



THE CARE AND FEEDING OF THE LIBRARY TRUSTEE



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WHO'S WHO?

- ◉ The library director is the equivalent of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the library. The director works in partnership with the library's board of trustees. The board is your collaborator in creating quality library service for the community.
- ◉ **The board's role** is to govern the library - to approve policy, secure adequate funding and hire a competent, qualified library director.
- ◉ **The director's role** is to manage the library - to implement the board's policies on a day-to-day basis, manage the staff and help lead the library forward in the best way possible to meet the needs of the community.

MORE ABOUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES (I)

◎ Board of Trustees

- Employs a library director who meets state requirements and develops guidelines for staff selection.
- Provides adequate salary scale and fringe benefits for all employees.
- Adopts personnel policies or personnel manual.
- Recommends qualifications and candidates for board. Notifies appropriate authorities of board vacancies. Provides orientation for new trustees.
- Develops standards for evaluating library director's performance. Reviews director's effectiveness.

MORE ABOUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES (III)

◎ **Library Director**

- Hires and directs staff according to board policy.
- Suggests improvements needed in salary and working conditions.
- Utilizes skills and initiative of staff members to the library's advantage.
- Provides board with recommendations and materials to review.
- Maintains personnel manual.
- Recommends criteria and assists in the selection of new trustees. Participates in orientation by introducing library staff, explaining procedures, etc.
- Suggests basis for evaluation criteria. Provides materials for board to study.
- Maintains records of all personnel.
- Regularly communicates with the Board about operations of the library and their outcomes and about issues/trends affecting the library.
- Assists the Board in the development and writing of policy.

MORE ABOUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES (III)



◎ Joint Responsibilities

- Observe all local, state, and federal laws that relate to current employment practices.
- Provide in-service training for development of staff members and effective implementation of policies.
- Provide opportunity for continuing education and advancement of staff and trustees.
- Treat trustees, director, and employees with respect.

DISAGREEMENTS

- ◎ Just as a trustee who disagrees with a board decision still should stand behind the full board's decision, so should the library director stand behind the boards decisions and implement them. If you have appropriately, fairly, and objectively counseled them, they will likely make the right decision in the first place.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE... (I)



- ◎ A clear understanding of the relationship between the board and staff members is vital to the smooth operation of the library.
- ◎ Ideally, the relationship will be analogous to that of a corporate board of directors; i.e., it should be one of cordial and friendly interest, but at no time should the board, or an individual board member, intervene between a staff member and the director.
- ◎ The board hires the director to be the expert in management of the library, including the management of all other personnel.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE... (II)



- ◎ Board members should not issue orders to the staff or make demands of the staff except through the director. The board has no direct responsibility for assessing staff performance other than the director's.
- ◎ There are times when it is appropriate for board members to work with staff members. Some examples of when board members may work with staff members are: in committee settings; in the long-range planning process; if requested by the director to make reports at the board meeting; and when planning library social events. The good director remembers this!
- ◎ A policy should be adopted that reflects the relationship between the library board, the library director, and the staff, and it should be communicated to the staff so that it is clearly understood.

COMMUNICATIONS: THE KEY!



- ◎ It is vital that the director maintain regular, on-going communications to the Board, including discussion/reporting on:
 - Library activities and outcomes (statistics)
 - Status of projects
 - Issues and concerns which may need policy adjustment
 - Financial status of the library
 - Information about trends affecting the library
 - Information regarding problems which the library is facing or may face.
 - NEVER, EVER sugarcoat things. Tell things as they are; yet don't but rude or disrespectful. Sometimes it takes time to develop such a relationship.
 - NEVER, EVER LIE! Your credibility will be lost.

COMMUNICATIONS - WATCH OUT!



- ◉ By the way, no matter how little you are paid, or how little you feel respected sometimes, **you ARE a public official!**
- ◉ Consider your actions as a public official - **NEVER** do anything in an official capacity that you wouldn't want published on the front page of your local newspaper.
- ◉ **More importantly, help the board to do the same.**
- ◉ Be brave, yet counsel caution to your board. Make sure they understand all sides of a issue and have objective information on which they can weigh options and base decisions. If possible, give options, but also give potential outcomes of those options.

THEY ARE HUMAN TOO...

- ◉ Like people, board members have egos, personality quirks, need for recognition and acceptance, and other potential pains in your backside....learn to live with them.
- ◉ Library trustees are called – "trustees" because they are entrusted with other people's money to spend on behalf of the community. Ensuring that the Board is compliant with all laws, regulations and procedures to help them be as transparent and accountable as possible to the community is a major priority. Remember, they have a responsibility on their shoulders.
- ◉ Remember that the job of trustee is regularly a thankless job, with no pay, and often requiring a great deal of their time. Do whatever you can to lessen those *all* of those effects.



**REMEMBER, YOU
ARE ON THE
SAME TEAM!**



Thanks for your interest!