staff, and resources, are all factors affecting the selection of the library director.

In advance, your search committee should:

Adopt a standard format for checking references. Phone calls may produce the most candid evaluations. Develop a form with standard questions which can be used during these phone conversations.

Agree on a standard list of questions to be posed to each candidate. Ask staff for suggestions. Sample questions may be obtained from the Massachusetts Library System. Each candidate is asked to respond to the same questions and this becomes an equal basis for evaluation. A standard list of questions helps assure that the interview proceeds smoothly and that only legal and appropriate information is discussed.

Devise a standard evaluation sheet to be used by the interview committee to note the candidates' responses and members' impressions.

Budget for whatever expenses the board agrees to fund for interviewees.
Discuss possible relocation costs. Be sure to inform all invited candidates of the board's policy on these expenses.

Note: Keep in mind that there are a number of questions that it is illegal for interviewing employers to ask of potential candidates, such as questions regarding the candidate's age, national origin, personal background, marital and family status, disability. It is also illegal per state law to ask about an applicant's salary history.

The Interview and Selection Process

Promptly acknowledge receipt of all applications, and notify applicants who do not meet established qualifications. Decide on the number of applicants to be interviewed, usually three to five people. Then contact these individuals to schedule the interviews. Plan the location for the interview, accommodations for the candidate, and a tour of the library.

The interview is a mutual evaluation process. Allow adequate time for discussion. The committee should provide the candidate with a fair, accurate picture of the library, the working conditions and the board's expectations.

Allow time between interviews to complete the evaluation sheets while the members' reactions to candidates are still fresh.

Trustee Tip

Remember that if your library is subject to the Open Meeting Law, at a minimum all final interviews are subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law and MUST be held in an open session.

After All Interviews are Completed

Select the best potential director through discussion and by ranking candidates based on the interview evaluations. The determination of a finalist should be by consensus of the entire search committee. Now is not the time to hold back negative impressions for fear of sounding overly critical. Your impressions, negative and positive, are important to the process of hiring the right candidate.

Do not overlook the step of checking references, no matter how promising the candidate appears to be. It is very important to avoid potential problems by checking references thoroughly, especially by telephone. A telephone call using questions that you've written out in advance will help you make an informed decision.

Once the references have been checked and the decision made about which candidate is best, recommend the top candidate to the full trustee board. The board will act to hire the candidate by telephoning the top candidate to offer the position. Give the candidate a reasonable period of time to consider the offer and to make their final decision. You should follow up with an informational letter and/or contract which includes details of the appointment: duties, salary, benefits, probationary period, and starting date. Include a second copy for the new director's signature and specify a return date.

Write all other candidates interviewed, thanking them and informing them of your decision ONLY AFTER an acceptance has been received. If your first choice declines or is unavailable, the board can quickly contact the second choice.

ORIENTING THE NEW DIRECTOR

Orient the new director and assist them with relocation. Provide school and housing information, and additional information on the library and the community. Welcome the new director with personal introductions to staff members, trustees, community representatives and local government officials. An open house or reception hosted by the board is a standard courtesy. News releases and photographic coverage should be arranged. And don't forget to notify the MBLC and MLS about your new director!

A probationary period, as stipulated in the contract, allows time for the board and the director to develop a working relationship and to evaluate library administration. Throughout this period, the board should be observing and evaluating the director's performance. 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 discussed and recorded. The board should never retain a director if a majority of the members are convinced that no improvement is possible. The board should consider contacting its municipal counsel in cases of possible dismissal of the director.

EVALUATING THE DIRECTOR

Evaluation of the library director is an ongoing process. A formal, written evaluation 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 Evaluation

- ☐ To provide the director with clear understanding of the board's expectations.
- ☐ To ensure the director and the board are aware of how well the expectations are being met.
- ☐ To serve as a formal vehicle of primary communication between the board and director.
- ☐ To identify the board's actual concerns so that appropriate action can be taken.
- ☐ To demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to municipal officials and the community.

THE EVALUATION

While directors are held accountable to many varied and sometimes conflicting constituencies, the responsibility for evaluating the director rests with the board. An annual, written, formal evaluation should be conducted. The library board and the director should reach a mutual agreement about the evaluation format and process. **Keep in mind that the Open Meeting Law mandates that evaluation of the director's performance must be held in open meeting sessions.**

Ideally, evaluations are positive, developmental processes that include praise and constructive guidance. The board should review the library plan, job descriptions, goals and objectives and the annual report submitted by the director, documenting accomplishments of the library. Other relevant information should be obtained as needed.

The board should develop definitions of their ratings and standards so that they have a common understanding and are able to communicate these to others. The board chairman and at

least one other member of the board, usually the personnel committee chairman, should form a committee to gather information from other trustees using an agreed upon evaluation tool. The library director should provide a self-evaluation report which indicates how they have met their annual goals and objectives. The committee should then meet to formulate a written evaluation and reach a consensus on how the director is to be rated on each item.

Copies of the committee's written evaluation should be sent to each board member with an opportunity for each to respond in writing to the committee. The committee's final, written evaluation should be given to the director by the board chair, and an opportunity should be provided for the director to meet with the committee to discuss any differences.

The formal evaluation of the library director should take place at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. It should be conducted in an objective, businesslike manner with a predetermined agenda, but should not be so austere as to be intimidating. Specific examples should be used to illustrate the evaluation and free discussion should be encouraged. Adequate time should be allowed to thoroughly explore all issues and the meeting should be free of interruptions. There should be a thorough summing-up by the spokesperson of the proceedings. The evaluation should be followed with a planning session to develop the basis for the next review.

Trustee Tip

There are many excellent resources and sample documents for preparing an evaluation. Resources include your municipality's Human Resources department, United for Libraries (see <http://www.ala.org/united/trustees/orgtools>), and MBLC's Sample Director Evaluation Document (see <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees/trustee-focus-library-director>).

REMOVAL OF A LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Adapted from *The Library Trustee: A Practical Guidebook*, 5th edition, by Virginia G. Young. ALA, 1995.

Even with the most careful selection process and thorough evaluation, sometimes the library director is not (or is no longer) a good fit for the library. Differences of opinion between the director and the board can often be resolved. However, occasionally differences can go beyond disagreement into dissension, and the working relationship is so severely damaged that its continuation is not possible.

If the problem cannot be resolved in a private meeting between the librarian and the board chair, decisive official action must be taken by a full meeting of the board. The cause of disagreement and the resulting board action should be clearly stated.

Note: Open Meeting Law allows for discussion of discipline or dismissal of an employee to be held in closed session.

In some cases, the board may determine that the librarian has demonstrated deficiencies in fulfilling their duties. Before deciding to seek a replacement, the director should be given a chance to improve their performance and clear expectations should be communicated. If those expectations are not met, a private conference communicating the board's decision to remove the director should be held. Termination of an unsatisfactory connection need not embarrass the librarian's professional future elsewhere.

When dissatisfaction is felt by either side regarding policies, program, or administration of the library, it has been found that impartial consultant service is useful. Analysis of weaknesses and recommendations for strengthening the program can solve an unsettled situation in a constructive fashion. Trustees and directors can contact the Massachusetts Library System and/or the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for consulting services.

It should be constantly kept in mind that the board's first responsibility is toward the public, to provide adequate and satisfactory library service, and this obligation takes precedence over personalities, prejudices, and partisanship. When a board does make the difficult decision to remove the director, municipal counsel or an attorney specializing in employment law should be consulted for guidance to assure that the termination process is carried out in accordance with all applicable laws.

ROLE OF THE MUNICIPALITY

In some municipalities, the authority and responsibility for hiring the library director may rest with the town/city manager, mayor or other administrator. While MGL ch. 78, sec. 11 gives the “custody and management” of the library to its board of trustees, local charter and/or bylaws can override this. (See chapter 3 of this *Handbook* for a discussion of municipal charters.) Sometimes the library board is charged with selecting a director subject to approval from the local administrator. In other cases, the town administrator has full hiring power. If the latter is the case, the library board should have a conversation with the administrator about working together to find the best candidate for the director position. Make the case that the library trustees know best the needs and goals of the library and are in the best position to find the candidate with the right qualifications to fulfill those needs and goals. Suggest that the library board could conduct the interviews and make a recommendation to the administrator, or request that at a minimum at least one trustee be a part of the search committee.

Even when the library board has full responsibility to hire and evaluate the library director, the board should be sure to confer with the local Human Resources department to make sure it follows any local regulations or procedures that may be in place. For example, the trustees may have the authority to appoint a new library director but the salary and benefits they can offer a candidate may be set by the town. Many HR departments have standard evaluation forms they expect to be used for all municipal employees; however, such forms often are not well suited to evaluating the head of the library. It is worth asking if an alternate evaluation form may be used or if the standard form can be modified as appropriate.

A note about association/corporation libraries: In libraries that are not town departments, the board of trustees will generally have much more, if not complete, authority and control over the hiring and evaluation of the library director. However, it is important for association/corporation boards to be aware of any agreements with the municipality that may include affect the hiring and evaluation processes. This is especially true if the library director is considered an employee of the town, rather than of the library itself.

THE TRUSTEE AND STAFF RELATIONS

The board, director, and staff should understand and observe the following channels of communication and authority:

- ☐ The only employee who reports directly to the board is the library director.
- ☐ The staff is hired and supervised 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 not give orders or instruction to the staff except through the director.
- ☐ Trustees should go directly to the library director in case of any commentary on the performance of staff.
- ☐ Trustees should not 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.
- ☐ Trustees must not be insulated from the staff, and should know the positions and programs. The library director should provide opportunities for trustees to be acquainted with the staff.
- ☐ The library director and the board should insist on proper channels for complaints.
- ☐ The director should keep the trustee board up to date on personnel issues such as staff hours, salaries, and benefits. A human resources manual, maintained and updated by the library director, should be available to trustees upon request.

LEGAL RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES TO ORGANIZE AND BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY

It is the responsibility of the public library trustee to become informed of the legal rights of employees to organize and bargain collectively. The Massachusetts Public Employees Collective Bargaining Law (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 150E) guarantees this right and is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations.

Every library board should familiarize itself with the requirements of the Massachusetts Public Employees Collective Bargaining Law, whether its employees are unionized or not. If your employees are unionized, you must become aware of your duties and responsibilities under the law. If your employees are not unionized, the law may help you to understand what every employee has a right to expect.

For more information regarding Massachusetts Public Employees Collective Bargaining Law, contact the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations at (617) 626-7132 for the Boston office or (413) 784-1230 for the Springfield office, or visit their website at <http://www.mass.gov/lwd/labor-relations/>. General information on workers' rights is available through the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General's Fair Labor Division, and can be viewed on their website at <http://www.mass.gov/ago/doing-business-in-massachusetts/workplace-rights/>.

A WORD ABOUT VOLUNTEERS

The temptation to rely on volunteers is almost overwhelming for the small library just a few steps from its volunteer beginnings, and for the larger library seeking ways to cut costs. Volunteers constitute an important community resource for many public libraries. When a program is developed, it should be with the understanding that the use of qualified volunteers in a library program is a supplement to, not a substitute for, paid staff.

Volunteers usually come to the library on an individual basis and participate in ongoing work or special projects within the library setting. Their tasks should be of genuine significance and should enhance the services and capabilities of the library. Volunteers can be advocates for the library within the community.

Libraries should not undertake a volunteer program unless the library board and the director are committed to the concept and are willing to devote the necessary time to develop a program that is well managed and will benefit the library. It is easy to underestimate the amount of time and energy it takes to manage library volunteers. But a successful volunteer program is well worth the effort.



Successful volunteer programs are:

- ☐ Planned and approved by staff and board
- ☐ Run under best employment practices - training, evaluation and development are important to volunteers
- ☐ Clear about work descriptions, the status of the volunteers and the expectations, including regular hours and consistent service and supervision
- ☐ Realistic in expectations of hours donated, types of work to be done and training required
- ☐ Clear about technicalities, such as insurance, use of library vehicles, paid expenses for library-related activities
- ☐ Open to the community, but on the basis of specific job descriptions and capabilities of volunteers to fill the jobs
- ☐ Mindful of the need for recognition and appreciation of volunteer work

Volunteers can be extraordinarily useful in libraries. The possibilities are almost limitless: working with outreach programs, presenting film programs, storytelling, teaching literacy classes, collecting historical material, planning and creating exhibits, delivering materials to the homebound, writing press releases, planning the oral history project, taking pictures, taking surveys, acting as hosts and hostesses at programs, working with senior citizen groups, taking books to convalescent homes and hospitals, shelving returned materials, and more.

Libraries should have a policy covering the use of volunteer labor which should include the concepts that the use of volunteers is temporary pending ability to employ staff, and that volunteers should not supplant or replace established staff positions (see chapter 4 for more information on policies). Trustees and directors must be knowledgeable about possible restrictions or regulations concerning the use of volunteers that may be affected by personnel policies or union contracts. Also be aware that library volunteers may be subject to Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks. Contact your municipal counsel for advice on these issues specific to your community.

Trustee Tip

Has your board adopted a policy for volunteers? Are there procedures in place for managing the volunteer program? The Massachusetts Library System has sample volunteer policies in their Policy Collection:
<http://guides.masslibsystem.org/c.php?g=570298&p=3930840>

BUDGETING & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

Trustees are legally responsible for overseeing library finances. Accountability and awareness are keys to meeting fiscal responsibilities. Accountability is imperative because public funds are being expended. Awareness is crucial because the board cannot make wise budgeting decisions unless members are aware of how the library is funded, what it costs to run the library, what the library needs, and what those needs will cost.

To understand the budgeting process and approve an annual budget for the library, board members must know where the money comes from and how much revenue they can expect to build into the budget each year. A good understanding of revenue sources is important as board members must encourage continued funding from those sources and find new sources when needed.

Each board member should:

- ☐ Know the library's financial base and background
- ☐ Know the local, state, and federal allocating authorities for library funds
- ☐ Know the supplementary sources of revenue, such as trust funds
- ☐ Investigate other possible sources of funding: bond issue, endowments, trusts, memorials, dedicated tax revenue, foundation grants, donations, and gifts
- ☐ Understand the financial needs of the library's operation, and funds needed for maintenance, growth, and expansion
- ☐ Understand the basics of legal requirements and reporting requirements for library funding
- ☐ Be able to manage trusts and endowment funds when appropriate.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library System can provide guidance on regulations and practices affecting library finances. Additional assistance may be provided by local governing authorities.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BUDGET PLANNING

1. First, know who does what.

A necessary first step in successful budget planning is knowing who has the authority and who does what in the budget planning process. Written policies and procedures should outline responsibilities and roles clearly. Developing the budget should not be up to the library director alone. Developing a budget is a team process. Trustees can play a vital role in assisting with the creation of the budget and getting it approved because they are the library's link to the community and its government.

2. Understand the budget's planning context.

The planning process is central to developing the budget since the budget must reflect the purpose and priorities of the library. The board defines its priorities in its strategic plan; the budget should tie into that plan. Board members can then explain to funding authorities what the library is doing for the community, what the library wants to do and what the expected results are. Funding requests should be made within the context of the plan. Tie these requests to clearly stated purposes and priorities.

3. Give yourself and others time.

It takes time to make a budget. Boards should develop budget planning calendars. Since budgeting, like planning, is a cooperative process, the director and staff must be given adequate time to make requests and recommendations. Think long range so funding resources for future growth can be identified or developed. (See Sample Budget Calendar in Appendix 7A.)

4. Question everything.

Don't simply manipulate a pre-existing pattern by adding and subtracting percentages of figures from programs and columns that were set up before. The budget is a tool for accomplishing specific goals. When a goal has been accomplished, phase out the program or project that was designed to meet it and make a case that funding should be moved to the next priority or purpose. Program budgets are a way to look at goals set and the costs to implement and continue these goals.

5. Be realistic.

Tune into what is happening in the community. Understand the community's ability to pay so you can know what can and can't be expected. Understand the competing demands of other departments on the funding agency so you know your fair share in relation to others. Use the MBLC's Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) to compare your situation with other similar libraries. (See *State Aid* section later in this chapter for more information on ARIS.)

6. Don't restrict your budget to available funding.

Remember that funds may increase or become unexpectedly available. Be ready to make use of those funds. Be in a position to find and use other sources of income, such as federal and state grants, and/or donations. Not all funding for the library needs to come from municipal sources. Grants, donations and sponsors can often be used for one-time projects or for start-up funds for a particular program. Look for community support for alternative funding when appropriate. When you find and use other funds, be sure your municipality knows. Publicize it.

7. Keep it simple.

Understand the library's mission and what the library is supposed to accomplish. Make the library and its needs understandable and accessible. When presenting budget requests, avoid acronyms or library lingo that may not be understood. Do not exaggerate or underestimate. If funding will result in cuts to programs, make sure that those cuts happen. Credibility is important.

Community members have the right to know how their tax money is spent. Make the budget understandable. Learn how to use simple and familiar comparisons to illustrate the value people are getting for their tax dollars. Sometimes, using a per capita figure for expenditures and comparing these with the average cost of a meal in a restaurant, or the cost of a hardcover book can be a compelling argument.

8. Read, listen, and learn.

Learn from other agencies about how they develop and present their budgets. Pay attention to success and learn from the examples of others. Above all, listen to your funding agency and know what they are looking for and what impresses them.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

A budget presentation is actually a political negotiation with municipal officials to determine the exact scope of programs and services to be offered. Trustees, in collaboration with the library director, must be thoroughly prepared to participate in presenting the budget: to explain, to justify and to negotiate. The library must be seen as a basic and indispensable community and information agency, not just an intellectual or recreational frill. Trustees are the front-line defenders of the public's right to know and thus should actively seek support for adequate library funding.

Don't wait until budget time to let the municipal officials know how funds are used and what you need! Throughout the year point out the successes, the services, and community response. Remember, testimonials and graphs, charts, and relevant statistics are usually much more persuasive than demands.

How can you stay visible to municipal officials throughout the year?

- ☐ Invite officials to special programs, receptions and library activities.
- ☐ Offer library reference service and assistance to local government officials and departments.
- ☐ Send officials copies of letters of appreciation, awards, staff accomplishments and special news articles.
- ☐ Post board meeting minutes as accepted and be certain that officials know where they are posted.
- ☐ Use Friends and community supporters to promote the library budget.

Publicize the library budget. Tell the community what the current funding level will accomplish. Inform the community about the value received from library funding. Let the public know how budget cuts may have affected your program. Use publicity before and after the budget process: brochures, newsletters, newspapers, and community meetings. Post information on your library's web page.

Trustee Tip

A great way to make the community aware of just how valuable the library is, and why it is worth funding to the greatest possible extent, is the What's Your Library Worth?/Library Value Calculator: <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/what-libraries-do/calculator>

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION

The trustees have the job of setting priorities and securing funds; the director and staff have the responsibility to implement the funded programs to meet the needs of the community.

Following are best practices of budget implementation:

- ☐ The tasks, authority and duties for library spending must be clearly delegated to the director or designee.
- ☐ Trustees may be asked to contribute specific expertise in fiscal management, but their major role is planning, budgeting and securing funds.
- ☐ Personnel and procedures for handling library funds may vary in local library systems depending on the size of the library budget and staff. Specific procedures and responsibilities should be outlined in the local policy and procedure manuals so that all trustees and staff understand the lines of authority. Trustees should delegate the handling of day-to-day financial operations of the library to the director.
- ☐ Trustees fulfill their fiscal responsibilities by maintaining a knowledge of budget implementation and adherence to budget plans and policies.

The library director is responsible for keeping the trustees informed of budget implementation. Monthly and annual reports should be prepared for the board, the public, and various funding sources which may require their own reporting forms. Trustees should receive and review monthly financial reports. Reports should show current expenditures, year-to-date expenditures, income received, year-to-date income and how these relate to the approved budget.

Trustees should monitor fiscal operations to assure that:

- ☐ Financial records are complete and accurate
- ☐ Resources are managed in an economical and efficient manner
- ☐ System of internal controls exists to safeguard the assets
- ☐ Accounting is accurate
- ☐ Needed reporting is done on time and accurately.

Budgeting is a continuous process. The library director and trustee finance committee or trustee treasurer should evaluate the budget and expenditures throughout the year to determine if the budget is on target for meeting expenditures and if revenue sources are providing income as expected.)

SOURCES OF LIBRARY FUNDING

Trustees need to know the sources of funding that support their library in order to fully participate in planning the program of service, and to knowledgeably approve the budget. Trustees are also charged with the responsibility of actively seeking increased funding to assure growth and development of needed library services.

Public libraries in Massachusetts are funded primarily by local monies. State and federal funding may supply some supplemental funding. Most libraries also receive funding from private sources, such as endowments, foundations, gifts, and Friends of the Library groups

LOCAL MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

Local levels and sources of funding vary with each community. The most consistent local funding source is the property tax. It is the board's responsibility to identify and actively pursue funding sources, and to present a budget request to the funding body. Each trustee should feel personally responsible for obtaining the best possible municipal appropriation for the best library services. Other municipal sources of income may include revolving fund accounts and special appropriations. Communication with funding authorities should be a top priority of the board to assure that information about funding is current and thorough.

Additional Sources of Municipal Support

Many communities in Massachusetts have adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA), and libraries have obtained local funding through this program for preserving and digitizing historical resources — such as newspapers, local histories and documents of historical interest — as well as other projects. See <http://www.communitypreservation.org> for more information.

Other Sources of Local Funding

When municipal support does not provide sufficient funds to maintain quality library services, it is the responsibility of the trustees to secure a broader financial base for the library. Many libraries have been creative in augmenting funds through the following means:

- ☐ Gifts and memorials
- ☐ Endowments based on legacies
- ☐ Library foundations
- ☐ Friends of Libraries
- ☐ Grants and foundation support for specific programs
- ☐ Regular donations from service clubs, civic organizations and individuals
- ☐ Enterprise activities (café, restaurant, bookshop, gift shop, copy center)

Gifts, Donations, and Endowment Funds

Even in a well-funded library there are enrichment activities which can be developed with added support. An active fundraising plan by trustees is important. Don't wait for money to come to you! An organized, well-publicized campaign to solicit funds should be developed. Set a goal and let potential contributors know why the library needs funds. Tell donors what the funds will enable the library to accomplish. Donated funds should be directed to either a 501(c)(3) library support organization, such as your Friends group or library foundation, or to the municipality under such restrictive language as meets the library's needs. Otherwise, if left to the municipality, these funds may be absorbed into the municipality's general fund. MGL ch 44, sec. 54 -55 provides information on municipal acceptance of donated funds.

Please refer to chapter 8 of this **Handbook** for a more thorough discussion of fundraising.

STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The most consistent source of state funds for public libraries is *State Aid to Public Libraries*, listed as an offset item on the Cherry Sheets (named for the cherry-colored paper on which it was originally printed). Each year the MA Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services issues Cherry Sheet estimates of payments which a community may expect from the Commonwealth during the following fiscal year. These estimates are published in the spring on the Division of Local Services website at: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/cherry-sheet-estimates>

State Aid to Public Libraries is an annual, voluntary program administered by the Board of Library Commissioners that distributes local aid to municipalities. It encourages municipal support and improvement for public library service, bolsters reciprocal resource sharing among libraries, compensates for differences in municipal funding capacities, and offsets costs to libraries that circulate materials to patrons from other certified municipalities.

State Aid funding is appropriated annually to the MBLC by the legislature, and in turn each year the Board awards funding to municipalities whose public libraries meet statutory and regulatory requirements Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, sections 19A & 19B, and 605 CMR 4.00. After a municipality is certified to receive State Aid to Public Libraries, the MBLC disburses three awards:

- ☐ Library Incentive Grant, based on the population of the municipality.
- ☐ Municipal Equalization Grant, based on the state Lottery formula.
- ☐ Nonresident Circulation Offset, based on the non-resident loans reported by public libraries.

Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L., c.78, s.19A) states that a municipality must appropriate a figure of at least the average of the last 3 years' municipal appropriations to the library for operations, increased by 2.5%, in order to be certified for State Aid to Public Libraries. This calculated figure is known as the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). Compliance for the MAR is based upon the year that the library is filing, most likely the last complete fiscal year.

A municipality must meet the MAR or apply for and receive a waiver of the MAR in order to be eligible to be certified for State Aid to Public Libraries by the MBLC. Capital appropriations cannot be used to meet the MAR.

In addition to the Municipal Appropriation Requirement, a library must have complied, during the prior fiscal year, with statutory requirements MGL, ch.78, sec.19B that are further defined in regulation 605 CMR 4.00 They are:

- 1) Be open to all residents of the Commonwealth.
- 2) Make no charge for normal library services.
- 3) Be kept open a minimum number of hours per week (based on population size of the municipality).

- 4) Employ trained library personnel (based on population size of the municipality).
In populations under 10,000, the library director must have a bachelor's degree and complete a series of courses in Basic Library Techniques. In populations of 10,000 and over, the library director must have an ALA-accredited master's degree in Library Science.
- 5) Expend a reasonable portion of the library's total budget on library materials (based on population size of the municipality).
- 6) Lend books and other materials to other certified libraries in the commonwealth and extend privileges to holders of cards issued by other certified public libraries in the commonwealth on a reciprocal basis.
- 7) Submit an annual report required by the MBLC, the Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS).

Applications for eligibility in the State Aid program are made annually to the MBLC. The application consists of *three forms*: the Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS), submitted online and due in August; the Financial Report, submitted online and due in October; and the Compliance Form (print form), due in October.

In addition to the above requirements for the municipality and its public library, each library director must apply for and receive state certification of librarianship: a certificate of professional or subprofessional librarianship, depending upon the population of the municipality.

Trustees should be familiar with the laws and regulations which pertain to the minimum standards for certification for State Aid to Public Libraries. In order to qualify for all other grant programs (Federal LSTA, Public Library Construction and any other State grants) that are administered by the Board of Library Commissioners, a library must be certified to receive State Aid to Public Libraries. Therefore, it is of great importance that all trustees understand the basic requirements of the program. For specific questions regarding the State Aid program, contact the MBLC's State Aid unit. An overview of the State Aid to Public Libraries program is available at: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-aris/index.php>.

FEDERAL FUNDS

Federal funds come primarily from the **Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)**, administered by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (<https://www.ims.gov>). In Massachusetts, the Board of Library Commissioners is the administrative agency which plans programs and grants for the distribution of these funds. LSTA Grants can be awarded to qualifying libraries of all types (including public, school, academic, and special libraries). In order to qualify for LSTA grants, a library must have a strategic plan on file with the Board of Library Commissioners, and must submit annual updates to it.

Other Federal Programs

There are many federal programs under which public libraries may qualify to receive funds. These change as new legislation is enacted. Comprehensive information on all federal grant programs is provided at Assistance Listings (CFDA) (<https://beta.sam.gov/>). There is a comprehensive searchable database and you can also download the catalog and a user manual if desired.

GRANTS

Grant writing is both an art and a skill. Staff and trustees should be alert to workshops and classes designed to provide training in this area. Public libraries can obtain limited support for innovative library programs from the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Additional funding for the visual and performing arts is available from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and many municipalities also have local cultural councils that offer grant opportunities.

Locally based corporations and foundations are also good sources of additional funds. Information on grant funding programs can be obtained from various foundation directories and periodicals available through the library and through sources over the Internet.

The Foundation Center is a major national source of information on philanthropic funding. The Center's publications and nationwide network of reference collections may help you identify foundation programs which correspond with your needs. You may access the Foundation Center through their web site at foundationcenter.org.

REVENUE MANAGEMENT

If your library receives additional funding from federal, state or private grants, and gifts and/or donations, it is important to meet the reporting and auditing requirements of the funding sources. These funds should not be co-mingled in the same budget categories as municipally appropriated funds.

The board of trustees must set a policy for the collecting of fines and fees. Unless there is an agreement with the municipality, fines and fees will go into the general fund.

State statutes must be observed in setting fees for copying public records, including board minutes, agendas and exhibits presented at board meetings. The Secretary of State office publishes a *Guide to Massachusetts Public Records Law*. The Board should also set a fee for all other printing and copying. It is recommended that all these policies be posted along with the notice on copying public records.

All revenues should be budgeted as a part of the regular budgeting process and amended in the same way. Cash for fines and fees collected by the library should be deposited as often as recommended by the town and/or auditor, but not less than weekly. No revenue should substitute for a petty cash account. If such an account is necessary, a separate fund should be established and used as necessary. Receipts must backup all withdrawals.

AUDITS

The board of trustees has the fiduciary responsibility for all funds in the library's budget. Trustees should make sure that the library undergoes an annual audit to assure that financial matters are being handled responsibly. Most municipalities will include the library in their annual audit. Association and Corporation boards should have an auditor. If an audit is new to the library, the trustees might want to contact their local municipal treasurer to ask for advice and assistance in determining best practices for the audit.

LIBRARY SUPPORT: FUNDRAISING, FOUNDATIONS AND FRIENDS

Most public libraries in Massachusetts are funded primarily through municipal appropriations, which usually cover essential costs, such as personnel, library materials, and building operations/maintenance. It is the library board's duty to ensure that adequate funding is provided by the municipality for the library. The majority of public libraries in the Commonwealth also receive income from other sources, such as trusts, Friends groups, foundations, endowments, capital campaigns (for specific projects), and donations from individuals and/or corporations, all of which can provide funding to enhance the mission of the public library. These additional sources of funding serve to elevate basic library services and are meant to *supplement* but *not supplant* the municipality's obligation to the library. If the board determines that municipal funding is inadequate, they may want to consider establishing a mechanism to supplement funding.

The library may have many support systems to help raise supplemental funding. These systems include the board of trustees, library director and staff, Friends of the Library, library volunteers, and library foundations. Beyond these groups which have a direct relationship to the library, the library may partner with local organizations, such as town archives, historical society, council of aging, schools, etc. It is important for the board and library director to find the beneficial relationships that could exist in the community.

Each group of library supporters has a specific role:

- ☐ **Trustees** represent citizen control and governance of the library as specified by state law.
- ☐ The **library director** represents the administration and management of the library.
- ☐ A **Library Foundation** represents a means of support to build funds for capital campaigns and other large-scale needs of the library.
- ☐ **Friends of the Library** represent citizen participation and assistance in the activities and programs of the library.

MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS

A number of methods exist to manage funds for the exclusive benefit of the library. Whatever the method, good management of funds and transparency are essential to maintain the public's confidence.

A library board may choose to work with the town to invest funds. This is a less expensive and time-consuming option for the board, but it also gives the board less control over the funds and yields lower returns due to the limited investment options available to municipalities by state law.

The board may instead choose to establish a **foundation** or a **trust**, organized as a non-profit corporation which exists as a separate legal entity from the library. The primary functions of these vehicles are to raise and manage major funds for the library. Each vehicle has a separate board of directors, some of whose members may come from the library board. In some cases a trust fund may be governed by the foundation or library board. Control of funds rests with the foundation or trust board of directors or trustees.

Before determining/establishing a new financial vehicle, the library board should:

- define their purpose and goals,
- reach out to key municipal officials (such as town manager/mayor, town treasurer, and/or select board) for legal and financial guidance,
- investigate all options (talk to libraries with experience, and seek guidance from professional legal and financial advisors) and determine which will best serve the library.

LIBRARY FOUNDATIONS

Library foundations have a similar organizational structure to Friends groups – they are a separate 501c3 organization with their own board of directors – and a similar aim: to support the library financially. But there are some key differences between these two organizations. Where Friends groups are typically run by citizens who simply love their library, foundations are usually set up by the library board and the foundation board often includes one or more library trustees. Friends groups tend to raise smaller amounts of money by reaching out to the whole community through book sales and other activities, while foundations typically seek large donations usually from a few key individuals or corporations. And while many Friends groups have been around for a long time, and raise funds for a broad range of library needs, foundations are typically set up for a specific purpose requiring a large amount of money, such as a capital campaign, and may or may not be disbanded when that purpose has been achieved.

A library may have either a Friends group or a foundation, or it may have both, depending on the specific needs of the library. Some libraries have employed a model of both entities working together as two branches of one organization. If your library is considering setting up a foundation, it should consider whether the foundation would best serve the library as its own entity or under the umbrella of the Friends group (if a Friends group exists). When a separate library foundation is being established, it is important to take into consideration the current role of the Friends, so as not to duplicate efforts or make the Friends feel irrelevant. Both entities have an important role to play in supporting the library.

Members of a foundation board should be carefully considered and selected. Foundation boards often include at least one library trustee. It is a good idea to include people with specific expertise, such as lawyers and accountants, and high profile community members. Generally, foundation board members are very well connected in their communities and can reach out directly to, or at least provide names of, potential major donors.

Why establish a public library foundation?

- ☐ To provide the library with an independent financial resource
- ☐ To fund enhancements to library services
- ☐ To help protect against possible reductions in service when times are tough
- ☐ To encourage planned giving and major gifts, endowments and memorials for the library
- ☐ To provide the residents of a municipality with a clear cut way of channeling tax exempt donations to the library explicitly for library use
- ☐ To offer the possibility of more aggressive investment practices, and thus greater potential returns for the library, than a municipality is allowed under Massachusetts law.
- ☐ To create a highly visible public relations tool for the library

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a time consuming and ongoing responsibility that requires planning, commitment and support from all connected to the library. But the rewards are great — people love to give to their local library as well as enjoy the benefits and beauty of the enhanced library.

Selected Fundraising Terms

Annual Appeal: Raising of funds on a yearly basis, primarily through direct mail and email.

Bequest: A gift made through a will of personal and/or real property (such as cash, land, securities or other assets of value).

Capital Campaign: A fundraising program to support capital projects such as technology, library renovations or additions, or new buildings.

Endowment Fund: A permanent fund which has been established to produce income (restricted or unrestricted) to supplement a library's budget. Typically only the interest is spent.

Planned Giving: An organized effort to encourage long term commitments through such deferred gifts as trusts, bequests, life insurance, etc.

Restricted/Unrestricted Funds: Restricted funds must be used as stipulated by the donor for the purpose designated by the donor. Unrestricted funds may be used at the discretion of the recipient.

Spending Policy: The percentage of endowment assets which will be spent in each annual period. For example: "four percent of the average of the value of the fund (at the calendar year end) over the past four years."

Trust: A set of instructions left to a trustee with management authority over the trust property (also called the principal or capital) which is to be managed for the benefit of a named beneficiary.

Fundraising tips/best practices

This advice regarding fundraising is adapted from United for Libraries, a division of the American Library Association.

- ☐ Good organizational structure makes all the difference. Be organized (policies, committees, etc) and create a strong structure/plan, including outreach and PR. Use your website effectively.
- ☐ Have key community leaders head the campaign (even if in name only). This lends credibility to your campaign and encourages donors to give for the library.
- ☐ Don't be deterred by competition with other worthy projects. Present your case with facts, benefits, and reasons for giving. Believe in your cause and never doubt success.
- ☐ Personal contacts and meeting one on one are the best ways to approach prospective donors. Know your target audience. Cultivate donors and respect their wishes. Leadership gifts are important. Visit the biggest donors first. Success is based on: due diligence and sending the right person at the right time to the right prospect for the right amount.
- ☐ Reach out to all groups and organizations in your community...women's clubs, veterans' organizations, civic clubs, church and synagogue groups, and PTAs.

- ☐ Have an elevator speech ready, but let it be adaptable. Create a donations graphic.
- ☐ Advise prospects about what will be done with their gift. Be frank about, but do not emphasize, your expenses in support of the project.
- ☐ Accept all forms of payment, and pledges. Ninety percent of the people who make pledges honor them. In-kind gifts are appropriate, as are memorials and endowments (obtain the library's policy regarding in-kind gifts, and make sure the donor understands the policy). Embed a donation mechanism into the website ("More ways to give").
- ☐ Keep good records. Tell and document the story, especially with donated items.
- ☐ There is no such thing as saying thank you too much to workers and donors!

COMMITTEES & CONSULTANTS

As an organization, you may want to consider hiring a professional fundraising consultant and/or have a fundraising committee(s).

Fundraising Committee

Fundraising committees can be in charge of all types of fundraising, including capital campaigns, special events, and annual appeals. Fundraising committee responsibilities include:

- ☐ Set goals for amount to be raised.
- ☐ Develop materials that support the goals (e.g. written plan, brochure/case statement) and talking points that everyone (including staff and volunteers) can articulate, and train committee members on how to do the Ask.
- ☐ Identify potential major contributors and the best way to reach them.
- ☐ All committee members should make a financial donation.
- ☐ Secure the largest gifts first.
- ☐ Contact potential major donors in person. Letters and phone calls should be used to set up appointments only, unless the person lives out of state.
- ☐ Listen to major donor suggestions regarding fund raising strategies.
- ☐ Don't forget to contact people who live outside of the community if they have strong ties to the community or the library.
- ☐ Avoid jargon. You should ask the potential donor to "consider" (not "give") a gift in a certain amount or range. Make sure you are not asking for too small a gift: underestimating a person's ability to give may cause offense.
- ☐ Don't forget to ask major donors how (or if) they want to be publicly recognized.

Public Relations Committee

Portraying the library and your fundraising campaign in the most positive light is important to all aspects of the campaign. Sometimes a library needs a public relations committee to assist the fundraising committee. PR committee responsibilities include:

- ☐ Know your community and how best to appeal to them
(in print vs. online, fancy vs simple, fashion vs dog show, etc).
- ☐ Never use pledged money for PR materials.
- ☐ Regularly inform and thank those who have already participated and given.
- ☐ Promote your campaign in all appropriate forms of media. Be creative!
- ☐ Plan fun events that are solely for campaign awareness
(such as the campaign kick-off or a ground breaking ceremony).

Hiring a Fundraising Consultant

The final decision on whether to hire a professional rests with the leadership board, which should consider all alternatives before hiring a consultant. If your aim is to raise significant funds, your board might want to consider hiring a consultant. This consultant's major role is to help determine the feasibility of raising these funds. They can help board and staff members to understand that only a certain amount of money can be raised at any one time from a specific constituency, and that donors will not support poorly defined objectives.

The professional fundraiser can help establish a fundraising plan and a calendar for achieving the goals, can help with scripting a presentation to major donors, and can coach those people identified to conduct major donor presentations.

While a professional consultant can make a significant contribution to a major fundraising campaign, this person should never be the one to make a final presentation to a potential major donor. People want the personal touch of talking with members of their own community, not a paid consultant.

No board should hire a consultant without a written contract defining the agreed upon services, timeframe and costs.



DONORS

It is essential to cultivate and appreciate donors.

Why do people give to a library?

- ☐ They feel connected to and use their library.
- ☐ They know that it is needed and are confident that it will be put to good use.
- ☐ They believe in the mission of a free public library.
- ☐ They know that the community (including themselves) will benefit from the gift.
- ☐ They were asked!

What do they look for when they are considering giving?

- ☐ Good management and sound planning
- ☐ Strong support
- ☐ A persuasive presentation and a request that is clearly articulated and professionally asked
- ☐ Knowledgeable and articulate library director
- ☐ Contributions by all board members, library trustees and others connected to the library (including staff)

The Association of Fundraising Professionals, in conjunction with the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, and the Giving Institute, developed a *Donor Bill of Rights* that is worth bearing in mind when reaching out to potential donors (see Appendix 8A).

BOND ISSUES AND OVERRIDES

When going for a bond exemption under Proposition 2½ or other taxpayer support, the fundraising campaign must be considered and approached like a political campaign. There are very stringent rules about use of the public library property to wage or support a political campaign.

Essentially, you aren't allowed to do it! You may not use the library staff, supplies, or building to promote your campaign, under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 55. The Massachusetts Office of Campaign and Political Finance (mass.gov/ocpf) has information which describes the library's rights and responsibilities in these matters, including the *Campaign Finance Guide: Public Employees, Public Resources and Political Activity*. You may also contact the Board of Library Commissioners for more information on the use of public resources for political activity. The Department of Revenue's Local Services division website has more information about overrides and Proposition 2½.

Trustees need to be cautious when it comes to such political campaigns. If an override is on the table, the board should consider seeking guidance from municipal counsel regarding specifically what trustees and staff may and may not do.

The following activities may be conducted by your Friends of the Library, or other local advocacy group:

- ☐ Get advice on how to win from the politicians who have run successful campaigns in your community.
- ☐ Form a separate committee to run this campaign. You may recruit volunteers from your most enthusiastic patrons, Friends, and trustees, so long as the business is not conducted on the library premises.
- ☐ Do not use public funds. Find a sponsor to underwrite all costs for the campaign, such as printing, postage, copying, even pencils.
- ☐ Identify the people in town who vote. Try to obtain a list of voters who actually went to the polls at the last local election.
- ☐ Have volunteers put these names into a database that will generate mailing labels (also add phone numbers and precinct numbers.)

- ☐ Mail an explanatory flyer to the people on this list.
- ☐ Provide written instructions to volunteer telephone callers. Make the phone calls a week after the flyer is mailed to find voters' positions on the issue. If they are in favor, ask them to go out and vote on Election Day.
- ☐ Maximize public relations by using your cable TV, Friends newsletter, letters to the editor, interviews with the press, and public speaking to civic groups and parent organizations.
- ☐ On Election Day, organize drivers, checkers, runners, and people to stand outside the polls. Thank people for coming.
- ☐ Don't forget to thank everyone who helped, regardless of whether your campaign has been successful.

Working with legislators and public officials

- ☐ Be fair, informed, and informative. Avoid cynicism about public officials.
- ☐ Be understanding of the pressures being applied to legislators.
- ☐ Be friendly and maintain contact. Don't wait for a crisis to seek them out.
- ☐ Be reasoned and reasonable in presenting arguments.
- ☐ Be thoughtful about getting their attention; don't waste their time.
- ☐ Be charitable (up to a point) about delays in their responses or actions.
- ☐ Be constructive and cooperative: try to provide possible alternatives.
- ☐ Be realistic and persistent, but recognize that politics is the art of compromise.
- ☐ Be a good opponent, fighting the issue, not the person.
- ☐ Be loyal to your position, trustworthy and discreet.

- ☐ Be calm and evaluative. Be willing to work at your arguments and your contacts.
- ☐ Be generous in giving credit where credit is due.
- ☐ Be visionary, realizing you may still win the war after losing a battle.

Trustee Tip

Try for a one-issue, special election for your bond issue or override vote. Libraries have had greater success in winning these votes when the library doesn't have to compete with other tax issues.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

All libraries need Friends. Friends of the Library are groups of citizens who join together to fundraise, advocate for, support and promote libraries. They understand the importance of library service to the community and work in a variety of ways to help provide quality service and to stimulate the use of the library.

Friends are in the unique position of being able to make enormous contributions in several areas: fundraising, services, programming, public relations, advocacy, volunteerism, and community involvement. Their activities change as needs change. Friends usually select a limited number of activities to emphasize annually. Friends may become a part of the volunteer program and work in the library on specific tasks or projects designated by the director.

All Friends groups should be separate non-profit organizations and should apply for tax exempt status (i.e. as a 501c3 organization). Once a Friends group has this status all donations made to them are tax deductible.

Why should a library have a Friends group?

- ☐ To create public support for an expanding library program
- ☐ To provide direct financial assistance to purchase items not covered in the regular budget
- ☐ To work for library legislation or appropriations
- ☐ To intensify community awareness and use of library
- ☐ To raise money and campaign for a new building, renovation or expansion
- ☐ To sponsor programs designed to add to the cultural life of the community
- ☐ To aid in public relations by informing the community about the library's services, and communicating the needs of the community to the library board and staff
- ☐ To call public attention to outstanding achievements of the staff and library

The specific goals, functions and activities of a Friends group will depend on the unique needs of the library it supports, and should be planned and carried out in accordance with the goals of the library.

Friends can be most effective by:

- ☐ Adopting bylaws including a clear statement of Friends' supportive role
- ☐ Developing a strong board
- ☐ Having a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the library's board of trustees
- ☐ Appointing a Friends liaison to the library's board of trustees and welcoming a liaison from the trustee board to Friends' meetings
- ☐ Inviting library director to all board meetings
- ☐ Keeping informed of library plans and policies
- ☐ Planning their activities with the approval of the library director and board

- ☐ Asking “what can we do?” instead of announcing “we will do this”
- ☐ Carrying out whatever projects are undertaken without excessive demands on the staff
- ☐ Serving as communication links to the board on community needs
- ☐ Recruiting new members and keeping them active and informed
- ☐ Working closely in cooperation with the board and library director

WORKING TOGETHER: FRIENDS, TRUSTEES AND STAFF

Friends can be invaluable members of the library team when organized carefully, but if the Friends’ role is not clearly defined and structured, the library’s operation and public image will be affected negatively. The roles of trustees, library staff and Friends of the Library are related but distinct, as outlined in the following document — which was created for Connecticut libraries but is universally applicable — called *Working Together: Roles and Responsibilities Guidelines*: <http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/trustees/orgtools/role.pdf>. These separate roles must be recognized, clarified and accepted on both sides in order to maintain a harmonious relationship between the Friends and the library. A thoughtfully prepared Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the board and the Friends can help to keep everyone on the same page and prevent misunderstandings and conflict. United for Libraries, the division of the American Library Association specifically for trustees and Friends has a sample MOU that boards can use: <http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/foundations/factsheets/factsheet26.pdf>. The MBLC will also provide a sample MOU.

Who Can Join Friends?

Anyone who cares about libraries can become a Friend, including trustees and library staff. In fact, trustees and staff should belong to the Friends of the Library, to show their support and appreciation for the Friends and to encourage community members to join. However, to avoid possible conflict of interest, it is recommended that current trustees and staff not hold office in the Friends of the Library organization. The library director or a staff member delegated by the director should attend Friends board meetings on a regular basis.

Trustees and Friends

Trustees must be involved with the Friends of the Library. All trustees should be members of the Friends. However, except in extreme circumstances, it is not advisable for trustees to serve on the Friends board. Trustees are considered municipal officials under state ethics laws, and being a board member of the Friends group may have conflict of interest implications. (See Chapter 3 of this *Handbook* for a discussion on the Conflict of Interest Law.) The Friends of the Library board can often be the training ground and a source of competent candidates for appointment to the library board. It can also provide a way for former trustees to continue contributing to the development of library services.

Trustees should assist the Friends organization and support activities by providing leadership in the following ways:

- ☐ Having a Memorandum of Understanding with the Friends which clearly states the roles of the trustees and Friends
- ☐ Working with the library director to draft procedures and regulations relevant to Friends activities
- ☐ Appointing a board liaison who attends Friends board meetings
- ☐ Welcoming a liaison from the Friends to trustee board meetings
- ☐ Including Friends' report as part of the trustee agenda at least quarterly, if not monthly
- ☐ Meeting semi-annually with the Friends board to plan and define goals for the group
- ☐ Attending Friends' events
- ☐ Including Friends representation on library planning efforts
- ☐ Providing information and asking for input

Trustee Tip

Trustees and Friends should have liaisons attend each other's board meetings, and each group should welcome a liaison from the other.

Library Staff and Friends

The library staff, especially the director, play an important role in the formation and maintenance of Friends organizations. They must be familiar with the resources and activities of Friends groups statewide and nationally. The library should provide materials, books, articles and expertise to guide the citizen interested in starting a local Friends of the Library organization. The library director and/or a staff member delegated by the director (i.e. a staff liaison) should attend Friends board meetings on a regular basis.

The director and staff further assist Friends by:

- ☐ Interpreting trustee policies and regulations concerning Friends
- ☐ Using the Memorandum of Understanding to clarify roles
- ☐ Attending Friends meetings and special events
- ☐ Regularly providing library reports, statistics and information to Friends
- ☐ Providing a library "wish list" to the Friends which will help them target the financial support the library needs
- ☐ Suggesting projects and targeting library needs
- ☐ Participating in planning activities with Friends

ORGANIZATION OF FRIENDS GROUPS

If your library does not have a Friends group, consider forming one. The idea to form a Friends group may come from interested citizens or from the trustees and library director, but regardless of who initiates it, careful pre-planning and involvement from the board and library director are essential. Set the guidelines, roles and structure of the Friends from the beginning. For assistance in forming a new Friends group, contact the Massachusetts Friends of Libraries (MFOL), the statewide organization developed to assist Friends of Libraries groups (see chapter 11 of this *Handbook* for additional information or the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

What Are The Steps Involved In Organizing A Friends Group? In brief:

Organize a small steering committee consisting of:

- People with proven concern for and love of the library, representing a cross section of the community
- Trustees, library director, and staff

The steering committee lays the groundwork:

- Decide on and pursue nonprofit incorporation and tax-exempt (501c3) status
- Write a draft constitution and bylaws to be approved at an inaugural meeting, as well as draft goals, objectives and purpose
- Form the initial nominating committee to prepare a slate of officers to present at the inaugural meeting
- Establish initial dues structure, schedule and membership applications; begin membership drive
- Plan the inaugural “all members” meeting:

Time, date, and place

Agenda (who will chair meeting, who will explain the purpose of Friends)

Pre-publicity (e.g. flyers, phone calls, announcements, news articles, etc.)

Make copies of the library’s policy, membership applications, and draft bylaws

During the first meeting the agenda might include:

- Welcome by chair of board of trustees
- Introduction by library director
- Explanation of purpose and formation of Friends group by steering committee
- Election of officers (including nominations from the floor)
- Review and adoption of constitution and bylaws

After the meeting:

- Publicize the formation of a Friends group and announce officers
- Actively recruit members throughout the community
- Design and distribute Friends brochure and establish website/page/online presence
- Form committees and begin work

This is a basic outline for getting started. Your local situation, size of the library, and size of the community should determine your specific plan. The important thing is to have a plan and to be prepared. For a more thorough overview of establishing a Friends group, see United for Libraries' Fact Sheet *How to Organize a Friends Group* (<http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/friendszone/factsheets/unitedff1.pdf>) and their *Toolkit to Create Friends Groups or to Revitalize the One You Have* (<http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/friends/orgtools/libraries-need-friends.pdf>).

It is important to note that while trustees are often integral in getting a Friends group up and running, and may serve on the initial steering committee or founding Friends board, the goal is ultimately for the Friends to have a self-sufficient board that works closely with the trustees but is not made up of trustees. Once the Friends have gotten their footing, it is recommended that any trustees involved should step down from the Friends board, except in a liaison capacity.

Trustee Tip

While money raised by the Friends is intended for use by the library and should be spent according to the library's needs as determined by the board and director, it is important to keep in mind that the Friends have spent time and energy raising these funds. Work with your Friends group to find appropriate uses of the money that they can feel good about. Keep the Friends in the loop of library happenings. And don't forget to thank them for the hard work they have done!

ADVOCACY

TRUSTEES AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

Advocacy is the art of championship: promoting and speaking out on behalf of a cause that one feels is of great importance. What better cause is there than one's own public library? It is the responsibility of each trustee to serve as an advocate, working diligently to gain adequate backing for the library. This goal is achieved by actively and enthusiastically seeking local, state, and federal support for the library's staff, collections, property, and programs. Trustees should be sharing the library story far and wide to all they meet.

Advocating at the local level is vitally important. There are many ways for a library to do this. Providing funding agencies with an annual report that outlines the services you offer is one way. Asking to present a "State of the Library" address at a Town or City Council meeting is a wonderful way to let them know what's going on at the library. The Library Director should present the report but trustees should attend the meeting to support the director. Trustees should also support the director when they are requesting the annual budget from the funding agency.

As an advocate, you can influence decision-makers by:

- speaking to civic groups about the library's needs and issues
- talking to friends about the library, its role in the community, and its needs
- writing letters to the editor of the local newspaper
- testifying at local and state budget hearings
- talking and writing to state and federal legislators about the needs of the library
- contributing to a library newsletter that is sent to decision makers

Advocacy is the responsibility of trustees. You are the voice of the community.

You can make a difference because trustees:

- see the library from the user's viewpoint
- have a perspective on the full range of public services
- represent a broad base of consumers
- understand the needs of their community
- are volunteer participants in government
- are voters

Involve your local community in the advocacy process. Trustees should be advocating for the library by pursuing contacts with friends; library users; civic groups; industry, business and real estate contacts; and elected town or city officials. Establish a local legislative network of committed residents and friends to put library issues before the voters and officials. Identify key supporters, distribute facts, figures and position papers, provide information on the legislative process, mobilize and be ready for action. There's no substitute for personal contacts.

Do bear in mind that, as public employees, there may be some limitations on what trustees can do in the role of advocacy. The State Ethics Commission has an Advisory piece to help guide elected and appointed public employees in what they may or may not do involving political activity. See **Advisory 11-1: Public Employee Political Activity** from the State Ethics Commission, and the **Campaign Finance Guide: Public Employees, Public Resources and Political Activity** from the Massachusetts Office of Campaign and Political Finance (OCPF).

Please refer to chapter 8 of this *Handbook* regarding the restrictions on use of public property for advocacy on local political issues such as overrides and debt exclusions.

STATE LEGISLATIVE NETWORK

Trustees also have a broader imperative: to work for improved library services across the Commonwealth. This can be accomplished by becoming informed about the structure of legislative activities across the state, learning to network with others who are concerned with improving libraries for the benefit of every citizen of Massachusetts, and developing a process with their director to ensure that all relevant legislative information is disseminated in a timely way to every trustee on the board.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has a Government Liaison whose job it is to disseminate information about libraries to Massachusetts trustees and librarians; to act as a resource for local legislative networks; to monitor legislation, and to provide information on library issues to local, state and federal officials. Information about legislative initiatives for library funding and the legislative process at the state level can be found on the MBLC website: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/budgets-and-funding.php>.

Trustees should pursue statewide progress for libraries by working with the Board of Library Commissioners, the Massachusetts Library System, the Massachusetts Library Association and the Massachusetts Library Trustee Association. Be aware of political issues that impact academic, school and special libraries as well as public libraries. Trustees can take action and sign up to receive alerts from the Massachusetts Library Association about libraries and library funding, here: <http://cqrcengage.com/alama>.

To take library advocacy a step further (i.e. the national level), visit the American Library Association's advocacy page at: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/home>.

Trustee Tip

Do you know your local, state, and national elected officials? Have you contacted your state or national legislators about library legislation or funding? Do you discuss pending legislation at your board meetings? If not, it's never too late to get started!

SPEAK UP: YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

➤ Know the key issues, needs, facts, and statistics of your library.

➤ Keep the library in the loop of major town/city boards.

➤ Get to know your municipal officials and state legislators.

➤ Encourage officials and legislators to use the library (e.g. town boards could hold meetings at the library, legislators could hold constituent hours at the library, etc.) and invite them to library events (programs, celebrations, award ceremonies, etc.).

➤ Establish an ongoing relationship with local media.

➤ Keep abreast of statewide initiatives and participate in advocacy efforts, such as Library Legislative Day.

➤ Attend trustee training workshops such as MBLC's trustee orientations, and events of the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association (MLTA) and the Massachusetts Friends of Libraries (MFOL).

Speak out for your library as the institution which provides the taxpayer the “biggest bang for the buck,” an essential element in the education of the lifelong learner.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

An active publicity program is essential to communicate the dissemination of needed services, and for the growth and even survival of public libraries. Time, effort and funding must be devoted to advertising library service. Publicity is the continuous process of informing the community and creating a positive public image for many constituencies. It may be difficult for librarians, trustees, Friends and library users to believe, but many people are unaware of the wide range of resources and services available at the public library. In today's media-oriented society, libraries must market their services by creatively using all forms of publicity. As noted in various sections of this *Handbook*, the library plan, budget, policies and activities provide ample opportunity to spread the word.

Consider using the following public relations tools:

- ☐ Public service announcements on local television, radio and cable
- ☐ Library website
- ☐ Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.)
- ☐ Newspaper and community organizations' newsletters, articles and photographs
- ☐ Information distributed by moving companies, Welcome Wagon, and other local organizations that support new residents
- ☐ Billboard space (donated) and community bulletin boards
- ☐ Club meetings, civic associations, PTA, and similar organizations
- ☐ Local business contacts
- ☐ Displays and exhibits
- ☐ Special events
- ☐ Bookmarks, booklists, flyers, brochures, posters

Public relations is much more than the flash, pizzazz and hoopla often associated with PR. Publicity and advertising are not sufficient alone to cultivate good relations between the public and the library. Public relations are 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.

Key Trustee Role in Public Relations

As ambassadors of goodwill, trustees play a crucial role in public relations. Their involvement helps to sustain the organization's credibility in the public eye. There is a natural role and a major responsibility for the library trustee in public relations. Trustees serve as the public's representatives to provide library direction and guidance. The trustee needs to keep in close touch with the people, listening to their perceptions of the library, their still unmet information needs, and the role they want the library to fulfill. At the same time, the trustee needs to serve as a spokesperson for the library to help people understand its role and any problems in fulfilling that role, as well as how to use library services.

As community leaders and citizens working as public employees without compensation on the library board, trustees are in a unique and key position to carry out this two-way communication. By virtue of their unpaid public service role, trustees can speak out and respond to the public in ways that the library director and staff, as employees, cannot; or which if they did, might well be perceived differently by the public.

Some of the most effective public relations for the library is done by members of the library board who may not know that public relations is what they are doing when they talk to their friends about the library. Everything said about the library adds to the community awareness of an important service, and trustees need to take advantage of the many opportunities they have to boost the library.

Board Responsibilities:

- ☐ Establish a public relations policy. Ask your library director to contact the Massachusetts Library System for sample public relations policies.
- ☐ With the library director, develop a positive PR plan and schedule for the library.
- ☐ Recognize PR as a total and continuous function of the library. Assign members to participate in PR events. Support staff training and involvement in PR programs.
- ☐ Evaluate the PR program and public service.
- ☐ Allocate funds for PR activities and/or volunteer specialists to offer help.
- ☐ Educate the board and expand awareness of Public Relations.

Individual Trustees:

- ☐ Be vocal and visible.
- ☐ Listen to the community. Be well informed, use the library and spread the word.
- ☐ 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 in your community to 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.
- ☐ Provide facts and figures to persuade people.
- ☐ Learn about other libraries and services statewide and nationally.
- ☐ Support a Friends of the Library group and recruit members.

WORKING WITH LOCAL NEWS MEDIA

The local media (newspapers, TV, cable, and radio) are a vital factor in all public relations efforts. In fact, the local media can, and should be, one of the library's best friends. Therefore, the library board should be familiar with all media resources in the community, and should learn how best to utilize these resources.

While each board should have a designated spokesperson (usually the board chair), library trustees should make it a point to know personally the editors, publishers, TV and radio station managers, editorial writers, plus media staff who may be involved in reporting on libraries or municipal matters. As determined by library board planning, there should be regular "keeping in touch" efforts. Media contacts should be invited and encouraged to attend library board meetings and kept informed of meeting date schedules, agenda items, special meetings, and any other special events. Key media contacts should be on mailing lists for such items as reports and announcements. Library board members should also keep in mind the value of using the letters to the editor column. This is a means of directly reaching a large audience.

Generally, the library director is the information source concerning library activities. The trustees, director, and staff should clearly understand and observe their respective roles in communicating with the media.

Tips for working with the media:

- ☐ Schedule visits to media representatives in the community.
- ☐ Ask the media representative what they can use, in what form they wish to receive it, and how often they can give coverage.
- ☐ Ask representatives for any ideas they have for giving publicity to the library.
Let them think of interviews, public service announcements, or even regular shows for local radio and TV stations.

- ☐ Compile a helpful information kit to give each media representative. For example: a summary of the library's goals, objectives, and priorities; current services; flyers or brochures; a listing of special upcoming events; and even a review or two of some new books that might be of personal interest.
- ☐ Absorb, but do not promise. Ideas, comments, or even complaints should be taken back to the board and the library director for discussion, and as tools in planning future public relations programs.



PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARY COOPERATION

The need for the establishment and maintenance of productive working relationships between libraries and trustees and local school board members and key administrators has long existed. Don't underestimate the power of the schools and school board as potential partners in public relations and advocacy. A vision of ideal cooperation between public and school libraries states the following principles:

- ☐ Every community provides its residents with access to a free public library and every student has access to school library services fully integrated into the school's instructional program.
- ☐ Every resident has access to the complete library and information resources of the community.
- ☐ Citizens and municipal officials demand excellence in library services and provide adequate financial support to achieve these goals.
- ☐ Municipal officials, public library trustees, directors and staff members, school committee members, school administrators and staff members understand that public libraries and school libraries have different missions but share certain goals and mutually support these respective missions and goals.
- ☐ Every public library and every school library is a member of a Massachusetts Library System.

LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION & RENOVATION

BUILDING A NEW LIBRARY

A major building improvement project is one of the most demanding responsibilities for a board of library trustees to undertake, but it is one that leaves an enduring legacy. The process of developing and executing a library building project is intensive and involves the close cooperation of municipal officials, the library board, staff and supporters and other individuals and interest groups.

There is no standard time frame that applies to all building projects; most take many years, sometimes even decades, to complete. Each project varies depending on local situations, conditions, regulations and ordinances. While the sequence of events may vary, most projects go through the same phases from inception through completion.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BUILDING PROCESS

Typically, there are six phases to any major library building project. The six phases are:

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ Planning and Programming | ☐ Design Development | ☐ Bidding |
| ☐ Schematic Design | ☐ Construction Documents | ☐ Construction |

The success of each project phase leads to the success of the next. Below is a basic outline of the steps involved in each.

Planning and Programming

1. Assessing community and facility needs: the library analyzes and documents the current and future library needs of the community and how well its current building supports them.
2. Organizing the planning team: for those cities or towns that do not have a permanent building committee, the library and/or town appoints a planning team. The team is often referred to as the **feasibility study** or **library needs assessment committee**. Typically, this committee is responsible for the project through completion of the schematic design phase and for assisting the library board in securing the appropriate approvals and funding.
3. Writing the **building program**: the building program is a written document that is typically based on a twenty year planning horizon. It is written before the architect is hired and used by the architect for design purposes and serves as a reference point throughout the project. The building program specifies the space requirements for each major patron and staff area by detailing design features, equipment and furnishings, occupancy, adjacencies and estimated net square feet.

Schematic Design

1. Selecting an owner's project manager (OPM) and architect: most communities have procurement procedures for soliciting, interviewing, evaluating and contracting for goods and services. If a building project uses state funds, the state's designer selection process and requirements for designing and constructing public facilities must be followed to hire an owner's project manager and an architect. The document *Designing and Constructing Public Facilities: Legal Requirements, Recommended Practices, Sources of Assistance* is a good primer and can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/ig/publications/manuals/dcmanual.pdf>.
 - The OPM is hired first. This person represents the owner – the library/town – and provides advice, oversight and consultation from design through construction. The architect is hired next and the OPM aids in the hiring process. The architect provides schematic design services and may coordinate engineering and consultant services.

2. Defining and communicating parameters: the OPM and architect read and understand the program. The architect meets the library committee and staff to confirm and clarify information and requirements.
3. Creating the schematic design: the architect works closely with the library to determine the type of project (addition/renovation, new construction, or conversion of an existing non-library building) and the building site, and then develops preliminary plans and elevations. The architect works with a team of designers, engineers and other consultants to design specialized components of the site and the building, such as mechanical and structural systems. This phase produces a preliminary site plans, floor plans, elevations and renderings.
4. Estimating project cost: determining the preliminary project cost estimate must be done by an independent cost estimator, not associated with the architect's firm.
5. Receiving local funding approval: community and funding authorities approve the project and local funding. Most projects are funded by tax dollars, capital campaigns, endowments, and grants.
6. Appointing a building committee: if necessary, committee membership and name may change as committee work shifts from schematic design to design development and construction.

Design Development

1. Refining the design: design development takes the schematic design and layers on details related to the building's exterior, its structural, mechanic and electrical systems, and other components such as lighting and plumbing.
2. Approving the design: the owner approves the final design and documentation, allowing the plans to move forward to the next phase.

Construction Documents

1. Adding more details: the intricacies of the building are further refined in the architectural drawings and with the creation of the specifications. The specifications are requirements that the builder, engineers, other tradespeople and consultants use to build. The documents created during this phase are used to solicit bids for construction services.
2. Estimating costs: an independent cost estimator refines the project cost estimate.

Bidding & Negotiating

1. Preparing to bid: document sets are made available to general contractors wishing to bid on the job. For all public buildings, it is necessary to use bid procedures outlined in the *Designing and Constructing Public Facilities* primer (<http://www.mass.gov/ig/publications/manuals/dcmanual.pdf>) for hiring the general contractor or construction team.
2. Evaluating potential contractors: with the help of the architect and the OPM, the owner evaluates bids.
3. Contracting: the contractor is selected and negotiations are completed on the cost and scope of the project so that a contract can be signed.

Construction

1. Setting the schedule: the construction schedule and projected completion date are established; both may be adjusted as construction moves forward.
2. Mobilizing: the construction team is mobilized and site preparations are made.

3. Building: unless there are major unforeseen circumstances, construction is a continuous forward process. Activities during this phase include but are not limited to:

- Excavation & site work
- Foundations and slabs
- Framing and roofing
- Building envelope
- Interior work
- Furnishings, shelving, finishes and equipment
- Finish work
- Touring the building as part of Substantial Completion to identify punch list items
- Transferring building to the owner

THE BUILDING COMMITTEE

Establishing the needs assessment committee and/or the building committee should happen early in the planning stage of the project. This committee serves both to allow the community to actively participate in the building project and to ensure that is an open and transparent process. In communities where there is a standing municipal building committee with town-wide responsibilities, or where the municipality appoints members to a committee, it is essential that the library's director and trustees are represented on that committee.

Ideally, a committee is composed of one or more trustees, citizens with specialized knowledge and skills, and the library director who can be either a voting or ex officio committee member. In some communities the committee is given decision making authority; in others it performs an advisory function. In almost all municipalities, actual decisions concerning financial expenditures or entering into contracts remain with the trustees or elected officials. It is important that the building committee have a written, detailed charge that delineates authority and responsibilities, and gives a clear statement of its relationship to the trustees and/or town officials, the library director, the OPM and the architect.

A well-organized building committee is an invaluable asset in moving a project successfully toward completion. Its meetings often serve as a bellwether for overall municipal support. Committee meetings abide by Open Meeting Laws. Meetings are well-publicized, and minutes are kept and made available to the general public.

THE LIBRARY BUILDING PROGRAM

The first step in planning a new building or a major renovation is the development of the library building program. While this document has similarities with a typical architectural program developed by an architectural firm, the library program includes elements not found in that document that are specific to libraries.

The best building programs are written by the library director in cooperation with the trustees, the staff, and the building committee, and with community input; but it is a time consuming task. In some instances, a library building consultant may be hired to write it or assist the library director with it. This consultant is usually an experienced librarian who has planned and implemented library building projects. The library's long range plan serves as a source document for the development of a building program.

What's included in a Library Building Program?

A 20-year planning horizon is used in developing the program requirements. The elements found in a library building program include:

- ☐ an overview of the history of the community and library
- ☐ a demographic analysis of the community
- ☐ a physical description of the current library
- ☐ an analysis of the library's current collection and services
- ☐ a needs assessment

☐ a description of an expanded and improved library that would adequately serve the needs of the community. This description is composed of space needs projections, descriptions of all major service and staff areas in terms of:

- ☐ seating
- ☐ spatial relationships among service areas
- ☐ furniture
- ☐ general design requirements
- ☐ equipment
- ☐ estimated square footage
- ☐ occupancy

The library building program articulates the library's vision of its future and serves as a set of instructions to the architect. The architect confirms program requirements through independent investigation and professional knowledge, and then begins conceptualizing a building that answers the needs and requirements expressed. Throughout the project, the program serves as a yardstick to determine how true the design remains to that vision.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL SITES

One of the most important factors in a library's success is its location. The library board and the committee may want to work together to identify sites to investigate for suitability.

Two to three sites should be identified and preliminarily investigated. One of these could be the library's existing site. The site selected among those identified must have appropriate subsoil conditions and provide adequate space for parking, grading, utilities and of course the library building, including space for future expansion. If applying for a Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program construction grant, the library's location must be specified at the time of application, and the site must have prior approval from the municipality.

The approved site cannot be changed once an MPLCP grant is awarded.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

The architect chosen to complete the preliminary or schematic design phase has several important tasks. The first is to become completely familiar with the library building program and its requirements. This knowledge and information is supplemented by feedback from interviews conducted with library staff, the trustees and building committee, and in some cases, library users. Through these discussions, the space requirements and area descriptions in the program are refined.

The architect studies and compares the potential sites previously identified by the committee, taking into account both viability and cost. If expansion and renovation of an existing building is a consideration, the architect determines whether the program requirements can be met using that building and site. Once the architect completes the feasibility study and makes a recommendation, the trustees make their final decision based on the recommendations of the architect, the library staff and the building committee. This decision takes into account the broader issues of finance, town-wide concerns, and public support.

Once the site location decision is reached, the architect produces a series of increasingly more detailed drawings that translate the program into preliminary plans within the context of its site. The architect presents the plans and revisions at a series of review meetings. The library director plays an integral and active role in these critical meetings. While architectural design will evolve even further during design development, the schematic design lays the foundation for the project's success or failure. Ultimately, these plans are presented to the community to gain town or city wide support for the project.

LEGAL ISSUES

Legal responsibility for a major library improvement project is complex and each city and town has its unique circumstances and protocols. In most cases the library trustees hold legal authority over decisions concerning library buildings, but the municipality has overall responsibility for public facilities and for their operations budgets.

Trustees are principally responsible for ensuring that adequate funds are available for a library project. Most projects rely on local tax dollars and funds raised privately. The process of raising funds may precipitate legal issues such as incorporating library Friends groups into 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations, the use of trust funds, bonds, or other city/town funding instruments. Other legal issues could include such things as purchasing or transferring land and complying with environmental laws and accessibility regulations. As needed, trustees seek legal advice throughout the planning, designing and construction process. Sources of advice may be from a municipal attorney, or an attorney for the board.

FUNDING

Library building projects almost always rely on more than one funding source. Determining the right mix that fits an individual community is an important trustee responsibility. In general, local funds constitute the major portion of a building project budget. Public funding sources include general revenue appropriations, general obligation bonds, mortgages, and short term debt. Gaining approval at town meeting for public funding requires sustained effort on the part of trustees. Efforts to win support are not unlike an election campaign.

While it is unusual for a project to be funded entirely from private donations, significant donations often fund major expenditures, especially in the case of furniture, computers, and landscaping. Trustees may choose to hire a private fundraising consultant to assist in conducting a capital campaign to raise funds.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services, the federal agency primarily responsible for federal funding to libraries in the United States, does not provide funds for library construction.

However, there are other possible sources of federal funds such as:

- ☐ Community Development Block Grants for targeted improvements such as handicapped access, usually as part of a town wide project, from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ☐ The Challenge Grants Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities (highly competitive)
- ☐ National Register of Historic Places for Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid from the Department of the Interior
- ☐ Rural Development Administration community facility loans
- ☐ New Market Tax Credit Program, a complex program for non-profit organizations, including libraries, that encourages investments by private investors into low-income communities.

MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The primary source of state funding is the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP), administered by the MBLC. The MPLCP was established by Chapter 478 of the Acts of 1987, and has been reauthorized and funded multiple times. As of June 2018, 330 grants have been awarded totaling \$ \$403,886,346 for planning and design and construction projects.

These grants help communities across the Commonwealth to fund planning, design and construction of major public library expansions, renovations and new construction. Except in a case where a library might suffer an unexpected catastrophic loss of its building, funds are made available through a competitive grant process. More information can be found on the Construction section of the MBLC website: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/construction>.

The types of projects that MPLCP funds are:

1. Planning and Design projects
2. Construction projects
 - New construction
 - Addition/renovations
 - Renovations
 - Joint Public Libraries
3. Catastrophic Loss of a Library Building projects

These grants are not offered on a regular schedule, but as funds become available. The timing of a grant cycle is contingent on the state legislature's authorization of a bond for public library construction and availability of funds through the state's capital budget each year.

Technical Support

In addition to financial support through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPCLP), the MBLC provides technical support from two full-time Library Building Specialists who work with public libraries pursuing capital building improvements. They assist library directors and staff, trustees, building committees and local officials through all project phases from planning and design through construction. Specialists serve as liaisons from the MBLC to administer the MPLCP and provide advice to libraries preparing MPLCP grant applications.

The Massachusetts Library System (MLS) also provides support from a staff library advisor who works with libraries pursuing targeted space improvements that involve reconfiguring portions of public service and staff work areas.

For further reading, a list of library design and construction resources is available at <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/constructionlibrary>.

BEYOND YOUR LIBRARY: RESOURCES & SUPPORT

MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE: HISTORY

The list of “firsts” associated with public library development in Massachusetts gives testament to the historic commitment of state government and the people of Massachusetts to library services.

In 1848, the Massachusetts General Court enacted legislation granting the City of Boston the right to establish a public library, the first such legislation in the world. Three years later the legislature extended to all cities and towns in the Commonwealth the authority to establish and maintain libraries with public funds.

In 1889, Melvil Dewey, whose name is synonymous with public library development, was able to say, “All nations recognize the United States as leading in the matter of (public) libraries. The United States recognizes the New England states and especially Massachusetts as its head.”

In 1890, the General Court established the Massachusetts Free Public Library Commission (today, the MBLC) as the nation’s first state library development agency, and authorized the country’s first state aid to local libraries program. This aid was in the form of one hundred dollars worth of books to every town establishing a free public library, appointing a board of trustees, providing facilities and establishing an appropriation of local funds.

Since 1900, the legislatures in each of the fifty states have created some variation of a state library agency charged with developing library services. In addition to the present-day Board of Library Commissioners, Massachusetts has a separate State Library and a State Archives.

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) is statutorily charged to support, develop, coordinate, improve and promote library services throughout the Commonwealth. The Board was established in 1890 under Chapter 78 of the Massachusetts General Laws and consists of nine Commissioners, each appointed by the governor for a five-year term. This term is renewable by the governor one time, and many commissioners serve a full decade on the board. Commissioners are residents of Massachusetts who have varying connections to libraries, and collectively represent a broad range of library types and services.

The Board of Library Commissioners' broad statutory mandate is stated in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, section 19: "The Board of Library Commissioners may expend such sums as may be appropriated for the extension and encouragement of library services within the commonwealth."

The mission of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners is to *"provide every person in the Commonwealth with full and equal access to outstanding library services, to promote innovation and collaboration, and to position libraries at the center of civic life in their communities."*

Program and advisory areas of the Board of Library Commissioners include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Adult Literacy | ☐ Library Statistics |
| ☐ Digitization and Preservation | ☐ Planning |
| ☐ Disaster Assistance | ☐ Resource Sharing |
| ☐ Federal LSTA Grants | ☐ Services for People with Disabilities |
| ☐ Librarian Certification | ☐ Small Libraries |
| ☐ Library Construction | ☐ State Aid to Public Libraries |
| ☐ Library Directory | ☐ Summer Reading |
| ☐ Library Jobs Database | ☐ Youth Services |

MBLC also advises municipalities and trustees regarding the operation and maintenance of public libraries and is statutorily authorized to administer state and federal programs for Massachusetts libraries.

The MBLC is your state agency and primary resource on library-related issues.

Its commissioners and staff work to provide the library community with encouragement, support and guidance. Through the MBLC, trustees and library directors all across the Commonwealth can work together to reinforce Massachusetts' position of leadership in library services.

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners:

www.mass.gov/mblc

98 North Washington Street, Suite 401
Boston, MA 02114-1933

Phone: 617-725-1860

Toll free: 800-952-7403 (in-state only)

Massachusetts Libraries
BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

STATEWIDE LIBRARY SERVICES

The following institutions and services are supported financially by the MBLC through federal Library Services and Technology Act grants or state funding.

> MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Massachusetts Library System (MLS) provides services to more than 1,500 Massachusetts libraries of all types and sizes throughout the Commonwealth. All 371 public libraries in the state are members of MLS. MLS was established in July 2010 with the following mission:

The Massachusetts Library System, a state-supported collaborative, fosters cooperation, communication, innovation, and sharing among member libraries of all types. The MLS promotes equitable access to excellent library services and resources for all who live, work, or study in Massachusetts.

Among the Massachusetts Library System's key initiatives are: statewide delivery and interlibrary loan services, MassCat (a resource sharing network for small libraries of all types), databases and ebooks, and workshops and advisory services for library personnel.

Massachusetts Library System:



<http://www.masslibsystem.org/>

Phone: 508-357-2121

Toll Free: 866-627-7228 (in-state only)

Email: info@masslibsystem.org

> LIBRARY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH



In 1970 the Boston Public Library was designated by legislation for reference and research services for the Commonwealth (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, section 19C), formerly known as the Library of Last Recourse. A state appropriation is made each year through the Board of Library Commissioners to fund this service. The amount of the appropriation is calculated on a per capita basis using the statewide population. Library for the Commonwealth services shall include but not be limited to, the development and maintenance of a statewide digital library, access to online media, research materials, multimodal reference services and information delivery, access to historical records and collections, inter-library loan services, and other resources responding to the informational, cultural, and educational needs of the Commonwealth. As part of the program, all citizens of Massachusetts are entitled to a BPL eCard, allowing them instant, remote online access to a wealth of electronic resources, including databases and e-books. For more information about the Library for the Commonwealth and the Boston Public Library, see <http://www.bpl.org/>.

Digital Commonwealth

In partnership with the Library for the Commonwealth, the Digital Commonwealth is a nonprofit, collaborative organization established in 2006 to aid Massachusetts organizations such as libraries, museums and other cultural institutions, in digitizing their historic and cultural collections. The Boston Public Library provides some free digitization services to member institutions. More than 70 public libraries across the Commonwealth are among the nearly 200 institutions participating in this project. Historical materials from many of these institutions are available on the Digital Commonwealth website:

<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/>

The Digital Commonwealth is a partner organization of the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA, <https://dp.la/>), which operates at the national level.





➤ MASSACHUSETTS CENTER FOR THE BOOK

In 1977, the Center for the Book was established in the Library of Congress. Starting in 1984, affiliate Centers for the Book were established in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Massachusetts Center for the Book is funded by the MBLC and carries out the national Center's mission of promoting "books, reading, literacy and libraries."

The Massachusetts Center for the Book has undertaken several projects to promote literacy and literature in and relating to the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Book Awards, held annually since 2000, honor books written by Massachusetts authors or that have strong ties to Massachusetts. Letters About Literature, a national contest encouraging school children to write letters to authors whose books have affected them personally, garners upwards of 5,000 entries from Massachusetts students annually.

Massachusetts Center for the Book:



<http://massbook.org>

Phone: 617-521-2719

Email: info@massbook.org



➤ LIBRARY SERVICES TO THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

State funds for libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped are administered by the Board of Library Commissioners. The purpose of the program is to provide blind and physically handicapped residents of Massachusetts with library service as effective, diverse and accessible as that which is available to the general public. Services are provided through contractual agreements with the Braille and Talking Book Library at Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown and the Talking Book Library (a subregional library) located at the Worcester Public Library. Both institutions are members of the Library of Congress/National Library Service (NLS) network, which is a federal program that provides materials and equipment to the blind free of charge.

Talking Book Library (Worcester Public Library):

<http://talkingbook.mywpl.org>

508-799-1730 or 1-800-762-0085 (In State)

Braille and Talking Book Library (Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown):

<http://www.perkins.org/community-programs/btbl/>

617-972-7240 or 1-800-852-3133

> RESOURCE SHARING NETWORKS

Library networks facilitate the sharing of resources among libraries for the mutual benefit of their patrons. The goal of the networks is to strengthen member libraries through innovative and economical technologies, efficient resource sharing, collaboration and shared expertise. This is accomplished through shared access to and support for:

- ☐ collections by means of interlibrary delivery services
- ☐ bibliographic data via a centralized database (catalog)
- ☐ online resources (electronic databases)
- ☐ continuing education and development of technical expertise of staff members.

The Nine Networks in Massachusetts:

- ☐ CLAMS Cape Libraries Automated Materials Sharing
- ☐ C/WMARS Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing
- ☐ FLO Fenway Libraries Online
- ☐ MBLN Metro Boston Library Network
- ☐ MLN Minuteman Library Network (Metrowest area)
- ☐ MVLC Merrimack Valley Library Consortium
- ☐ NOBLE North of Boston Library Exchange
- ☐ OCLN Old Colony Library Network (South Shore area)
- ☐ SAILS SAILS, Inc. (Southeastern Massachusetts)

For more information and a map of the nine networks in the Commonwealth please visit <https://mbic.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/library-networks.php>.

Other state organizations related to libraries

> STATE LIBRARY OF MASSACHUSETTS

The State Library of Massachusetts was organized in 1826 to provide library service to the Governor and other constitutional officers of the Commonwealth, and to members of the General Court and their staff. The Library's collection of Massachusetts government publications is the most complete in existence, with comprehensive holdings of executive agency publications, reports of cities and towns, selected federal publications, and other materials related to the commonwealth. The State Library is independent of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

State Library of Massachusetts:

<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/oversight-agencies/lib/>
617-727-2590

> MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES

The Massachusetts Archives, a division of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, has as its mission to preserve and make accessible the records of the government of Massachusetts, and to assist government agencies in managing their permanent records.

The Archives holds materials dating as far back as 1629, and includes documents such as founding documents (charters, treaties, and the Constitution of 1780); legislative, executive and administrative documents; records from the Treasurer's and Attorney General's offices; local records; and other historical materials including photographs, maps and artifacts. These collections are public records, and the Archives is open to the public for research purposes.

Massachusetts Archives:

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcidx.htm>
Phone: 617-727-2816
Email: archives@sec.state.ma.us

KEEPING UP TO DATE

Amid changing communities, technological innovations, and an information-dominated society, library trustees often face complex issues and difficult decisions.

Board members must strive to develop competencies in diverse areas such as finance, policy, and the ever-evolving role of the public library in our society. Continuing education opportunities are available on the national, state and local level, in person and online, to offer support to both new and experienced trustees. In addition to library-specific workshops, other training opportunities may be available on general topics such as Open Meeting Law, procurement, strategic planning, and many others. There are approximately 50,000 public library trustees in the United States, with some 2,600 representing Massachusetts libraries. By sharing information, discussing common problems and planning strategies for the future, trustees can more effectively fulfill their responsibilities.

SUPPORT FROM THE MBLC

MBLC and MLS offer training and continuing education programs, including Trustee Orientations which are held around the state. Information about Trustee Orientations can be found at <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees/events/orientations>.

All Massachusetts trustees are automatically subscribed to the MBLC Trustee-Announcement email list, which is used to disseminate important information from the MBLC that all trustees need to know. Trustees can also self-subscribe to the Massachusetts Public Library Trustees email discussion group to communicate with other trustees throughout the state:

<https://mblc.state.ma.us/sympa/info/trustees>.

MBLC has compiled helpful information and resources for trustees in our Trustees Resource Guide, available at: <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees>. Here you will find sample policies and bylaws, discussion of issues common to trustee boards, and other useful resources.



PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

Trustees are eligible and encouraged to join and attend meetings and conferences of the following organizations:

Association	Mission/Purpose
MLTA Massachusetts Library Trustees Association Email: mltamemberinfo@gmail.com	MLTA supports library trustees across the Commonwealth.
MLA Massachusetts Library Association http://www.masslib.org/	MLA strengthens the Massachusetts library community through advocacy, connection, and collaboration.
MFOL Massachusetts Friends of Libraries https://massfol.org/	MFOL encourages and assists in the formation and continued growth of our state's Friends of Library groups.
NELA New England Library Association http://nelib.org/	NELA provides educational and leadership opportunities for library staff in support of improved library services for the people of New England.

Association	Mission/Purpose
ALA American Library Association http://www.ala.org/	ALA provides leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.
United for Libraries (Division of ALA) http://www.ala.org/united/	United for Libraries is a national network of enthusiastic library supporters, including library trustees and Friends. They support those who govern, promote, advocate, and fundraise for all types of libraries.
PLA Public Library Association (Division of ALA) http://www.ala.org/pla/	PLA enhances the development and effectiveness of public library staff and public library services.
ARSL Association for Rural & Small Libraries http://arsl.info/	ARSL provides resources and support that empower those in small and rural libraries to deliver excellent service for their communities.
Urban Libraries Council http://www.urbanlibraries.org/	Urban Libraries Council provides a forum for library leaders to share best practices and innovative ideas that inspire programs that support 21st century learning, a strong economy, and an active democracy.

CONTINUING EDUCATION POLICY

Board policy should include a statement in support of continuing education and training for both library staff and trustees. The library's budget should include monies for participation in various activities:

☐ At least one trustee membership in each professional organization. Consideration should be given to the payment of dues or fees for national or regional library associations from operating funds. All board members should be encouraged to join these groups and participate. Many of the associations listed above offer reduced rate memberships for library trustees and/or memberships for entire boards.

☐ Funding for trustees and staff to attend local, statewide and national conferences.

☐ Funding to purchase special books and materials relevant to trusteeship.

Time should be allotted at board meetings to share articles of interest and reports from conferences that members attend. Have trustees present mini-workshops based on what they learn at meetings.

Trustee Tip

Invest in the future. The time, effort, and money spent for trustees and staff to learn more about their jobs will earn a high rate of return in the improved service to the community.

GETTING ADDITIONAL HELP

In addition to the MBLC, MLS, and other support organizations noted in this chapter, there may be times you or your board will want or need guidance from other Massachusetts state agencies. The agencies most commonly sought by library boards are listed below:

Massachusetts Attorney General (AG)

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/office-of-attorney-general-maura-healey>

Boston Main Office: (617) 727-2200

AG's Regional Offices:

Springfield: (413) 784-1240

New Bedford: (508) 990-9700

Worcester: (508) 792-7600

State Ethics Commission

and Attorney of the Day program

<http://www.mass.gov/ethics/>

(617) 371-9500

Secretary of the Commonwealth

Public Records Division

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/preidx.htm>

(617) 727-2832

Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Division of Local Services

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/local-officials/>

(617) 626-2300

Massachusetts Municipal Association

<http://www.mma.org/>

(617) 426-7272

Chapter 1 Appendix A

Sample Position Description for Public Library Trustee

POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEE

Job Title: Library Board Member

Accountable To: Members of the community, local governing body, and others served by the library

Responsibilities: Attends and participates in all board meetings

Works with other board members to:

- oversee the library
- hire and evaluate the library director
- establish policy and strategic plans
- determine the final budget
- conduct public relations and advocacy

Duties: Reads board meeting minutes and other materials sent out before the board meeting

- Becomes informed about all phases of library operation
- Knows the programs and services the library offers
- Serves on committees as assigned by board chair
- Participates in the library's planning process, reviews and revises plan annually

- Lends expertise and leadership to the board for the good of the library
- Actively participates in activities and workshops offered on the local, state and national levels
- Helps to secure adequate municipal funding for the library
- Participates in fundraising activities
- Visits the library often
- Is aware of the services offered by the MBLC and MLS
- Reports regularly to municipal officials and to the community
- Knows laws that affect the library
- Understands local government structure and stays informed of changes in municipal policies that may affect the library

Qualifications: Resident of the city or town in which they serve

- Commitment to and appreciation of the library, and a desire to provide the best possible library service for the community

CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.*
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.*
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.*
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.*
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.*
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.*
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.*
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.*

(Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008.) ¹
(from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics>)

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Chapter 2 Appendix A

Parliamentary Know-how

Parliamentary procedure is used during meeting and committee deliberations to allow self-governing organizations to debate and reach group decisions, by vote, with the least possible friction. Library boards should include in their bylaws a statement of adherence to parliamentary procedures. Following parliamentary procedures allows for debate and group decisions to be made by majority opinion with respect for the minority opinion.

Following is a brief guide to parliamentary language commonly used at board meetings:

Objective (What you want to do)	Action – making a motion (The words to use)
To introduce business	Offer a motion
To approve action	Move to accept, adopt, or ratify
To modify or change	Move to amend or refer to a committee
To defer action	Move to postpone to a definite time, refer to a committee, or lay on table
To limit discussion	Move to time debate
To stop discussion	Move the previous question
To determine correctness of an announced voice vote	Move for division of the assembly
To suppress a question	Object to consideration, move to postpone indefinitely, or lay on table
To object to decision of the Chair	Move an appeal from the decision
To make a request	Call for point of information, rise to parliamentary inquiry, or raise question of privileges
To consider a second time	Move to take from the table, reconsider, or rescind
To repeal action	Move to rescind

Chapter 2 Appendix B

Sample Board Meeting Agenda

--- PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Date
Time
Place

AGENDA

[Agenda Item]

[Speaker]

1. Call to Order

Chairperson

- a. Roll call and introductions
- b. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting
- c. Next meeting date

2. Reports: will vary throughout the course of the year.

Reports may be presented in advance to save time.

The following are examples of what may be included.

Financial

Treasurer

Library Director

Library Director

Committees

Committee Chair

Policy

Legislative

Friends group

3. Action Items

Chairperson

4. New Business

5. Public Comment

6. Adjournment

Chairperson

Note: Action items on the agenda should be listed in enough detail to be understood by the public, per Open Meeting Law. “New business” may include topics that the board chair could not reasonably anticipate would be brought for discussion at the meeting. However, it is advisable that any new business brought to the board not be acted upon in the same meeting.

Chapter 2 Appendix C

Sample Board Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE _____ PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Date

Time

Place

PRESENT: List names of board members present and/or absent

STAFF PRESENT: List names of staff present

OBSERVERS: List names of any observers present

Call to Order (note time meeting was called to order)

Approval of Minutes: Approval of the previous meeting's minutes should be noted, with any corrections stipulated

Date of future Meeting

Reports/Actions: (All reports given and actions taken should be recorded)

Financial Report

A written report should be presented by the treasurer or library director which clearly shows monies received and expended during the previous month, year to-date figures, total budget, balance of budget, and an explanation of major changes.

Library Director's Report

The director's report is crucial to the efficient administration of the library, since it may be the only regularly scheduled opportunity for trustees to hear about and focus on the day-to-day issues which the library presents. The report may include: statistics on library use; program attendance; personnel activities and issues; programming; progress reports and ideas for the future; building maintenance progress and problems.

Committees

Policy: Minutes should record any policy changes or decisions

Legislative: Progress report, etc.

Any other committee activities that were reported on

Public Comment: Any public comments that were made should be noted

Adjournment (note time meeting was adjourned)

Signature of minutes recorder

Chapter 2 Appendix D

Sample Board Calendar

Note: Many of the events on this sample calendar will happen at different times of the year for different libraries, based largely on the municipal calendar. (See also: Sample Budget Calendar, Appendix 7A)

Annual Calendar of Board Meetings, Committee Activities, and Required Actions

January

- Write annual report for town report
- Submit budget to Finance Committee

February

- Prepare warrant articles for Town Meeting
- Attend local or nearby Legislative Breakfast

March

- Submit warrant articles for Town Meeting
- Plan staff appreciation event
- Attend Library Legislative Day at State House in Boston

April

- Town Meeting
- Thank you ceremony for departing trustees
- Celebrate staff appreciation event

May

- Orientation of new trustees
- Elect officers and standing committees
- Meet with trust/endowment officers if applicable
- Review financial performance and forecast expenditures for next fiscal year
- Check for compliance with State Aid to Public Libraries minimum requirements for materials expenditures

June

- Volunteer Recognition Day
- Review policies, bylaws, and job descriptions
- Plan trustee appreciation event

July

- Review goals for past fiscal year and set new goals
- Celebrate trustee appreciation event

August

- Prepare Director Evaluation
- Review and tabulate data from prior year's monthly reports
- Submit ARIS report to MBLC
- Meet with Director to produce draft evaluation

September

- Discuss draft evaluation of Director
- Submit long range plan annual update to MBLC

October

- Meet with trust/endowment officers if applicable
- Review financial performance and forecast expenditures for remainder of fiscal year
- Finalize evaluation of Director, including contract
- Submit State Aid to Public Libraries application to MBLC

November

- Attend MLTA/MFOL conference(s)
- Discuss performance evaluation with Director, including goals
- Celebrate holidays with staff

December

- Review budget and prepare budget for next fiscal year.

Chapter 2 Appendix E

Sample Board Report Cards

TRUSTEE BOARD REPORT CARD

(Board members should complete this review individually, and their responses should then be compiled and discussed at a designated board meeting.)

	Yes	Somewhat/ Sometimes	No
Does the board operate under a written set of bylaws and follow the laws that govern board operations? Are the bylaws current and do they accurately reflect the true workings of the board? Is there an effective committee structure that involves all members in board work?			
Are board meetings run in a business-like manner with a minimum amount of time devoted to unimportant matters?			
Does the board meet monthly at a regular time? Are arrangements made to ensure that the library director attends board meetings and committee meetings? Are the agenda and meeting documents distributed in advance? Are minutes compiled in a timely manner and sent to members following the meetings?			
Do you have a training or orientation program for new trustees which is jointly conducted by senior trustees and the library director?			

	Yes	Somewhat/ Sometimes	No
Is a local trustee notebook or manual maintained to supplement the <i>Handbook</i> published by the Board of Library Commissioners?			
Does the board work closely with municipal governing agents who appoint trustees? Are qualifications and duties clearly stated and terms of appointment limited? Does the board represent the whole community? Does the board maintain a good working relationship with local government officials?			
Are all board members and each library location provided with an up-to-date policy manual and notified when policies change? Have all policies been reviewed in the last two years?			
Is there a current strategic plan for the future growth and development of the library?			
Does the board work systematically to assure adequate current and future library funding?			
Does the board systematically evaluate itself, the director and library plan annually?			
Is there good communication between the library director and the board, between the chair and other board members, between the board and related public groups, among various board members?			
Does the board encourage and fund trustee and staff attendance at local, state and national library meetings?			

INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE REPORT CARD

(This evaluation form is meant for individual reflection by each trustee of their own performance as a board member, and need not be discussed or shared with other board members.)

	Yes	Somewhat/ Sometimes	No
Do you understand and respect the different roles and duties of the library director and the trustee board? Do you understand the structure and bylaws of the board? Do you understand the library/board's relationship to the municipality?			
Do you attend all board meetings and assigned committee meetings? Do you prepare and study meeting and other materials necessary to be a well informed board participant?			
Do you regularly read at least one library periodical and consult relevant books or other resources?			
Are you familiar with local, state, and federal laws that affect libraries and your responsibilities as a trustee? Do you strive to be aware of local, state and national legislation and their implications? Do you actively advocate at least on the local and state level??			

	Yes	Somewhat/ Sometimes	No
Do you accompany the director to budget hearings before governing officials and actively work to gain funding from a variety of sources?			
Have you attended at least one community event or meeting as a representative of the library in the last year? Have you attended at least one library-oriented state or national meeting or library workshop in the past year?			
Have you reviewed the library's policy manual to make sure you understand the rationale for service and need for revision?			
Have you reviewed the library's goals, objectives and long range plan in the past year?			
When visiting other cities and other states, do you visit their local libraries? Have you visited your local library in the last month?			
Are you a current member of any professional library associations?			



Chapter 4 Appendix A

ALA Library Bill Of Rights

American Library Association LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

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

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all 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, 1996.²

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

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Chapter 4 Appendix B

Sample Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Anytown Public Library attempts to serve the entire community. The Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to the library director, as guided by community interest and the library's Collection Development Policy (a copy of this policy is available on request). The Board has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. If you feel that a particular item is not suitable for inclusion in the library's collection, please return the completed form to the Library Director, Anytown Public Library, Anytown, USA. Anonymous requests will not be considered.

**If you are requesting reconsideration of more than one item,
please complete a separate sheet for each item.**

Date: _____

Your Full Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address (Street, City/Town, Zip Code):

Are you representing:

Yourself _____ An organization (name) _____

Item requested for reconsideration:

Type of material (book, DVD, etc.) _____

Title _____

Author/Artist _____

Publisher & Date of Publication _____

1. How did you learn of this item?

2. What are your objections to this item?

3. What harm do you feel might result from reading, listening to, or viewing this work?

4. What do you believe is the theme of this work or what was the author's/artist's intent in creating the work?

5. In your opinion, is there anything good about this work?

6. Did you read, listen to or view the work in its entirety? Circle one: Yes No

If not, what parts did you read, listen to or view?

7. Have you read any professional reviews of the work? Circle one: Yes No

If yes, please list the names of reviewers and the sources in which it/they were published.

8. What action would you like the library to take in regard to this work?

9. What suggestion do you have for a work with a similar purpose to replace this item?

Chapter 7 Appendix A

Sample Budget Calendar

BUDGET CALENDAR

July/September

Trustees and library director review goals, objectives and budget of the previous year and the goals and objective of the current year. Board and library director should review annual statistical information from the year just completed and what these statistics say about library services. Board sets goals and objectives for the next fiscal year.

Treasurer/Trustee Finance Committee project revenue available for next fiscal year.

October/December

Director and staff discuss library services and relationship to budget. Is the library offering the services the community needs? Is funding adequate for these services? New services that should be added in next fiscal year; technology updates that should be made.

Treasurer/Trustee Finance Committee/Library Director have a preliminary discussion on the next fiscal year budget. Review first quarter expenditures of current budget. Have preliminary discussion with municipal officials.

Library Director presents draft budget to Treasurer/Trustee Finance Committee.
Refines budget after discussion

Library director takes budget guidance given by municipal officials, prepares budget and presents to the Board. Trustees vote on budget.

**January/March**

Library Director and Board of Trustees meet with municipal officials to present and advocate for library budget.

Trustees publicize budget and advocate for it at community meetings, and with local groups.

April/June

Trustees and Library Director present budget for final approval to town meeting, city council, or town administrator.

Chapter 8 Appendix A

Donor Bill of Rights

A DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

DEVELOPED BY:

Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)

Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP)

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)

Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Non-Profits

PHILANTHROPY is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life. To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the not-for-profit organizations and causes they are asked to support, we declare that all donors have these rights:

- I To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes.*
- II To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.*
- III To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements.*
- IV To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.*
- V To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition.*
- VI To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.*
- VII To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.*
- VIII To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization or hired solicitors.*
- IX To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.*
- X To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.³*

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(from <http://www.afpnet.org/files/ContentDocuments/DonorBillOfRights.pdf>)

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FURTHER READING

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners maintains a Professional Library with the aim of providing information on library management and operations to trustees, librarians, government officials, and interested citizens. The following publications may be available for loan from the MBLC. To borrow this material, please call 617-725-1860 or request through the Commonwealth Catalog (<https://commonwealthcatalog.org>). The Massachusetts Library System also has its own lending collection of materials of interest to trustees, and additionally, some materials may be available through your library's network.

General trusteeship

The Complete Library Trustee Handbook by Sally Gardner Reed and Jillian Kalonick for the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, 2010.

The Successful Library Trustee Handbook
by Mary Y. Moore, 2nd edition, 2010.

Library Board Strategic Guide: Going to the Next Level
by Ellen G. Miller and Patricia H. Fisher, 2007.

Measuring Board Effectiveness Questionnaire: a Tool for Strengthening your Board
by Thomas P. Holland and Myra Blackmon, 2004.

Taming the Troublesome Board Member
by Katha Kissman, 2006.

***The Ultimate Board Member's Book :
a 1-hour Guide to Understanding Your Role and Responsibilities***
by Kay Sprinkel Grace, 2004.

United for Libraries—Trustees section: <http://www.ala.org/united/trustees>

Policy making

Creating Policies for Results: From Chaos to Clarity

by Sandra Nelson and June Garcia, 2003.

PLA Handbook for Writers of Public Library Policies

(PLA Policy Manual Committee), 1993.

The Public Library Policy Writer: A Guidebook with Model Policies on CD-ROM

by Jeanette C. Larson and Herman L. Totten, 2008.

Planning

Strategic Planning for Results

by Sandra Nelson, 2008.

Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries

by the Aspen Institute, 2014.

(And companion ***Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library***,
http://guides.masslibsystem.org/ld.php?content_id=30054358, 2016.)

Personnel

A Library Board's Practical Guide to Finding the Right Library Director

by Detroit Suburban Librarians' Round Table Succession Planning Committee, 2005.

Fundraising

Asking: A 59-Minute Guide to Everything Board Members, Volunteers, and Staff Must Know to Secure the Gift

by Jerold Panas, 2006.

Forming and Funding Public Library Foundations, 2nd edition

by Benjamin Goldberg, 2004.

Fundraising for Libraries: 25 Proven Ways to Get More Money for Your Library

by James Swan, 2002.

Fundraising Mistakes That Bedevil All Boards (and Staff Too) :

a 1-hour guide to identifying and overcoming obstacles to your success

by Kay Sprinkel Grace, 2004.

Getting the Money: How to Succeed in Fundraising for Public and Nonprofit Libraries

by Ken Dowlin, 2009.

Friends

The Essential Friends of Libraries: Fast Facts, Forms, and Tips

by Sandy Dolnick, 2005.

The Good, the Great, and the Unfriendly: A Librarian's Guide to Working with Friends Groups

by Sally Gardner Reed, 2017.

Library construction & renovation

Checklist of Library Building Design Considerations

by William W. Sannwald, 2016.

Managing Your Library Construction Project

by Richard C. McCarthy, 2007.

Redesigning the Public Library Building

by Primary Research Group Staff, 2013.

For more “recommended reading” on library planning, design, construction and maintenance, please see [http://guides. mbhc.state.ma.us/constructionlibrary](http://guides.mbhc.state.ma.us/constructionlibrary).

**Massachusetts Board of
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617-725-1860

mass.gov/libraries

(consumer portal)

mass.gov/mblc

(agency site)

