

# Handbook for Louisiana Library Trustees



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
A LIBRARY PURPOSE	iii
I. TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES	1
1. Statutory Responsibility	1
2. Practical Responsibility	2
3. Who Does What (Table 1)	4
4. Who Does What (Table 2)	12
5. Ethical Responsibility	14
II. BOARD ORGANIZATION	15
1. Officers	16
2. Meetings	16
3. Bylaws	17
4. Parliamentary Know-How	19
5. Most Used Motions	20
III. PLANNING	21
1. The Plan	21
2. The Mission Statement	21
IV. POLICY MAKING	
1. Benefits	23
2. What To Know	24
3. What Policies Are Needed	25
4. Policy in Action	34
5. Appendix	Follows Page 35

V.	BUDGET AND FINANCE	37
1.	Money	37
2.	Sources	37
3.	Budget	39
4.	Tax Campaign	39
5.	Auditor Requirements	42
VI.	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	43
1.	State Board of Library Examiners Regulations	44
2.	Expectations	45
3.	How To Hire A Library Director	46
4.	Review	53
VII.	PUBLIC RELATIONS	54
1.	Library To Community	54
2.	Feedback, Community to Library	54
3.	Library-Oriented Public Relations Programs	55
4.	Positive Trustee Participation	56
5.	Friends of The Library	56
VIII.	CONTINUING EDUCATION	58
1.	Library Organizations	59
2.	Trustee Travel	59
3.	Staff Continuing Education	60
IX.	CONSTRUCTION	61
1.	Financing	61
2.	Involvement	62
3.	Teamwork	62
4.	Responsibilities	63
X.	STATE LIBRARY	65
1.	Services	65
2.	Publications	66
3.	Special Programs	66
4.	Ways Trustees Can Help	67

XI.	STANDARDS	68
1.	Measuring Library Services	68
2.	Staff	69
3.	Materials	69
4.	Physical Facilities	69
XII	FINAL NOTE	71
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	72
	INDEX	74

# INTRODUCTION

---

Louisiana's public libraries are among the finest in the nation -- due in large part to those citizens who serve as trustees with vigor, selflessness, and commitment to public library service in the communities. We are pleased that you have agreed to be one of those few. We thank you for your dedication to promoting public libraries, to forging strong relationships between the library and the people it serves, and in standing up for the principles of intellectual freedom and equitable access to information for all. These guiding principles are the backbone of our profession and remain at the forefront of what we do as librarians. Having dedicated trustees like yourself working alongside us is of the utmost importance.

You may be a seasoned veteran of years of service on public library boards, or other boards, or you may be newly appointed and eagerly searching for guidance in managing a new and unfamiliar responsibility. Whatever your context or experience this handbook is designed to assist you in becoming a more knowledgeable and effective trustee.

We understand that public library trusteeship can be challenging even in the best of times, and that events often unfold too quickly to permit an extensive search for the right answer. By becoming familiar with this Handbook and the accompanying library laws and standards, and you will be well armed to navigate the day to day challenges you may experience as a trustee as well as to plan for the future.

This handbook is a living, breathing document that is regularly updated and enhanced with new insight and expertise from library professionals and those serving as public library trustees. During your tenure as a public library trustee, I encourage you to contact me at any time to provide input. We are all working towards the same goal of ensuring that public library service in Louisiana is always the best it can be.



Rebecca Hamilton  
State Librarian

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This volume would not be possible without the important and laborious contributions of Claudia Penny and Gwen Loflin in the Library Development Division of the State Library of Louisiana. Also, Sara Taffae and Peggie Henderson of the Computer Services Office in the same institution contributed the computer enhancements known as desktop publishing. The authors wish to thank the State Library for generous in-kind support. Finally, thanks go to the Louisiana Library Association for the financial support that enabled printing and distribution.

## **A LIBRARY PURPOSE**

The purpose of each public library in Louisiana is to provide services and resources for all people in the area it serves: to increase their opportunities for participation in society, to learn, to achieve self-fulfillment, to pursue careers, and to conduct research. Although each library will adopt priorities and emphases according to its community needs, goals integral to the stated purpose and common to all public libraries in Louisiana are:

To insure availability of services to match the needs of all people in the community.

To provide people with the means for informal self-education and for supplementing formal education.

To serve as a recreational and cultural center for all the people of the community.

Library trustees are the key to the success of this purpose.

# I. TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

In the operations of libraries, trustees have three responsibilities:

*Statutory Responsibility*  
*Practical Responsibility*  
*Ethical Responsibility*

## Statutory Responsibility

Every trustee on a board must operate from a shared background of fact, beginning with a familiarity with Louisiana law governing parish and municipal libraries. Trustees need to be aware of state and national library standards, and to what degree the local library satisfies those measurements. (See *Library Laws of Louisiana*, especially **RS 25:211-223**, which accompanies this manual; and the *Standards for Public Libraries in Louisiana*, accompanying this manual.) Below is a summary of the most important aspects of the law.

The trustee is legally appointed, so it is not surprising that there are some legal requirements. Trustee powers and duties are set out in **RS 25:215** and are specifically assigned to the trustee acting within the board structure.

All authority for operation of the library resides in the board, in its legal and official capacity. No authority resides in the individual member; trustees need to remember that. Individual trustees do not have power or authority to commit the library or to speak for the board, unless so directed.

Each Louisiana library board is a body politic charged by legislative action with broad powers: "... shall have authority to establish rules and regulations for its own government and that of the library. . ." It should be noted that in Louisiana library law the library board is called "the board of control." There are implications of highest responsibility in this language.



"Establish rules and regulations" should be reduced to more manageable terms, but before it is stated what library trustees do, it should be stated what they do not do. Very simply it is this: the library board does not "run" the library. Rather, the board sees that the library is "run" by hiring a professional librarian who administers the library according to the board's written policies.

### **Practical Responsibility**

1. Employ and/or dismiss the library director and approve appointment of staff
2. Establish written policy
3. Secure adequate funding
4. Approve budget
5. Provide and maintain:
  - a. facilities
  - b. resources
  - c. services
6. Develop the library's plan of service
7. Tell the library story affirmatively and participate as appropriate in a planned program of public relations
8. Utilize opportunities for continuing education

- ★ **REMINDER:** A trustee who discharges all of these broad responsibilities will have enough to do without encroaching on the library director's job of day-to-day operation of the library.

The tables on the following pages help to delineate broad responsibilities. Subsequent chapters provide additional and expanded information on these topics.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## TABLE I

### BOARD

### LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

#### A. Policy Making

1. Determines the goals and objectives of the library and methods of evaluating progress toward meeting them.

2. Considers what policies are needed to carry forward the library's plan most effectively.

3. Officially adopts library policies.

4. Establishes policies dealing with material selection, print and non-print.

1. Provides assistance and direction to the board in setting goals and objectives and determining methods of evaluation.

2. Recommends and drafts policies needed. Advises board on merit of decisions it is considering.

3. Administers library in accordance with adopted policies. Interprets policies to staff and public.

4. Selects and orders all book and other library materials, print and non-print.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### B. Administration of the Library

1. Has indirect responsibility through the employment of a library director and the adoption of plans, policies and budget.

2. Keeps in touch with library's progress and problems through director's reports, personal use of the library, and feedback from the public.

1. Has direct responsibility for administration of the library within the framework of the board's plan, policies, and budget.

2. Reports at each board meeting and in other ways keeps board informed of library's progress and problems.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### C. Personnel

1. Employs library director and confirms staff appointments.

2. Sees that personnel policies provide fringe benefits, such as vacation, sick leave, and compatible working conditions. (Insurance plans are recommended but not mandated. Opportunities for professional growth and staff development should be considered.)

3. Provides adequate salary scale for staff.

4. Develops criteria for evaluating library director's effectiveness.

1. Employs and supervises staff.

2. Recommends needed improvement in working conditions, fringe benefits, and salary scale.

3. Utilizes skills and initiative of staff members to the library's advantage.

4. Suggests basis for evaluation criteria and provides materials for board study. Maintains records of personnel evaluation.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### D. Budget

1. Scrutinizes preliminary budget submitted by library director, makes necessary changes, officially adopts budget. Explores and considers all ways of increasing library's income through new sources and cooperating with other libraries or agencies.

2. Authorizes expenditures in accordance with the budget.

1. Prepares preliminary budget recommendation based on present and anticipated revenues and needs in relation to the board's plan for library growth. Calls board's attention to way of stretching budget through cooperation with other libraries or agencies.

2. Decides on use of money on the basis of the approved budget.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### E. Board Meetings

1. Attends and participates in all regular and special meetings.

2. Maintains "open meetings" as required by law.

3. Approves minutes.

1. Attends all regular and special board meetings except those at which library director's employment, salary, or performance are to be considered.

2. Gives appropriate public notice of meetings.

3. Acts as secretary to the board, prepares agenda with board chair, provides minutes.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### F. Public Relations

1. Establishes and participates in planned program of marketing and public relations

2. Serves as "connecting link" between the library and the community, interpreting the one to the other.

3. Keeps political fences mended.

1. Maintains an active program of marketing and public relations.

2. Interprets board policies to staff and public and involves library in community activities.

3. Keeps political fences mended.



# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### G. Continuing Education

1. Reads trustee materials and library-related publications.

2. Sees that new trustees have planned orientation.

3. Attends district, state, and national trustee or library-related meetings, whenever possible.

4. Belongs to the Louisiana Library Association, the Southeastern Library Association, and the American Library Association.

5. Supports continuing education for director, staff, and take advantage of opportunities for trustee education.

1. Calls significant materials to attention of library board.

2. Organize orientation of new trustees.

3. Informs trustees of important meetings and workshops for them to attend. Urge travel support in budget.

4. Belongs to and attends conferences of Louisiana Library Association, Southeastern Library Association, and American Library Association.

5. Designs and develops continuing education for staff and board.

# WHO DOES WHAT

## BOARD

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR

---

### H. Planning for the Library's Growth

1. Analyzes the community and considers library's strengths and weaknesses in relation to it.

2. Set goals and adopts short and long range plans for library growth.

3. Sets priorities and decides on course of action to implement plans.

4. Considers the advantages of membership in a library system or other networking opportunities.

1. Suggests and provides materials for community analysis. Helps analyze the library's strengths and weaknesses.

2. Recommends plans for library's growth and means for implementing plans.

3. Administers library in terms of plans adopted by the board.

4. Supplies materials allowing board to become knowledgeable about library systems or other networking opportunities.

## WHO DOES WHAT TABLE II

Further board and library director responsibilities involve the governing authority. The following chart sets out these interrelationships.

Board	Library Director	Governing Authority
1. Recommends to governing authority names of persons for appointment to the board.	1. Informs board when new appointment is necessary. Reminds secretary of governing authority.	1. Appoints board members. (Governing authority president or designated alternate is a voting, ex officio member.)
2. Requests tax election. Requests and justifies millage (or direct appropriation from the governing authority). Works to insure tax passage.	2. Provides counsel and documentation. Helps to plan educational information for the tax election.	2. Sets millage after consultation with board. (Or sets direct appropriation from the governing authority.) Calls tax election.
3. Board President or designee approves expenditures.	3. Prepares list of claims for approval.	3. Levies library tax millage annually. Actual handling of funds and payment of expenses varies from parish to parish. Police jury may charge for some services. (See RS 33:1236 No. 35.)

4. Approves purchase of major furniture or equipment needed.

5. Decides on property to be leased.

6. Decides on appropriate property for new construction and mode of financing (from budget, bond issue, new tax, etc.) (See section on **Construction.**)

7. Works to insure a good political climate. Appears before governing authority to report or commend from time to time.

4. Advise of need and provides specifications.

5. Locates property, counsels board, and negotiates with landlord.

6. Helps to locate property and negotiates with seller.

7. Works to insure a good political climate. Provides background information to board members. Offers services to governing authority members.

4. Advertises for bids and awards contracts on purchases over \$10,000.

5. Approves and signs lease.

6. Approves selection, purchases property, and takes titles.

7. Makes agenda time available to board or director when requested.

## Ethical Responsibility

An understanding of the above responsibilities covers a number of ethical considerations. The American Library Association has adopted the following:

### **Ethical Statement for Public Library Trustees**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1985; Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985; Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988; Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January 1989.*

## II. BOARD ORGANIZATION

The library board represents the public which owns the library, and which expects the library to be operated in ways that will be most beneficial to the most people. Good organization, therefore, is mandatory.

Louisiana law provides for the appointment of trustees, specifies the number, and identifies the appointing body. (See **RS 25:214.**)

Of utmost importance to the public, of course, is not how many trustees, or by whom appointed, but is rather how effective and committed the trustees are. Unfortunately, there is no way for the law to guarantee good appointments to the board.

Therefore, the board should be aggressive in pointing out to the appropriate appointing body criteria for selection of new members and in making suggestions of qualified persons who could serve effectively. Nepotism should be avoided as a matter of policy.

New members of the board should immediately be given sufficient orientation to enable them to begin to be useful to the library. Attention should be given to the new members for several months to insure a clear understanding of problems and responsibilities as they arise.

Neither new nor experienced trustees should ever forget the necessity of friendly relations with the appointing body. The library director should be urged to be aggressive in suggesting services of the library that might be useful to such governmental officials. Board and staff should use every opportunity to present the library as an important community resource -- a public utility to be used and useful in the public service. The presence at board meetings of the president of the police jury, or his designee as an ex officio member of the board, offers many opportunities to interpret the library to the governing authority.

## OFFICERS

State statutes provide that each library board of trustees shall meet annually and select from its membership a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer for a term of one year. The law states that the board may appoint the library director to be secretary; this is what is most often done.

## MEETINGS

Louisiana law states that library board meetings should be open to the public, except in certain specified instances. Public awareness of the library can only be beneficial in the long run; therefore, the news media should be encouraged and urged to attend the board meetings, and report them fully.

Any citizen choosing to attend a board meeting as a spectator should be given a warm welcome. Never forget it: the public owns the library. Trustees operate the library on behalf of the public.

The bylaws should set out procedures for allowing comment from members of the public. Library board meetings are open to the public. This should not be confused with public meetings, where anyone is allowed to speak. Only when the agenda seeks public comment is the board obligated to consider it.

Regular meetings should be held on a schedule set out in the bylaws. Special meetings may be called to handle unusual situations or problems.

- ★ **REMINDER:** If the board enters into an executive or closed session for any purpose, no votes or binding decisions can be taken at that session. **RS 42:5C** requires that "all votes...shall be viva voce and shall be recorded in the minutes". In other words, all action must be taken in an open meeting. **RS 42:5B** prohibits proxy voting.

The library director should attend all meetings except those at which salary or tenure relating to the director is being discussed. The library director may, at the discretion of the board, attend a meeting at which the director's salary requirements are to be negotiated.

## BYLAWS

Every library board should adopt bylaws, rules, and regulations covering meetings of the board and policies for operation of the library. Bylaws should be brief and concise.

### **They should cover:**

1. Time and place of regular meetings
2. Method of calling special meetings
3. Quorum -- what constitutes a quorum of the board?
4. Duties and powers of officers
5. Order of business for meetings; for example:
  - Roll call
  - Approval of minutes
  - Correspondence and communications
  - Report of library director
  - Financial report
  - Reports of standing committees
  - Reports of special committees
  - Unfinished business
  - New business
  - Adjournment
6. Agenda
7. Appointment and duties of committees
  - The bylaws should provide a procedure for appointing special or standing committees to deal with finance, personnel, administration and buildings as needed.



8. Hearings and public comments before the board  
A procedure should be set forth in bylaws permitting people to appear before the board to make requests or offer their views on the library's operation.
9. Amending bylaws
10. Required reports
11. Parliamentary authority
12. Rules, regulations, and policy statements

## PARLIAMENTARY KNOW-HOW

Motions grouped according to the purpose to be accomplished:

To introduce business.....	move to main 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

## MOST USED MOTIONS

**Main Motion:** Proposal for action or for expression of certain views. Only one main motion may be on the floor at any one time.

**Subsidiary Motions:** Motions to modify or delay action on the main motion. In order when the main motion is being discussed.

Amend or Modify (five methods to Amend):

- 1 - to strike
- 2 - to insert
- 3 - to strike and insert
- 4 - to add at end of sentence
- 5 - to substitute

*Substitution generally is used only for an entire paragraph or section; strike and insert is quicker, easier, and accomplishes the same purpose.*

**Refer to Committee** -- For information, for appropriate recommendations, and/or to carry out recommendations.

**Postpone to a Certain Time** -- Defer further consideration of the main question until a definitely stated time.

**Previous Question** -- To close debate on current questions. Affirmative vote (two-thirds without discussion) closes debate and orders immediate vote on pending question. The call "Question" may be ignored by the Chair.

**Lay on Table** -- Set aside temporarily. Majority vote and no discussion. Motion may not be modified. If definite time is desired, postpone should be employed.

**Rescind or Cancel** -- May be called for by anyone when it is too late for reconsideration if action is not under way. Two-thirds vote without notice required, majority if notice to rescind has been given.

**Adjourn** -- May be accomplished by general consent or by motion.

Based on Scott Foresman's *Robert's Rules of Order*, 1990.

### III. PLANNING

Library boards are continuously involved in decision making, their effort pointed toward the best possible library service for their specific community. If the board has analyzed and understands the community, and has analyzed and understands the strength and weakness of the library, it has a good basis on which to make judgements affecting the future. Formalized and put into writing, these judgments become a PLAN.

As in policy-making, an understanding of goals and objectives is a prerequisite to good planning. Planning involves asking four basic questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to go?
- How do we get there?
- What timetable will allow us to move most effectively?

When the answer to the fourth question is reached, the product is THE PLAN. A basic outcome of self-analysis that assists in planning is the creation of a mission statement. This is a necessity: it sets the overall tone for the library, establishing what it means to the community and what it will strive to produce on behalf of the community.

**The mission statement is a concise expression of the library's purpose. It specifies the fundamental reasons for the library's existence. In this sense, it builds on, but is not limited to, the roles chosen by the library. The mission establishes the scope of the library's activities for the current planning cycle and acts as the foundation for other planning phases. In one sense, the mission is like a job description: it gives direction to the library's daily activities. \***

*\* from Mclure et al, Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries (Chicago: ALA, 1987).*

Planning for the library is not easy. Planning sessions should be scheduled when the whole board can be present and when there is ample time to explore, brainstorm, and dream. Boards should consider devoting time to a special meeting that centers on intense discussion of long range planning.

Librarians and trustees should plan *with* people, not *for* people. The community should be queried and brought into the planning at an early stage of anything that will require strong community support and understanding. People are more likely to support that which they have helped to develop. This is a basic tenet of marketing: involving key constituencies in the development of products and services. Community organizations should be told of the library's goals and aspirations and asked for assistance.

Good planning allows a choice of options. It lets a board avoid a "this-is-the-only-way-we-can-do-it-now" situation. Careful planning builds smooth operation of the library and public confidence in its activities. The environment of the library is always changing, and planning is simply controlling change.

Many communities have a planning commission and some urban centers have professional planners as a part of city government. Be sure that these people know the library's needs and goals, and urge them to include the library in the community plan at every possible point.

### **AIM HIGH! PLAN BOLDLY!**

The library director and the library board are partners in planning. If they do not aim high and plan boldly for the library, who will? The future of library service in any community is up to the library board. The board is in charge. The board's responsibilities are set out in statutes that cannot be evaded, statutes that name it "the board of control."

## IV. POLICY MAKING

Medieval maps display large areas of uncharted territory labeled terra incognita ("unknown land"). Trustees who turn the operation of the library over to the library director and who fail to provide written policies send their chief executive out into terra incognita. Louisiana library trustees have full authority and responsibility to develop policies for all phases of library operation.

Policies are the outgrowth of the library mission. As in the creation of the Mission Statement, policies are the result of consideration and deliberation, and also the result of teamwork. Goals and objectives must be envisioned and expressed in writing before policies can be written. What kind of library does the board, with the counsel of the library director, want? What kind of service is needed? The library PLAN and MISSION are revealed in what the board's policies say. Policymaking boards should ask the question: **Does this support the library's mission?** Other good questions when considering policy include:

- **Is the policy fair?**
- **Is the policy stated in a positive manner?**
- **Is the policy clearly and concisely stated?**
- **Is the policy flexible for exceptions?**

### BENEFITS

Trustees can ensure that the operation of the library reflects the judgment of the people's representatives by writing and approving policy statements that guide the library director and staff.

A library guided by carefully considered, written policies will avoid numerous pitfalls and will have operations that run smoothly.

Written policies provide direction and consistency in day-to-day operation of the library. Policies reduce the necessity for hurried or uninformed response in crisis situations; policies allow objective and equitable treatment. For example, if there is a "no-strings" policy regarding acceptance of gifts, a gift offered with stipulations can be refused simply by citing policy, no feelings are hurt. Or, if the policy on maternity leave is adopted before someone begins knitting tiny garments on a coffee break, the library director can instruct the employee by citing policy, and, again, no feelings are hurt. Or, if there is a book selection policy requiring that a dissatisfied reader to fill out an official complaint form which is already in the hands of the desk assistant, the first step in a potentially sticky situation can be taken while everyone remains calm.

It is essential that the policies be gathered into a manual so that they are available for quick reference and regular review.

## WHAT TO KNOW

What do you have to know before you can write good policies? Everything: everything about the community, its culture, geography, economics, demography, and education. Any library is good only as it relates to a particular and unique community. A library is a good library to the degree that it supplies what the individual user needs. This implies not only books but other print or non-print materials as well, comfortable surroundings, and an atmosphere of friendliness and encouragement. A surly staff member at the check-out desk can damage the library more than a gap in the book collection. Policies should reflect the board's convictions concerning materials, services, housing, and staff. They should not necessarily reflect a "we-have-always-done-it-this-way" approach.

Policy is not something to be written in a hurry or without study and thought. It is basic to every aspect of the library's service and deserves the board's best effort. But do not think it is engraved on tables of stone, once it is written. A policy must be changed as community needs change. Fresh, creative thinking keeps service responsive to needs. Policies give the library director guidance concerning what kind of a library THIS community needs NOW, as well as setting goals for the future.

★ **REMINDER:** Most policies will come as a recommendation from the Director; or the director may be asked to provide a working draft.

## **AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION**

Be aware that changing community values require policies unthought of only a few years ago. Examples of areas requiring examination for policy implications might include: the homeless, latchkey children, and unattended juveniles at closing time. Consult your legal advisor where there might be a question of liability. Meanwhile, the checklists below should act as a guideline for general policy considerations.

## **WHAT POLICIES ARE NEEDED**

The board should establish written policy on all phases of library operation, both internal and external. The following listings will be useful as the Board begins to assemble or revise written policies.

### **General Library Objectives**

General library objectives to be considered may include:

1. Promote enlightened citizenship
2. Enrich personal lives
3. Assume a leadership role in the community
4. Support ALA Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement
5. Assemble, preserve, and administer books and related materials
6. Provide open access and free service to every resident in community



## Define the Role of the Library

The American Library Association suggests that eight major roles of the public library (listed below in alphabetical order) may be considered. A policy which will emphasize one among these, and prioritize the remainder, is feasible.

1. ***Community Activities Center:*** The library is a central focus point for community activities, meetings, and services.
2. ***Community Information Center:*** The library is a clearinghouse for current information on community organizations, issues, and services.
3. ***Formal Education Support Center:*** The library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objectives established during their formal courses of study.
4. ***Independent Learning Center:*** The library supports individuals of all ages pursuing a sustained program of learning independent of any educational provider.
5. ***Popular Materials Library:*** The library features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages.
6. ***Preschoolers' Door to Learning:*** The library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services for children, and for parents and children together.
7. ***Reference Library:*** The library actively provides timely, accurate, and useful information for community residents.
8. ***Research Center:*** The library assists scholars and researchers to conduct in-depth studies, investigate specific areas of knowledge, and create new knowledge.

## **Service of the Library**

The library provides books and materials for information, entertainment, intellectual development, and enrichment of the people of the community. The library should endeavor to:

1. Select, organize, and make available necessary books and materials (include fines, fees, and charges for lost books)
2. Provide guidance and assistance to borrowers
3. Initiate programs, exhibits, book lists, etc.
4. Cooperate with other community agencies and organizations
5. Secure information beyond its own resources when requested
6. Lead to other libraries upon request
7. Provide special services to nonresidents, disadvantaged, disabled, hospital patients, etc.
8. Maintain a balance in its services to various age groups
9. Cooperate with, but not perform the functions of school or other institutional libraries
10. Provide service during hours which best meet the needs of the community
11. Provide service outlets located at points of maximum usefulness
12. Periodically review library service being offered

## **Budget**

The following points should be considered in a policy on budgets:

1. Preparation -- who is responsible
2. Scope -- categories to be included
3. Presentation -- by whom, to whom, and when
4. Special budget for new construction or capital improvements as needed

## **Personnel**

All personnel policies should be in compliance with the 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. Also, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires compliance with certain accommodations in its Title 1.

### **The main points of good personnel policy include the following:**

1. A description of each job in the library, degree of responsibility, educational and other qualifications required, special abilities or skills required, and the salary scale attached to the job
2. Procedure for selection and appointment of library director and staff
3. A regular salary scale, giving minimum and maximum salary or wages, amount of increments, period between increments, etc.
4. Provision for probationary appointment with specified length of time
5. Comfortable working conditions -- adequate heat, light, restrooms, etc.
6. Vacation with pay
7. Sick leave with pay
8. Other leaves of absence, such as those covered in the Family Leave and Medical Act, with or without pay
9. A regular work week with specified number of hours
10. Holiday schedule
11. Work breaks
12. Fringe benefits available to employees -- hospitalization, other insurance, retirement, and workers' compensation coverage
13. Attendance at library-related meetings -- time off with pay and travel expenses
14. Opportunities for further training and education

15. Evaluation procedure for library director and staff
16. Grievance and discipline procedure
17. Resignation -- amount of notice required and stipulation that resignation should be in writing
18. Cause and procedure for termination of employment
19. Protection against unfair discharge or demotion
20. Retirement -- eligibility and procedures
21. Provisions for hiring substitute personnel when needed
22. Statement on responsibility of librarian for administration of library and responsibility of trustees for making library policy

It is recommended that the policy be reviewed by the local district attorney to insure legality and to avoid misunderstandings.

### **Trustees**

The library board of control authority has to establish rules and regulations. Here are some important policy considerations:

1. Selection or appointment
2. Reimbursement for travel and related expense incurred by attendance at meetings that are library-related
3. Membership in state, regional, and national associations: LLA, SELA, ALA, ALTA
4. Liability, insurance - the following will be of interest:

In a recent publication called *Avoiding Liability Risk*, published by the American Library Trustee Association, Renee Rubin discusses then most important duties that reduce board liability.

Among the most important is the publication of operational policies. Others include: fulfill the library's mission of service; ensure legal compliance (with local, state and federal laws and regulations); establish fiscal policies; develop long-range goals and plans to implement them; establish valid appointment or election procedures. A key tenet is: be prepared, be informed, and act in good faith. These actions will minimize your exposure to a lawsuit.

Another measure to minimize vulnerability is to examine insurance that protects against errors and omissions. Boards should examine the policies of the library and the governing authority, as well as their own personal insurance to determine what coverage exists. Some library boards purchase separate policies such as those covering errors and omissions.

## **Materials Selection**

The selection statement should reflect the philosophy and overall objectives of the library.

1. Support of ALA Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement (LLA *Intellectual Freedom Manual* will greatly assist in development of selection policy.)
2. Who is responsible for selection
3. Quality of materials to be selected
4. Scope, emphasis, and source of collection
5. Treatment of gifts
6. Basis for withdrawals and disposal of discards
7. Position on supplying textbooks and other materials related to school curriculum
8. Procedure to be followed in handling materials content complaint (See "Model Collection Development Policy" at the end of this chapter.)

## **Confidentiality**

Protect confidentiality of records identifying names of library users. (See ALA Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records and **RS 44:13.**)

## **Cooperation with other Libraries**

A policy on cooperation can increase access to materials and should include statements on:

1. Recognition of need for cooperation
2. Affiliation with regional or statewide library networks
3. Specific areas where cooperation will be advantageous

## **Public Relations**

Some of the primary public relations goals of the library should be:

1. To always represent the library in a positive light.
2. To employ current marketing strategy to promote the library.
3. To inform the public of library objectives and services through the press, radio, TV, etc.
4. Recognition of part played by trustees, staff, and Friends of the Library in public relations
5. Participation by trustees and staff in community activities
6. Responsibility of trustees and staff for public relations
7. To encourage use of the library
8. To obtain citizen support for library development
9. To coordinate library activity with other community agencies
10. To state that the image of the library is the responsibility of every library employee

## **Gifts and Special Collections**

Gifts can help promote the program of the library, but libraries have found it helpful to point to an established policy, especially when books and other articles are offered. A policy should include statements on:

1. Conditions under which gifts of books and other materials will be accepted
2. Disposition of non-usable gifts
3. Acceptance of personal property, art objects, portraits, etc.
4. Conditions under which gifts of money, real property, and/or stock will be accepted
5. Shelving of special collections
6. Use of special bookplates
7. Acceptance of denominational literature
8. Acceptance of historical materials and writings of local authors
9. Storage of material not designated as an outright gift
10. Encouragement of gifts for memorial purposes

## **Relationship with Schools**

The public library and the public school are companion educational agencies, but their responsibilities differ in scope and function. In writing a policy the library should:

1. Define the separate functions and objectives of the public library and the school library
2. Determine ways of establishing cooperative relations with the school
3. Provide for continuous joint planning between those responsible for school and public library service
4. Provide a written contract or agreement if library is to give full service to schools

## **Meeting Room Use and Use of Library by Groups**

Libraries have found it useful to adopt a written policy stating:

1. Who may use the rooms and when
2. Whether library activities have priority
3. Whether a fee will be charged, and if so, how much
5. Whether meetings are to be free to the public
6. Whether smoking will be allowed
7. Whether recurring meetings are allowed
8. Whether refreshments may be served
9. Who is in charge of reservations

All of the check list above suggests items which should be included in every library's policy statement but should be adapted to suit local conditions and needs. Policy must express a true commitment of service and leadership.

(See ALA Meeting Room Guidelines in the LLA *Intellectual Freedom Manual*)

## **The Creation of Policy**

How does policy actually get established? Designing policy is a project. First, a determination about need for such a policy is made. If no policy exists, the proposed policy is discussed in relation to what is affected in the library. Board and staff may research how the policy is written and used elsewhere, and how the local community is affected by the issue. If a current policy is in need of revision, the factors creating need for revision are reviewed.

When discussing possibilities, consider the viewpoints of all parties - the public who may be affected by the policy; the staff who must implement policy; the library's mission and its advancement through adoption of policy; and the trustees who must interpret policy to the community.

The request for a policy may be initiated by a board member, by a committee of the board, or by the library director. The Board may involve the staff through the director, with whom the board should always work. Discuss a draft version and adopt or refine the policy. Reevaluate the policy when needed.



## POLICY IN ACTION

There are two steps in implementing policy. They are: the establishment of policies by the trustees; and administrative action by the library director in accordance with those policies.

For instance, board objectives may be: to assemble, preserve, and administer in organized collections, books, videos, audio tapes, and other materials for the communication of ideas, in order to promote an enlightened citizenship and to enrich personal lives.

### Implementation:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. POLICY established by trustees on:</b>   | <b>2. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION by the library director</b> |
| a. Selection of books and other library materials.                                       | a. Setting up procedures to acquire materials           |
| b. Provision for their maximum use within budgetary limits                               | b. Preparing forms for user complaint                   |
| c. Procedures to be followed in user complaints of book content                          | c. Briefing staff on their use                          |
| d. Public relations (including relations with other organizations and use of mass media) | d. Stimulating reading and providing readers' guidance  |
|  | e. Making contacts with organizations                   |
|  | f. Planning and preparing publicity                     |

## AND FINALLY

Every library trustee should have a copy of the library policies and should be completely familiar with the rationale for each one. This is of the greatest importance: the trustee often can interpret the library to the community through an explanation of policy.

Among the most complicated of policies are those dealing with the library collection. The following guidelines are reprinted with permission from Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., *Developing Public Library Collections, Policies, and Procedures*, Kay Ann Cassell and Elizabeth Futas, 1995.

APPENDIX



# MODEL COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The library for which this policy was created does not exist except in the minds of the authors of this volume who have conjured it up.

---

## BACKGROUND

The Futas-Cassell Memorial Free Public Library (FCMFPL) is located in a suburban community, Williamsville, of a medium-sized urban city, Gotham, and serves a population of 35,000 middle-class and working-class individuals. It is a growing community, with a strong Hispanic minority population and another growing minority of single-parent families, most of whom are headed by women. The income level is between \$15,000 and \$50,000 and in many family situations, both husband and wife work full-time. The majority of adults are high-school graduates and have some postsecondary education. There is a group of professionals who have college and postbaccalaureate degrees. A housing boom has brought a population shift from the city to its surrounding suburbs—Williamsville is one of them. Our town has three elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and a community college, which is part of the state's higher-education system. A number of shopping malls on the outskirts of town offer residents restaurants, good shopping, and movie complexes. There are four houses of worship in town which offer religious instruction, as well as social, service, and study groups.

The public library is legally run by a Board consisting of ten men and women appointed by the office of the mayor. They sit for a three-year term which can be renewed indefinitely. The library employs five full-time-equivalent librarians—a library director, a children's librarian, a technical services librarian, and the equivalent of two reference positions (a job shared by three part-time people.) The library is open 60 hours a week: Monday through Thursday 9:00 to 9:00 and Friday and Saturday 9:00 to 5:00. The collection comprises 60,000 books and 150 periodical subscriptions with 2,500 volumes in the reference collection, 3,500 volumes in the children's room, and 500 titles on records and tapes. The library circulates books, periodicals, audiotapes, videotapes, toys, puzzles, and art works. The circulation per year is 150,000. The library occupies 40,000 square feet and includes a room for library programs, film showings, storytelling programs, and for town meetings.

In a community survey done by the mayor's staff with input from the library staff, a great deal was learned about the town residents. Many residents spend their leisure time on projects centered around their homes: gardening, remodeling and redecorating, barbecuing, etc. They belong to a number of service and hobbyist organizations like the Lion's Club or Chess Club and participate in organized sports with their families.

---

## POLICY

The following policy was written by the individuals most concerned with the library and presented to its Board of Trustees. It was passed a little over a year ago, and to date, nothing has been changed, although the year began with a review of the policy statement.

### INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

Williamsville is an active and growing suburban community of 35,000 residents, the largest majority of whom work in Gotham, which is fifteen miles northwest. There is, and has been for the past five years, a population shift from the southeast sections of Gotham to this town. Since the population shift was expected, schools were built and the public library successfully passed a capital bond issue to build a 15,000 square foot addition onto the existing library.

### STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Ideas are among the most powerful of human forces and knowledge a most essential tool for modern living. Since access to these ideas and this knowledge, through the written, audio, and visual media is so important, it is the philosophy of the Futas-Cassell Memorial Free Public Library to serve all the people of Williamsville equally and impartially to the best of its ability. Toward that end, the library seeks to purchase and retain the best and most useful material to fulfill its goals.

The goals of the FCMFPL are to:

1. meet the informational needs of the entire community,
  2. assist individuals in achieving intellectual and spiritu-
-

- al growth and to enjoy life to the fullest through recreational reading and viewing,
3. supplement formal study and encourage informal self-evaluation and learning,
  4. stimulate thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the country, and the world by providing access to a variety of opinions on matters of current interest,
  5. aid in learning and improving job-related skills.

### **OBJECTIVES**

To meet the goals set forth in this policy statement, the following objectives have been adopted:

1. Serve the population of Williamsville by making information available to it in many formats for personal and private use.
2. Identify groups of people with specialized informational needs and purchase materials they will be able to use.
3. Act as a cultural and educational resource for the community by inviting lectures, demonstrations, and discussions to take place in the library building.
4. Enhance the acceptance of new technology for making lives easier and better by example and by expanding the collection of materials in those areas.

### **PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

The purpose of this policy statement is to clarify for the public and library staff the criteria used for selecting material, as well as the responsibility for the collection. We have included goals and objectives, as well as a description of the community and the philosophy of the library, to put these criteria into perspective.

### **SELECTION**

The materials for our library must be selected with the purpose of carrying out the goals of this institution. To help in the process of selection, the following criteria are among those used to judge the quality and quantity of the items that are chosen:

The overarching criteria for the selection of any material are value, need, reception, format, and availability.

---

#### NONFICTION

1. Purpose and importance
2. Authority and reputation
3. Accuracy
4. Style, clarity, presentation
5. Access
6. Format
7. Need
8. Demand
9. Price
10. Relationship to other items in collection

#### FICTION

1. Style
2. Creativity, vitality
3. Characterization
4. Literary merit, significance
5. Appeal
6. Authenticity
7. Demand
8. Price
9. Need
10. Relationship to other items in collection

Individual titles used in selecting materials are listed in the appendix to this policy and are subject to additions, deletions, and changes. On occasion, reception may also refer to an item which is talked about, but which may not be reviewed, or may be reviewed negatively. Such an item may also belong on the shelves of the library to familiarize citizens with what is going on in the outside world.

---

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The responsibility for selecting material legally rests in the hands of the governing body of this library—the Board of Trustees. It, in turn, delegates this to the professional staff, which becomes responsible for the development of the collection on a day-to-day

---

basis. In some areas, committees, individuals, or groups on the staff are more specifically delegated to select material; these responsibilities are listed in the part of this policy statement concerning selection.

There are numerous areas in which the Futas-Cassell Memorial Free Public Library has set up additional or alternative selection criteria, principles, and/or responsibilities.

[An example in each category is presented, with a partial list of other items within the category.]

## **CLIENTELE**

The clientele of the library includes adult, young adult, and children, and may include adult independent learners; specific racial, ethnic, or religious groups within the community; physically disabled, institutionalized, retirees, etc.

### **Young Adults**

Our library seeks to contribute to the understanding of the problems of development within this group especially as regards their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The levels of competence and library skills vary greatly within this age group, and items are selected by the children's and reference librarians with an eye to these differences. The collection is fluid, flexible, current, and attractive and contains material mainly in paperback with an expected high turn-over rate. Important topics and favorite authors, as well as records, tapes, and videos, are selected specifically for this group. Young adults who seek out adult material will be encouraged; those who seek out juvenile material will also be helped. Although the goals of the institution stand also for this group, demand is seen as an important reason for inclusion. Specific criteria are:

- a wide range of subjects, some controversial;
- materials to encourage reading for pleasure and, therefore, set up a habit of life-long recreational reading;
- portrayal of young adults in an honest, nonsentimental, non-authoritative way;
- recognition of special characteristics of this age group and the need to identify with others, peer pressure in the areas of behavior and conduct, and a search for self-identity, self-worth, and independence from family.



## **SUBJECTS**

Certain subject areas may pose problems, notably religion, politics, medicine, and philosophy. There are also areas which are not necessarily controversial but which need carefully defined parameters because of the expense of the material or the restricted usefulness for the particular library such as art and genealogy.

## **RELIGION**

The Williamsville library practices tolerance and attempts to present all of the world's religions through their own materials (e.g., Bibles) and enlightened material about them. In addition, the library attempts to select well-written books on comparative religions, Biblical interpretations, church history, religious education, and inspirational literature of all kinds. The collection is not large, but is kept up-to-date by conscientious weeding. Since there are courses taught in religious studies at the community college, and four active religious communities within the town, individuals with a greater need for in-depth materials are requested to borrow from another collection through interlibrary loan.

## **FORMATS**

The library collects a number of formats especially in the area of audiovisual materials. Among these are films, records, audio cassettes, slides, and pictures. Other formats which are also part of a modern library's collection include paperbacks, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, textbooks, maps, and microforms. Newer formats such as videotapes, computer software, and compact disks are being added as funding allows. The latest that we have developed criteria for is videotapes.

### **Videotapes**

It has been a policy of this library to purchase film in favor of video and to purchase instructional and educational videos in 3/4-inch format. The overwhelming acceptance of the 1/2-inch video format for all kinds of films, and the knowledge that there is a demand for this material, has made itself felt within the library in the past few years. The responsibility for selecting this material rests with a committee of librarians (three reference people and the children's librarian) using criteria similar to those of our book collection. Additional criteria include:

1. Material more appropriate in print form will not be purchased in video, just for the sake of the format.
-

2. A balanced collection of entertainment, documentary, instruction, and cultural material will be purchased.
3. Particular attention will be paid to a classic collection of children's videos that should last for several generations.
4. Since not all of the members of the community have equipment on which to play videos, two VHS videocassette recorders will be purchased to be borrowed with the videos.
5. A small percentage of the book budget (10 percent) will be used to extend this collection each year, and the staff will be encouraged to seek foundation and outside funding sources to build a worthwhile collection more rapidly. When the collection is built, the library will go to the town to ask for additional funding to keep the collection up-to-date.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

This section includes information on: rental collections, art, government publications, gifts, and toys.

#### **Gifts**

The Futas-Cassell Memorial Free Public Library of Williamsville encourages gifts of material or money for material by groups or individuals, citizens of the town or beyond, foundations, corporations, etc. These gifts must meet standard criteria; any materials received will be discarded if the library cannot use them. They will be offered to hospitals and jails in the state.

The library actively seeks bequests and memorials to honor those in the community who have been faithful patrons and supporters of the library and has memorial bookplates which can be attached to materials purchased with money donated for this purpose. Groups or collections of materials cannot necessarily be kept together as a group, and the library will most likely not be able to accept such gifts because of the financial costs of handling them. The library cannot be responsible for the appraisal of gifts for income tax or any other purposes.

### **LEVELS OF COLLECTION**

Academic libraries have been using levels of collection develop-

---

ment for some time; it might be wise for public libraries to do the same. As a small library, however, we should not seek to use the levels defined for an academic institution. Comprehensive and research levels are used only by the largest public libraries which serve a research function in their cities, such as Boston Public Library, Chicago Public Library, and Providence Public Library. For libraries like the FCMFPL, the remaining levels should be redefined in the policy statement as follows:

**Recreational Level:** The best current titles on the subject which would include a well-selected group. Some, especially those without individual value over time, might be rented and not added to the collection at all.

**General Information Level:** A large number of current titles and a limited number of retrospective titles on any subject which would include those beyond the best-seller list. Only duplicate copies of the most asked for would be rented from this level. Others would be purchased, added to the collection, and retained over time.

**Instructional Level:** A good selection of current titles and a selection of retrospective titles. This would include some retrospective purchasing in new fields that reach this level, and a careful perusal of physical condition for replacement, if necessary. Some duplication might be necessary and careful weeding based on circulation level should be done at the time of evaluation.

**Reference Level:** Most current titles and a wide assortment of retrospective titles. During evaluation, note should be taken not only of circulation figures but of other means of use, e.g., in-house by patrons and by the professional staff.

In addition to the levels of collection, the library also seeks to include a core of essential materials in all subjects, which would be necessary to meet the demands and goals of the community.

#### **COLLECTION MAINTENANCE**

The collection of this library is maintained through judicious weeding of outdated, outmoded, and worn out materials. If needed, these are replaced, rebound, or duplicated when purchased. An

---

inventory of items is performed once a year to keep the collection usable. Weeding the collection is considered of primary value to the maintenance of a good collection. Book sales and distribution of weeded materials are done on a twice-yearly basis. Books donated to the library may be sold or given away at this time.

### **COLLECTION EVALUATION**

During the yearly inventory, and as a guide to selecting quality material, certain lists are checked to determine whether the library has purchased books of a lasting nature for its collection. At this time ALA's *Notable Books*, *Notable Young Adult Books*, and *Notable Children's Books*, along with other lists, are checked. Any items missing from the collection found on these lists are purchased if possible. Procedures for evaluating materials are in our procedures manual which includes the forms used to determine the value of the individual items in the collection.

---

## **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP**

It is the policy of this library to purchase material based on the criteria presented above. A number of books and other material purchased that will meet these criteria may be offensive to certain members of the community. The library sees its function as a purveyor of information on many topics, levels, and opinions. To meet its goals and objectives, this library must protect the freedom of all to choose their own information in the style in which it is presented. To that end, we subscribe wholeheartedly to the "Library Bill of Rights" and its several interpretations, "The Freedom to Read Statement" and "The Freedom to View Statement," all of which are appended to this document.

The library is a unique institution and is charged with being an unbiased repository of recorded expression. To that end, any attempt by a group or individual to remove items from the collection, or to add items not meeting standards set by this policy, shall be fought by the staff, librarians, and the Board. Procedures for reconsideration of material are in the procedures manual, along with the forms used to fill out complaints. The Board has the legal responsibility for the collection and its protection under the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution.

## CONSORTIUM, COOPERATIVES, AND NETWORKS

The Futas-Cassell Memorial Free Public Library hopes to be tied together in the future with a number of public libraries in this area through an automated circulation and cataloging system. This will mean a larger selection of materials for our patrons to use, but will also mean a larger call on the material here by others from the libraries in the consortium. The value of automation and the broadening of the library's collection far exceeds the use of our material by others.

In addition to official consortium agreements, the FCMFPL participates in a state-wide interlibrary loan network through the state agency. This is a multitype library network and we have the advantage of being able to borrow needed material.

---

## REVIEW OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This policy shall be reviewed at the first meeting of the Board of Trustees every year. If there are sections requiring revision, they shall be reviewed by the staff and presented to the Board for its acceptance into this policy at that time.

## V. BUDGET AND FINANCE

### MONEY

When dealing with public monies accountability is imperative. What the public is going to hold the board accountable for is not honesty, which they assume, but wisdom, which they may question.

What is board responsibility in connection with the library's money?

The library board has the bottom line responsibility of providing the money, enough to insure good library service. This is a responsibility which cannot be assigned to others; the trustee is the accountable, indispensable factor, and success is imperative. Board failure to achieve continuing financial support for the library translates to doors closed and lights out.

Once funding is assured, the board is accountable for spending the money in ways that will provide the people with the best possible service, given the level of support.

- ★ **REMINDER:** *The Handbook For Louisiana Public Library Directors* has an excellent section on financial matters. Ask your library director for this additional and supplementary information.

### SOURCES

The major source of support for public libraries is a special property tax levy voted by the citizens of the appropriate political subdivision. This tax is usually voted for five or ten years and must be voted on again at expiration. Additional support may also come from the general fund of the governing authority, sales tax income, severance tax, revenue sharing funds, fines, interest, or a combination of these.

State aid was appropriated by the Louisiana Legislature from 1978 through 1987. When available, these funds were administered by the State Library within limitations set out by the enabling law (RS 25:14). State aide was restored by the 1996 legislation session. This appropriation will be subject to annual renewal and is one of the chief concerns of the Louisiana Library Association.

Federal matching funds, usually in the form of Library Services and Construction Act (Title II) may be sought, particularly for non-recurring programs (rather than on-going expenses) such as to construct a new building, to purchase a bookmobile, or to purchase new technology for the library. However, federal funds are always in jeopardy, and irregular at best.

Another federal program from which many libraries have benefited is the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). There are still other federal programs, frequently changing, which offer opportunities to hire additional staff for libraries.

One area of financing that should not be overlooked is that of private money gifts to the library, or bequests in wills. The continuing public relations program of the library should call attention to private money gifts and solicit them, constantly reinforcing the fact that the library has tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service.

Look around with an imaginative eye and do not overlook any possibility for additional funding. Sometimes it is possible to cooperate with another agency to effect savings; an example of this would be using the bulk gasoline pumps operated by the police jury to buy bookmobile fuel more cheaply. It is a rare library that does not need more money to offer services to the people. The trustee's job is to obtain the money, remembering that reducing expense on one item frees money to be spent on another.

One possibility for added income is interest accumulation through the investment of idle funds on a short-term basis. Money not needed until later in the year can earn significant amounts in the interim. Consult a financial advisor when needed. Be sure your money is working for you.

## **BUDGET**

Annually, well in advance of the beginning of the new fiscal year, the library director prepares a preliminary budget recommendation for board scrutiny.

The budget is the expression of the library's goals, objectives, and plans in dollar terms.

The budget process is where the trustee's planning function becomes critical. What services need funding? What does evaluation of present programs tell? What needs do people have that the library is not presently supplying? The answers to these questions will tell how the budget should be designed.

If it is apparent the needs of the public cannot be met with the money presently available, it is up to the board to attempt to find a way to increase revenues. If the board does not do it, no one will. The public trusts the board to be aggressive in promoting, defending, and funding the library.

## **TAX CAMPAIGN**

Libraries are popular institutions that provide useful services. However, a library tax election cannot be taken for granted. There is a new urgency in the critical necessity for well planned and executed tax campaigns and for the courageous involvement of trustees. (For a good review of tax election procedures and strategies, see the *Handbook for Louisiana Public Library Directors*; and consult with the Library Development Division of the State Library of Louisiana).

Library trustees should never be timid or apologetic when asking the public to support the library. Do not fail to keep the public and the governing authority informed of the money requirements of the library. There must be sufficient funding to supply the community's needs for information, education, culture, and recreation.



## **Planning the Campaign:**

CAUTION: The State Constitution, Article XI, Section 4 reads:

*No public funds shall be used to urge any elector to vote for or against any candidate or proposition, or be appropriated to candidate or political organization. This provision shall not prohibit the use of public funds for dissemination of factual information relative to a proposition appearing on an election ballot.*

This means that library funds may not be used to promote an affirmative vote on a library tax proposition. Such funds may be used to state what would happen if the tax passes or if it fails, but not to print bookmarks, posters, handbills, etc. saying "vote Yes" or "Vote for the library tax." This prohibition extends to the use of library time by the librarian and staff to promote a favorable vote and the use of library equipment to produce promotional materials.

Tax election campaigns should be honest, open, and aggressive. The plan for the campaign should include a full disclosure of the needs and expenses of the library. The rationale for the tax should be based on facts.

### **Suggestions for planning a campaign:**

1. Create a timeline for the tax campaign. You must plan ahead at least 18 months before a tax election.
2. Determine the amount that is needed to run the library efficiently and effectively and allow for growth.
3. Contact the Library Development staff of the State Library of Louisiana. They can assist you in your planning, supply you with sample publicity pieces, and apprise you of any recent changes in the election law and dates for elections.
4. Organize Friends of the Library group or a Library Development Committee if one does not already exist. Enlist their aid in promoting the tax election and conducting the campaign.
5. Develop a theme and plan for improved services that will attract citizens to the cause of the library.
6. Meet with library staff members and explain the goals and plans for the campaign.
7. Develop a campaign budget and solicit contributions. Do not be hesitant to ask for money.
8. Develop promotional items such as signs, billboards, bookmarks, posters, space on commercial marquees, information in mailed bills and notifications.
9. Prepare a list of organization and churches throughout the parish with meeting time and name, address, and telephone number of contact person for each. Write letters to churches asking members to support the upcoming library tax election by mentioning it in the service or in the church bulletin.
10. Organize a speakers bureau made up of board members and library friends. Prepare a fact sheet on library operation and services to assist speakers. Have enough copies to give each person in the audience a copy. Ask for resolutions of support.
11. Seek endorsements from public bodies and civic organizations. Seek out potential opposition and present and explain the library situation.

12. Visit the newspaper, the radio and television stations to ask their help in promoting the tax election by using: weekly stories on library services; specific stories on the various goals of the campaign; editorials; letters to the editor from a variety of interested citizens; publicizing resolutions from supporting groups and organizations; interviews with board members, library staff, and interested citizens; spot announcements on library services and tax campaign goals; advertisements paid for by business, industry, or individuals (not the library), or as tags onto their usual advertisements.
13. An important part of your campaign should focus on library users and others most likely to vote. Getting out the vote may include ideas like a campaign center, transportation to the polls, or telephone committees.
14. Remember to have your Friends group involved; they are a ready-made advocate group.

★ **REMINDER:** Library directors need to be part of the governance team, working with juries and/or councils, offices of local government, and other officials in the community.

## AUDITOR REQUIREMENTS

According to law, political subdivisions whose budget exceeds \$250,000, must be audited. The auditor's report is distributed to all trustees. For an explanation of the auditing requirements and the Local Government Budget Act, see the *Handbook for Louisiana Public Library Directors*.

## VI. LIBRARY DIRECTOR

*The most important thing a board will ever do is hire a library director.*

The board hires only the library director. Staff members are usually hired by the library director, and ratified by the board at the earliest opportunity thereafter. People are crucial to the operation of the library, because it is a personal, one-on-one service. The performance of the library director and of the staff determine whether the community has a vital, useful, educational, and informational agency, or a cold, ineffective reading room.

The Board should be aware that the generous salary of a good director is the best investment it can possibly make. The salary of the director is not the place to economize. A clever, alert director finds new money sources and fresh ways to burnish the library's image.

Hiring and firing the library director are among the most difficult things a board does. Procedures for both of these eventualities should be in place. The one constant that must be remembered is that the board's responsibility is to provide the best possible library service to the greatest number of persons.

If evaluation reveals that the current library director's abilities are not the ones required, remember that the library does not exist to provide employment. Be courageous and willing to take a stand for whatever is necessary for the good of the library and the community it serves.

When the position must be filled, don't rush into hiring. Take time to consider carefully what the situation requires and what the applicants offer. What professional capabilities, what personality characteristics does the job call for? The board has the opportunity to build success into the future by making the correct hiring decision.

Design questions that can elicit more information than can be determined on a printed resume. Remember, you may not ask questions on age, family obligations, sexual preference, or disability. Consult the personnel literature and your legal advisor about the type of questions that or may not be asked.

Although telephone interviews are tempting because they are economical, you may find it difficult to analyze some of the candidates responses and attitudes. Another caution that should be exercised relates to references provided by the candidate. Furthermore, some reference sources will be restrained in their response fearing that negative comments could generate legal action. **RS 23:291** (1995) provides that "accurate information about a current or former employee's job performance or reasons for separation, shall be immune from civil liability and other consequences of such disclosure provided such employer is not acting in bad faith." This state law may help to elicit more information from some employers, but generally speaking reference givers are cautious, or are selected carefully by candidates to provide positive comments.

Louisiana library law requires that the director of a public library be certified by the State Board of Library Examiners. The basic requirements for certification is a Master's degree from a school of library science accredited by the American Library Association (See **RS 25:215 and 222** and **State Board of Library Examiners Regulations** immediately following.)

## **STATE BOARD OF LIBRARY EXAMINERS REGULATIONS**

The State Board of Library Examiners Issues two types of credentials: the Executive Certificate, and provisional Certification. Requirements for executive status include holding a master's degree in librarianship from an institution accredited by the American Library Association, and three years "appropriate executive experience in a library." Provisional status is rendered if executive experience is lacking, and must be converted to executive certification within three years.

Applicants for certification must pass a written examination covering the following aspects of public library administration:

1. Library organization and administration
2. Library budgets and financial operation
3. Standards for library service
4. Louisiana library law
5. Current status of library development in Louisiana

The applicant must also be favorably evaluated in an oral examination.

Boards are urged to hire candidates already certified if possible, or eligible for certification. Uncertified directors should be encouraged to gain the credential as soon as possible. The State Board of Library Examiners issues two types of credentials: the Executive Certificate, and Provisional Certification.

Requirements for certification include holding the MLS (or MLIS; or Master's Degree in Library and Information Science) from an institution accredited by the American Library Association; and three years "appropriate executive experience in a library." Also required is a written examination covering the following aspects of public library service:

- ★ **REMINDER:** If budgetary limitations demand considering employment of an inexperienced recent graduate, be aware that experience has to be gained somewhere and be prepared to help the library director learn. The State Library of Louisiana can provide vital assistance in the orientation of a new librarian and will respond to a request to do so.

## EXPECTATIONS

The library director has the right to expect of the board:

1. Solid support of the library director's administration of board policies
2. A free hand in operating library
3. Communication of information, complaints, or instructions between staff and board only through the library director

4. An atmosphere of complete honesty, cordiality, and respect
5. A regular evaluation of how well the job is being done. Protection against arbitrary removal

**The board has the right to expect of the library director:**

1. The best possible performance on the job
2. An understanding of staff development and a willingness to impart to staff the feeling that the staff member is the library when dealing with a customer
3. A readiness to take the initiative to encourage trustee education and participation in local, state, and national affairs
4. An atmosphere of complete honesty, cordiality, and respect
5. A willingness to have performance evaluation
6. A recognition of the necessity to develop an understanding of political relationships in the community

## **HOW TO HIRE A LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

### **Preliminary Assessment**

Before even thinking about a new director, a board should take a hard look at the current status of the library. This might well begin with an exit interview with the present director. What does this session reveal that needs immediate attention? Is the personnel policy adequate? Will the transition be smooth? Are changes indicated? If so, now is the time to make the necessary decisions.

At this time of self-examination, the board may be wise to address itself to such fundamental questions as: what is the role of this library in the community today? Have library needs changed in the community? Has our library kept pace? What do we want in our next director?

## Homework Before You Advertise

The board should next take several steps which will enable it to meet candidates for the directorship with confidence.

1. Development or obtain a current description of the community. Along with geographic and demographic information, this should include facts about the economy, government, education, recreation, and cultural activity. It should make note of any important trends or changes underway.
2. Prepare or obtain a current description of the public library program in the community. For the public library, this should include a history of the institution, its board composition, its articles of incorporation and bylaws, together with facts on staffing, collection, programs, and budget.
3. Write or update a detailed job description of the position. Include data on specific duties, salary, fringe benefits, hours, civil service regulations or requirements, period of probation, etc. (You may need professional guidance or legal counsel on this one.)
4. Agree upon a standard series of questions to be posed to each candidate so that:
  - a. each candidate is asked to respond to the same questions and therefore the same basis for evaluation will exist; and,
  - b. the interview proceeds smoothly and unproductive lulls do not develop. (Some of the topics which might be dealt with in interviews are: What are the interview's goals? How interested is the person in your position and on what terms? What questions does the candidate have for the board? What are this individual's strengths? What should be the relationship between the library director and the board?)



5. Develop a standardized evaluation sheet so that during interviews the interviewing committee can be evaluating the same characteristics -- within a flexible interview format.
6. Consider whether outside assistance should be secured to assist in interview sessions. This might be a library consultant, a member of the system staff if your library is part of a system, one or more other librarians from the community, librarians within your own library, or a member of a lay group such as Friends of the Library. Initial screening may be done by one or more of these groups, with final screening by the board or a subcommittee of it.
7. Decide whether the director will be offered a contract, or an open-ended agreement.
8. Make provision for costs of interviews and moving. What expenses will the board reimburse for those coming for interviews? What cost of relocation will the board pay? Inform all candidates invited for interviews of the board's policy on these expenses. Money might be saved by using state or national conferences to interview. Placement centers are often a part of these gatherings.
9. Take a good look at your present staff. Now that you know what you want and are ready for interviews, one of them might be eligible. However, don't select such a person for the sake of convenience. You are looking for the best person for the job, who may or may not be one of your own.

## Advertisement

To let the library world know of your need as well as the opportunities involved in directing your library, you should now compose a carefully worded ad for insertion in selected publications. It is good personnel practice to reach as many potential candidates as possible. The ad should include details as to salary, library school degree, years of experience required, location, and some attractive features of your position. Blind ads may greatly reduce the response you receive; librarians like to know where they are applying. Ask for letters of interest and resumes, and set a deadline for receiving them.

Be sure to designate one person to receive applications. This is usually the president or secretary of the library board.

When your ad is ready, you will need to decide where it is most likely to produce results and arrange for its placement. The following are some of the publications and services which are regularly used for this type of advertisement: the metropolitan newspaper that serves your area, *Library Journal*, *American Libraries*, *LJ Hotline*, library school placement offices, state association and state library publications, or telephone joblines. A word of caution, however. A long lead time is often needed for copy -- especially for professional periodicals.

In addition, use word-of-mouth advertising among friends and colleagues to spread the news of this available position. This method often works well and quickly, but should not be relied upon exclusively.

As applications are received, those not meeting established qualifications should be screened out and the applicants so notified. References should now be checked. As soon as the board feels that it has in hand applications from likely prospects, it is ready to interview.

## **Interview**

First, hold an interview planning meeting of your total board at which decisions should be made on the following:

1. The number of applicants to be interviewed usually three to five. Interview expense may influence this decision. However, it is wise to spend the necessary amount to look at a good array of candidates.
2. Communication with candidates to set their scheduled time of interview.
3. The one person who will be responsible for conducting interviews, with others assisting.
4. The appropriate setting for interviews.
5. The arrangements for accommodations for out-of-town candidates who might need them .
6. The tour of the library and community for each candidate, which may be handled by a group other than the interview team.

As scheduled, the interview team now conducts the interviews, encouraging maximum exchange of information. Allow time between interviews in order to complete evaluation sheets while impressions of the candidates and his/her reactions are fresh in the minds of interview team members.

## **Hiring Decisions**

After interviews are completed, select the best potential director through discussion and by ranking candidates based on interviews and evaluation sheets. Discussion might be needed to reach a consensus and unanimous support of the selection. Phone to offer the position. By ranking the acceptable candidates, the board will save itself time if the first choice declines the offer or is unavailable for other reasons. The board chairman can then quickly proceed to contact the second choice. Follow up with a confirming letter of contract which includes details of the appointment and reporting date. Include a second copy for the director's signature and return. Write to unsuccessful candidates thanking them and informing them of your decision ONLY after an acceptance has been received.

## **Before the Director Arrives**

There are a number of courtesies which may be extended during the period between job acceptance and the reporting date. These can set the tone for a mutually satisfactory board - director relationship. Assistance in the family's relocation, particularly with school and housing information and additional information about the library and the community, may be provided. For example, a subscription to the local newspaper may be valuable in acclimating your new director and family. Week-end visits can sometimes be arranged prior to the reporting date if desired.

## **Upon arrival**

Knowledgeable trustees or staff members should be on hand to meet and welcome the new director. News release and photographic coverage should be arranged as soon as possible. Personal introductions to appropriate community personnel should be scheduled (especially by trustees) promptly, including the opportunity to meet local government officials. A good method of expediting this process is a formal or informal open house or reception hosted by the board.

## **After the Director Is on the Job**

Good personnel practice calls for a predetermined probationary period if this is not already included in Civil Service procedures. This will usually be either six months or one year. Early in this period, some short and long term goals for the current director's administration should be set by the director and approved by the board.

During probation, your director's performance in the achievement of these goals should be carefully evaluated. The following are some questions the board might use in its evaluation.

1. Is your director an effective administrator organizing own work and that of staff?
2. Does he/she show initiative, creativity, following through?
3. Are deadlines being met, goals achieved?
4. Is director tactful?
5. Does board feel library program is really being promoted?
6. What are director's relations with board? With staff? With local officials? With the public?

For evaluation, trustees should write statements concerning director's strengths and weakness. The board should then discuss his/her performance in executive session and with the director. A decision to retain or dismiss should be made during the probationary period and the director promptly informed.

The board's responsibility for evaluation of the director does not end at the conclusion of the probationary period. It is ever present. Formal and informal evaluation should be done periodically. Satisfactions and dissatisfactions should be recorded and discussed with the director. Problems should be documented as a basis for future decision. Reward good performance: a raise in salary, public recognition, and positive feedback are a few examples of ways to do this. However, if performance is in doubt, annual increases should not be given automatically just because they are on the schedule. The board should never retain a director if a majority of board members are convinced no improvement is possible.

### **POINTS TO REMEMBER**

1. Establish guidelines for position you seek to fill.
2. Put together an attractive package of salary and fringe benefits to interest the person you really want.
3. Screen applicants carefully (including reference checks), with professional assistance when desirable.
4. Agree on goals and objectives director is to achieve.
5. Evaluate performance.
6. Decide to retain or let go during probationary period.
7. Continue evaluation of performance on a periodic and meaningful basis.
8. Reward satisfactory performance or, when necessary, discontinue employment.

## VII. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Any institution that depends on the tax dollar must report to the public if it expects to survive. An institution relevant to its community will have good service to report. The community must hear about your library. Remember, all public relations activities have policy implications.

### LIBRARY TO COMMUNITY

Trustees have a vital role to play in the library's communication with the public it serves. The library board is one of the best channels of two-way communication. Trustees can effectively interpret the library to the community and "tell-and-sell" its programs and services. The board helps to carry the library out into the community and it must feed from the community back to the library.

- ★ **REMINDER:** Trustees never undertake a formal public relations initiative on their own. All efforts with the media must be channeled through the director or his designate. If the press calls a board member, the director should be informed.

### FEEDBACK, COMMUNITY TO LIBRARY

Trustees must be knowledgeable about the community. They must listen to the community and be receptive to ideas about needed services. Trustees can identify developing trends, and help to see new ways in which the library can be useful. Trustees also must listen to dissatisfied patrons, hear their complaints graciously, and be the conduit through which the complaints move back to the library director. The trustee plays a public relations role every time he or she listens and responds. The trustees represent the library, and can be -- indeed, must be -- an important member of the public relations team.

## **LIBRARY-ORIENTED PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMS**

Trustees, in their policy-making, planning, money-producing roles, determine to a great extent how well the library is going to serve the community. The board must work for service that is the very best possible. Then it must urge a planned program of public relations that will ensure that the public knows what is available, what is going on, and what it is getting for its tax dollar.

### **Such a program may include:**

Publicity in all forms of mass media (and sometimes not so mass media) such as:

- Newspaper publicity
- Television and radio spots  
    TV Public Access Channels  
    Public Service Announcements (PSA's)
- Church bulletins
- Official brochures and information about local services
- Enclosures in utility bills, bank statements, etc.
- An attractive annual report, widely distributed
- Art, exhibits, or other special interest events in the library

There are many ways to tell the library story. Be alert to the local situation and the possibilities for tie-in with other institutions and agencies. Remember that the novel or non-traditional often has great appeal, particularly in the quest for the patronage of the non-user. Trustees should welcome creative thinking and be prepared to consider ideas that are outside their own experience.



## POSITIVE TRUSTEE PARTICIPATION

The individual trustee not only represents community feedback to the library, but is a positive voice for the library in the community.

For example, trustees should:

1. Suggest use of library to local groups planning programs
2. Give talks about the library before organizations
3. Know the library's services and spread the word informally
4. Keep political fences mended for the library's benefit
5. Appear frequently before the governing authority to report or commend as appropriate

- ★ **REMINDER:** Board members must be sure that they are identified as such by the public. The effective trustee has to learn how the political world works. Like it or not, library boards are in politics and must learn to operate effectively in the political arena.

## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Many library boards have found that they need help in telling the library story. In some communities board members have encouraged citizens who are interested in, and enthusiastic about, the library's present or potential services to form a Friends of the Library organization.

Friends groups can provide very important support. Libraries without Friends groups are missing a very important ally.

Friends do not participate in the work of the board and should be a separate organization, although trustee liaison with the group is desirable. It is not recommended that board members function as officers in Friends groups.

**Some Friends' activities which have been specially fruitful are:**

1. Work for new facilities
2. Presenting special programs such as story hour, art shows, etc.
3. Raising money for special purchases
4. Publicizing memorials and gifts
5. Assisting in campaigns for ballot propositions

Friends of Libraries of Louisiana (FOLOLA) is a statewide organization that will give information and guidance to local groups wishing to organize.

The State Library of Louisiana will supply on request materials on how to organize a Friends group.

## VIII. CONTINUING EDUCATION

Goethe said it: *"There is nothing more frightful than ignorance in action."*

Accomplishment and expertise in other fields (business, industry, arts, higher education, etc.) do not automatically insure that a board member has the know-how to be a good library trustee. Good library trusteeship must be learned. In many cases outside initiation and stimulation are needed to start and maintain the learning process. Every trustee not serving the library at full potential represents an untapped resource, a resource needed to ensure that quality libraries are maintained.

- ★ **REMINDER:** The board has its share of responsibility to see that the new member receives proper orientation, and that all members receive materials and information to keep themselves current and advancing in library philosophy and services.

The library director can be an effective developer of trustee excellence. The library director, as the professional expert, must open up the world of libraries and librarianship beyond the local scene and invite the trustee to move into it. A library director should not fear a knowledgeable board which might demand more than the status quo. And library directors should never say, "Our trustees don't have time for all that," or "Our trustees aren't interested," or "Our trustees won't meet for more than an hour."

The library director can encourage continuing education for trustees by recommending:

- A policy that all new trustees have a planned orientation and that all trustees have continuous updating on library activities
- A policy of library-paid dues for trustee memberships in state and national library associations
- A policy of financial support for trustee travel with an annual budget line to cover attendance at regional, state, and national meetings of library organizations

## **LIBRARY ORGANIZATIONS**

The Louisiana Library Association offers many learning experiences through publications, association activities, and through its various sections, including the Trustee Section. The Annual LLA conference offers a Trustee Section program as well as general programming of interest to all members. In most areas of the state there are regional trustee organizations that meet once a year with more localized programming.

The American Library Association (ALA) and one of its divisions, the American Library Trustee Association (ALTA) hold annual meetings with workshops and program meetings where the trustee may meet with colleagues from around the nation. The Southeastern Library Association (SELA) holds such meetings biennially. These are opportunities to talk, to hear how other trustees have solved problems, and to exchange experiences and information. At these meetings a trustee learns and gains a sense of libraries as a vast network across the nation with no library being isolated. This learning inevitably benefits the local library which the trustee serves.

The trustee also should be aware of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). This group, appointed by the President to advise him or her on library-related issues, has been the sponsoring agency for two White House Conferences on Library and Information Services, and provides a focus for national concerns.

## **TRUSTEE TRAVEL**

The library director should encourage trustees to become members and participants in organizations important to them, including paying dues to support membership. This is good and justifiable use of public funds. Participation must not be limited to members who can pay their own expenses and trustees sometimes are hesitant and reluctant to use library money. The library director should urge trustees to attend meetings at library expense, offer to make registration and reservation arrangements, and suggest current articles related to program emphases.

After the first plunge, most trustees continue to increase their interest and effort. Trustees who read library literature, attend meetings, and talk with other trustees begin to ask new kinds of questions. The library director must be ready to help trustees learn. The worth of a knowledgeable trustee is recognized in library circles, and there are state and national association awards to recognize top performance.

## **STAFF CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Board policy should state that the library director is expected to attend meetings of professional associations and further to encourage and create opportunities for staff members to up-grade their competencies.

Board policy also should encourage continuing education for staff members. This encouragement can take the form of support for staff to attend association meetings or continuing education workshops.

Time and money spent for trustee and staff to learn to do their jobs better and to be motivated to greater performance will earn a high rate of return in improved library service to the community.

## IX. CONSTRUCTION

A new building opens many opportunities. Planning for it must take into account not only meeting present needs, but must anticipate future growth and new services, as well.

A completed, fully furnished and stocked new library building or newly remodeled facility often begins with someone's comment that the plans for the future are going to be hard to carry out in the space now available.

### FINANCING

Financing a library building is usually a major problem. Louisiana statutes set out the various ways the money part of the project may be handled. These include:

- Bond issue
- Special tax or additional specified millage in tax proposition
- Gifts and bequests
- Grants (There are few sources of money for library construction available in federal government grants. Regional planning agencies may help to identify possibilities.)
- Revenue sharing funds appropriated by governing authority

Trustees should be forceful in seeking funds for needed construction. Any of the above sources or combination of sources is a possibility. A consultant from the State Library of Louisiana will be able to give suggestions and advice.

New buildings usually cost substantially more for maintenance and upkeep than those currently in use. New buildings increase demands for service and changes in types of service. The new budgetary demands must be anticipated from the beginning in planning new construction.

## **INVOLVEMENT**

From communicating the need for a new library building to the library's public to the greeting of guests on dedication day, board members must be in the forefront of the effort.

A construction project encompasses every level of trustee responsibility and activity. A new building is the expression of the library's plan, most often a high-priority objective as the board moves toward its goal of the best possible library service for its community. Achieving a new building will demand skill in public relations, abilities in the political arena, and perhaps a recasting of library policies. The project will require the total involvement of the trustee.

One consultant has said, "It is ... no longer adequate to merely communicate the library's needs to some budget making authority. People must be educated, convinced, and persuaded, they must be shown alternatives and priorities; and in some cases they must be both led and pushed."

## **TEAMWORK**

Once community support is achieved and financial ability assured a building team must be assembled. Building the library will be a cooperative effort from the beginning to the end of the project.

The team should include:

1. The library board
2. The library director
3. A library building consultant, unless the library director has demonstrated skills in library building planning
4. The architect, with supporting personnel
5. A library interiors planning consultant who might be a professional planner, unless one of the other members of the team is experienced in layout, in selecting library furnishings and equipment, and in writing specifications

Each member of the team has a specific range of responsibility.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The library board is the indispensable factor in the building program. The board, with appropriate counsel and advice, carries full responsibility for:

1. Initiating a building project
2. Securing the money to finance the project
3. Selecting the professional participants for governing authority approval
4. Selecting the site for governing authority purchase



5. Approving the architect's plans
6. Assuring compliance with state and federal regulations for public buildings, including accessibility by the disabled
7. Helping arrange the dedicatory ceremonies and announcements
8. Helping acquaint the public with the new services now possible

If the board is as involved as it should be, constructing the new building will be one of the greatest and most rewarding and exciting challenges it will ever face.

## **X. STATE LIBRARY**

Louisiana has had a State Library since 1925, when it was established by legislative act.

Every trustee should be acquainted with the vital, supportive role of the State Library of Louisiana and with its capacity to contribute to the excellence of local library service. Because of it, no library board is out in the cold world all alone and no library board has to make it on its own.

The support the State Library provides is in services and special programs, not in financing a local library operation.

It has entered the folklore of Louisiana that parish libraries have fiscal ties to the State Library to the degree that if local support fails, the State Library will step in and assume the library's financial obligations. This view has no foundation in fact. Parish libraries are legally autonomous and dependent on local support for existence. However, the State Library does offer local libraries many varied services.

### **SERVICES**

One of the most useful services to trustees is the consultant assistance which is available upon the library board's request. Although library consultants visit each library system on a regular schedule, they are available to boards at any time a special need arises. Consultants can assist in planning a tax election campaign, employing a new library director, setting up a new program of service, developing a construction project, or whatever the situation requires. State Library consultants are available also for attendance at board meetings and for consultation with individual trustees.

Services available to Louisiana libraries include access to a back-up book collection through interlibrary loan, reference service, technical processing assistance, and access to film, videotape and recording collections.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

*Communique*' is a monthly publication that provides news about what is happening in libraries around the state. Boards may advertise jobs available through *Communique*. This publication goes to all libraries and trustees.

An annual directory of all public library board members and librarians is published by the State Library and distributed to trustees and libraries.

By statute, the State Library is required to request annual reports from each public library. Using the information received, the library publishes an annual statistical report, *Public Libraries in Louisiana*, which is distributed to all trustees and libraries. This publication should be looked at carefully. It is a basic help in judging the effectiveness of the local library with its facts about circulation, collections, and finances.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Outreach services are available to the blind and physically handicapped through the State Library. There are books in a variety of forms -- braille, disc, tapes, and large print editions. Talking Book machines and tapes players are available at no cost to the user. In this program the assistance of the trustee is especially important. The trustee can be most helpful in identifying eligible local prospective users, and in publicizing the program generally.

The State Library has also extended service to the residents of state institutions -- the mentally ill, the mentally retarded, and the incarcerated. After a pilot period of two years, the institution assumes full responsibility for the library operation with the State Library continuing to offer consultation and a full range of library services. In 1996, twenty-seven such institutions were served.

## WAYS TRUSTEES CAN HELP

The State Library is an integral part of each public library's service to its community. Trustees should have a thorough understanding of the interrelationship and should interpret the State Library on the local scene. The State Library's financial support comes in part from legislative appropriation and the trustees' efforts with elected officials will help to strengthen its annual budget request.

The State Library of Louisiana is located on the State Capitol grounds at 760 North Third Street and the mailing address is:

*State Library of Louisiana  
Library Development Division  
P.O. Box 131  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0131  
504-342-4931 ; (fax) 504-342-3547  
email: [libdev@pelican.state.lib.la.us](mailto:libdev@pelican.state.lib.la.us)*

## XI. STANDARDS

It should be understood that standards are to serve as a guide to total evaluation of public library service. A standard is a criterion against which to measure a library's quality of service, not a rule that must be followed by every library.

The most recent document on standards, Standards For Louisiana Public Libraries 1995, adopted by the Louisiana Library Association in 1995, is devoted substantially to principles of library service and less to actual quantitative measurements. This document is meant to be used as a tool rather than a definitive statement of what a public library should be. Library boards, librarians, and interested citizens should together study Standards step-by-step in order to evaluate their own library service.

### MEASURING LIBRARY SERVICES

**FUNDING:** Each library must plan its service program, establish the cost, and then find funds to support the program.

- Local funding should be the basic source of support. In most parishes, this is based on local property tax.
- State funding is the next level of support. The continuation of state aid will require the concerted effort of all libraries, as well as strong citizen action.
- Library Services and Construction Act funds administered by the State Library have provided valuable incentive for innovation and construction. Libraries must seek federal funds in competition with other agencies.

## **STAFF:**

- Each library should have a library director with a Master's Degree in Library Science from an institution accredited by the American Library Association.
- Louisiana's public library law requires that a public library be administered by a person certified by the State Board of Library Examiners. (See **RS 25:215** and **222**).
- One staff member is recommended for each 2,000 persons in the service area.

## **MATERIALS:**

- 2.5 volumes per capital is the minimum recommended for a collection.
- Systematic withdrawal of materials no longer useful is necessary to maintain relevant resources.

## **PHYSICAL FACILITIES:**

- The physical facilities of a library should reflect a pattern to serve the informational, educational, social, and recreational needs of the community.
- A new building should be planned for a minimum of 20 years expansion of service and community growth.

★ **REMINDER:** The Standards for *Louisiana Public Libraries, 1995* should be included in this folder.

## A Final Note

Thank you for serving on the library board. Trustees are valued and valuable members of their communities. Remember that there are human and written resources from which you can learn. Your library director is among them, and she is your ally. Your colleagues on the board have experience to share. Other resources mentioned in the text are readily available.

This Handbook has tried to direct you toward these and other resources for support, ideas, and information. Along with your library's mission you can guide the library into the future. Your efforts in this quest are important, and appreciated.





## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Belanger, David. *"Board Games: Examining the Trustee/Director Conflict,"* Library Journal, November 15, 1995, p. 38-41.

Biggs, Mary and Kramer, Glenna eds. *"We Have Been There, Too: Library Board Essentials for Effectiveness,"* Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 68, May 1994, p. 32-35.

Cassell, Kay A. and Futas, Elizabeth, eds. *Developing Public Library Collections, Policies and Procedures.* New York, London: Neal-Schuman, 1991.

Howe, Fisher. *Welcome To The Board: Your Guide to Effective Participation,* Bass, 1995.

Keesey, Ray E. *Modern Parliamentary Procedure,* Washington: American Psychological Association, 1994.

Kreamer, Jean T. *"A Delicate Matter: A code of Ethics for Public Library Trustees (In Louisiana),"* Public Librarian, Vol. 27, Winter 1988, p. 182-183.

Kreamer, Jean T. *"Holding the Line: Censorship and Library Trustees,"* Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 68, May 1994, p. 36-37.

Kreamer, Jean T. *"The Library Trustee as a Library Activist,"* Public Libraries, Vol. 29, July/August 1990, p. 220-223.

McClure, Charles R.; Owen, Amy; Zweizig, Douglas L.; Lynch, Mary J. and Van House, Nancy A. eds. *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures.* Chicago and London: American Library Association, 1987.

Rubin, Renee. *Avoiding Liability Risk.* Chicago and London: American Library Association, 1994.

Short, Jack. *Library Trustee Guidelines*, Avon, CT: Consultant Publications, 1994.

Swan, James. *Working Together*. New York, London: Neal-Schuman, 1992.

Wade, Gordon S. *Working with Library Boards*. New York, London: Neal-Schuman, 1991.

Young, Virginia G. *The Library Trustee: A Practical Guidebook*, 5th Ed. Chicago and London: American Library Association, 1995.

## Index

### A

Access by handicapped, 66  
Accountability, 37  
Administration of Library: responsibility of Board, 5; responsibility of Library Director, 5  
Administrative Librarian. See Library Director  
Agenda, 17. See also Order of business  
Aims. See Goals  
Amending bylaws, 18  
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, 28  
Architect, 63  
Authority: for operation of library, 1; of individual member, 1  
Awards, 60

### B

\*\*Bayouland Library System,  
Bequests: as source of funds, 38  
Blind: services to, 66. See also Louisiana State Library  
Board of Control: definition, 1; establishes rules and regulations, 1; responsibilities, 1-14; does not run library, 2; policy making, 4; administration of library, 5; overseeing personnel, 6; adopts library budget, 7; participation in board meetings, 8; establishes public relations, 9; supports continuing education, 10; plans for library's growth, 11; interrelationships with Library Director and Governing Authority, 12-13; appointment of members by Governing Authority, 12; ex-officio member, 12, 15; officers elected annually, 15; need for friendly relations with appointing body, 15; meetings, 16; bylaws, 17; objectives of, 34; aggressive in promoting, defending, and funding library, 39; increases revenues for library budget, 39; expectations of Library Director, 46; as a two-way communication channel, 54  
Book selection. See Materials selection  
Bond issues, 61  
Braille books, 66  
Budget: Board responsibility for, 37, 39; preliminary prepared by Library Director, 39; as an expression of library's goals, objectives, and plans, 39; Board increases revenue for, 39  
Building problems: with financing a library, 61  
Building team, 62  
Bylaws: recommended, 17-18

### C

Censorship. See LLA *Intellectual Freedom Manual*  
Certificates: types, 44; requirements for candidates for, 44; examination for, 44-45  
Certification: required for Library Director, 44  
Citations and awards, 60  
Citizens request for reconsideration of library material. See Appendix to Chapter 4  
Collection. See Appendix to Chapter 4  
Communication: importance of, 54  
Complaints by patrons, 24; policy on procedure, 35  
Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA), 38  
Confidentiality of library records. See RS 44:13

Construction: financial problems with, 61; methods of financing, 61; trustee responsibility for, 61, 63-64; building team members, 62; planning, 61; compliance with state and federal regulations, 63

Consultant, building, 61

Consultative Service of State Library of Louisiana, 61, 65

Continuing education: Trustees, 10, 58-60; policies for, 58-59; Library Director, 58-60; library staff, 60

Contributions: accepting gifts and, 32

Cooperation with other libraries: guidelines for policy on, 32

## D

Dates for tax elections. *See Handbook for Louisiana Public Library Directors*

Developing a plan: steps in, 21

*Developing Public Library Collections, Policies, and Procedures*, 35

*Directory of Louisiana Public Library Trustees and Librarians*, 66

Dues: included in library budget, 58

Duties and powers of Board of Control, 1-14

## E

Effectiveness of Trustees, 23

Enabling law, 37

Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, 28

Establishment of Louisiana State Library, 65

Executive sessions, 16

Ex-officio member of Board of Control, 12

Expectations: Board of Library Director, 46; Library Director of Board, 46

## F

Family Leave and Medical Act, 28

\*\*Federal grants, cons. ch. 9

Films, 65

Finance. *See Funds*

Firing the Library Director: need for policy statement on, 43

Freedom to Read Statement, 30

Friends of the library: in public relations, 56; activities, 57; Friends of Libraries of Louisiana (FOLOLA), 57

## G

General objectives: guidelines for policy on, 25

Goals, 21

*Goals, Guidelines, and Gauges for Public Libraries in Louisiana*, 68

Grants: as method of financing construction, 61

## H

*Handbook for Louisiana Public Library Directors*, 37, 39

Handicapped. *See Physically handicapped*

Hiring a Library Director: need for policy statement on, 43; procedure and considerations, 46-53

I

**\*\*Information service of Louisiana State Library, ch. 11**  
**Institutions: service to. See Louisiana State Library**  
**In-service training. See Continuing education**  
**Intellectual freedom. See Materials selection policy**  
**Interrelationships: Board, Library Director, and Governing Authority, 12-13**  
**Investment of idle funds, 38**

L

**Large print books, 66**  
**Legislative network, 37**  
**Liability insurance, 30**  
**Library associations, 10**  
**Library Bill of Rights, 30**  
**Library Board. See Board of Control**  
**Library collection, 35**  
**Library Communique, 66**  
**Library Development Division (State Library of Louisiana), 39**  
**Library Director: responsibilities, 4-13, 43; dismissed by Board of Control, 2, 43; policy making, 4; administration of library, 5; overseeing personnel, 6; prepares library budget, 7; participation in Board meetings, 8; maintains public relations, 9; designs continuing education for staff and Board, 10; plans for library's growth, 11; interrelationships with Board of Control and Governing Authority, 12-13; expectations of Board of Control, 45; evaluation of, 43; requirements for certification for 44; how to hire, 46-53; administrative action by in accordance with policy, 34**  
**Library organizations: Louisiana Library Association (LLA), 10, 30, 37, 59; American Library Association (ALA), 10, 14, 30, 31, 59; American Library Trustee Association (ALTA), 30, 59; Southeastern Library Association (SELA), 10, 29, 59; National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), 59; LLA Trustee Section, 59**  
**Library Services and Construction Act (Title II), 38, 69**  
**Local funding of library, 68**  
**Louisiana Library Law. See Law**  
**Louisiana Library Association (LLA), 10, 30; legislative network, 37; Trustee Section, 59; Goals, Guidelines, and Gauges for Public Library System in Louisiana, 68**  
**Louisiana State Library: defining the role of, 26; eight major roles of 26; Trustee interpretation of through policy explanation, 35; tax-exempt status with IRS, 38; established by legislative act, 65; does not finance local libraries, 65; consultative service, 65; interlibrary loan, 65; reference service, 65; technical processing service, 65; films and recordings, 65; publications, 66; services to blind and physically handicapped, 66; institutional services to mentally ill, retarded, and imprisoned, 66; Trustee support for, 67; monthly newsletter (Communique), 66; annual directory, 66; annual reports, 66; location and mailing address, 67**

M

**Materials selection: policy on, 24, 30, 34**  
**Maternity leave, 24**  
**\*\*Meeting rooms, guidelines for policy on,**  
**Meetings of Board of Control: open meetings required, 8, 16; Board responsibility for, 8, 16; Library Director responsibility for, 8, 16; executive or closed session, 16; schedule set out in bylaws, 16; bylaws, 17; parliamentary etiquette in, 19-20**

Millage, 12  
\*\*Minutes, table  
\*\*Modisette Award, pub. rel.

## N

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), 59  
Nepotism, 15

## O

Objectives, general. *See* Goals  
Open meetings, 8, 16  
Order of business, 17  
Ordinances creating libraries. *See* RS 25:212  
Orientation: new Trustees, 58. *See also* Continuing education, Trustees

## P

Physically handicapped: services to, 66. *See also* Louisiana State Library  
Planning: Board's responsibility in, 11, 21; Library Director's responsibility in, 11; prerequisites for, 21; basic questions in, 21; community involvement in, 22; planning commission and professional planners, 22; for construction of new building, 61; service program, 68  
Police jury, 15. *See also* Governing Authority  
Policy: established by Trustees, 23, 34; guidelines for, 23; what to know, 24; as a reflection of Board's convictions, 24; changing as needs change, 24; objectives to be considered, 25; for defining role of library, 26; on budgets, 27; on service of library, 27; on personnel, 28-29; important considerations in, 30; recommended review of by local district attorney, 29; on book selection, 30; on confidentiality, 31; on cooperation with other libraries, 31; on public relations, 31; on gifts and special collections, 32; on relationship with schools, 33; on meeting room use and use of library by groups, 33; creation of, 33; determination of need for, 33; in need of revision, 33; request for, 33; parties to, 34; in action, 34; implementation of, 34; centrality of, 34; steps in implementation of, 34; administrative action by Library Director in accordance with, 34; *Developing Public Library Collections, Policies, and Procedures*, 35  
Policy execution: Library Director's responsibility for, 4-13  
Property tax: major source of support for public libraries, 68  
Publicity, 55  
*Public Libraries in Louisiana*, 66  
Public Library service: purposes, 68; evaluation, 68-70; funding, 68; staff, 69; materials, 69; physical facilities, 69  
Public relations: Board's responsibility, 54-55; Library Director's responsibility, 54; programs, 55; Trustee participation in, 54-56  
Public Service Announcements (PSA's), 55

## R

Recordings, 65  
Relationships with schools: policy on, 32  
Reports to Louisiana State Library: each public library required to make, 66  
Responsibilities: statutory, 1-2; practical, 2-3; ethical, 14; Governing Authority, 12-13; Trustee, 1-14; Library Director, 4-13  
Revenue sharing funds, 37; as method of financing construction, 61

## S

Salary of Library Director, 16  
Schools: guidelines for relationships with, 32  
\*\*Secret ballot,  
Services: guidelines for policy on, 27  
Southeastern Library Association (SELA), 10, 29, 59  
Special property tax, 37  
Staff. *See* Personnel  
Standards: definition of, 68; document on (Standards for Louisiana Public Libraries 1995), 68;  
on funding, 68; on staff, 69; on withdrawal of materials, 69; on physical facilities, 69  
State Board of Library Examiners: regulations, 44  
\*\*State Library of Louisiana. *See* Louisiana State Library & ch.11  
\*\*State Library Board of Commissioners,  
Statistical Report on Public Libraries, 66  
\*\*\*"Sunshine" law. *See* Open meetings

## T

Talking books, 66  
Tax campaign: necessity for well-planned and executed, 39; planning for, 40-42; rationale basis  
for, 40; auditor requirements, 42  
Tax election, 12  
Tax-exempt status, 38  
Terms of office of Trustees, 16  
Travel by Trustees, 59  
Trustee: definition, 1; legal basis for powers and duties, 1; appointment, 12; term, 16; role in  
communication, 54; feedback to community, 54; participation in public relations, 55;  
travel by, 59; seeks financing for construction, 61; responsibility for construction, 63-64  
\*\*Trustee awards and citations: LLA, ; ALA,

## V

Voting privilege of ex-officio member of Board, 12