

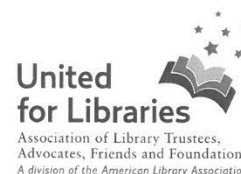
Appendix D

United for Libraries Tip Sheets for Trustees

1. The Role of Library Trustees
2. The Role of the Friends Board
3. Mission Statements
4. Sample Memorandum of Understanding
5. Library Support for Friends Activities
6. Evaluating the Library Director
7. Governing (Independent) Library Boards vs. Advisory Library Boards: Which are Better?
8. When Friends Aren't Friendly
9. Trustee Competencies
10. How to Chair a Committee
11. Twelve Golden Rules for Board Members
12. Protecting Your Library's Collection

tip sheet #1

Tools for Trustees



THE ROLE OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

It is not uncommon for the role of the Friends and the role of the public library Trustees to become confused. What authority and responsibilities do the Friends have? What is the role of the Trustees? Should an individual serve on both boards? If either of these groups is unsure of the limits of their respective authorities, conflicts can, and often do, arise. Tip Sheets #1 and #2 outline the roles of the Trustees and the role of the Friends, specifically indicating where their work and communication should overlap or complement each other.

There are typically two types of Trustee Boards - a) a governing board or b) an advisory board.

1. The **Governing Board** is either elected by the general population or is appointed by the city or town's elected council. This type of board has full authority over the governance of the library. This Board hires the library director, sets policy, and works closely with the director in establishing and presenting the library's budget to the city.
2. The **Advisory Board** typically exists where the library is a city department, the library director is hired by the city, and the library director reports directly to the city manager or mayor. The Advisory Board typically has less governing authority though it may be an appointed or elected Board. By law in most states, this Board still has responsibility for policy setting, but does not have responsibility for the budget or the direct oversight of the library director.
3. In both cases, the library Board of Trustees has the authority for developing and implementing the policies that govern library services.
4. In both cases, the library Board of Trustees works with the library administration in planning and goal setting for the library.
5. In both cases, the library Board of Trustees should meet at least monthly with the library administration in an open meeting where a Friends liaison should be present and have an opportunity on the agenda to update the Board of Trustees on the Friends' activities.
6. In both cases, a member of the library Board of Trustees should be appointed to act as a liaison to the Friends and attend their meetings and as many of their functions as possible.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #1, continued

7. In both cases, all members of a library Board of Trustees should become personal members of the Friends at the highest level they are able.
8. Individually and collectively, Trustees should act as advocates of libraries and present the library point of view to their locally- and nationally-elected legislators and leaders.
9. At least yearly, the library board should plan a joint meeting to discuss mutual concerns with Friends. This can be done in conjunction with a breakfast or dinner meeting.

Should a member of the library Board of Trustees also serve as a member of the Friends of the Library Board? The generally accepted wisdom is “no.” There are a number of reasons for this:

1. It can imbue a single member with more power and authority than his or her peers on each of the boards.
2. There can be a perceived conflict if a member of the policy making Board is also in a decision making role on the Friends Board that helps fund the library's services.
3. There can be a potential conflict of interest when a policy the library Board of Trustees is proposing might not be considered to be in the best interest of the Friends. For example, deciding to give discarded library materials to an outsourced agency or proposing the establishment of a foundation for fundraising.

Even if your Trustee Board and Friends Board are working in perfect harmony right now, no precedent should be set that will allow possible conflicts in the future. Though it is the case that a Trustee Board member may take a leadership role in creating a new Friends group and therefore have a decision making role in both for awhile; this should be considered a temporary necessity and the new Friends should elect officers (other than library Trustees) as soon as possible.

For more information, see United for Libraries’ Toolkit #3, “Friends and Libraries: Working Effectively Together” in the Trustee Zone at www.ala.org/united. In addition, see the chapter on “Organizational Effectiveness” in *101+ Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends*, available in the Friends & Foundations Zone and the Trustee Zone.

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tip sheet #2

Tools for Trustees



THE ROLE OF THE FRIENDS BOARD

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Friends are citizens who value the service of libraries and volunteer to help them. Friends usually operate with a self-elected board of directors representing the community.

1. Friends may be future Trustees, and Trustees future Friends; however, there should be no overlapping boards (see below).
2. Friends are kept informed of the library's plans, progress, and challenges by the library director.
3. A Friends board member should be appointed as a liaison to the library's board of Trustees. This liaison should attend all Trustee meetings, be prepared to report Friends issues and activities to the Trustees, and report back to the Friends.
4. Friends recognize that they do not perform a policy-making role for the library, but should feel that their opinions are valued by the Trustees.
5. Friends support policies set by the library Board of Trustees.
6. Friends serve as "connecting links" between the library and community, interpreting one to the other.
7. Friends funds supplement the library's operating budget to provide materials and programs that enhance the library's service. Friends funds should not replace money that is normally provided by the city or institution for library operations. Friends decide how to spend their money after conferring with the library director and library Board.
8. Fundraising by the Friends is done with the knowledge of the Trustees and in coordination with the library director.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #2, continued

9. Individually and collectively, Friends use their influence to assist the library in obtaining desired financial support from the community or institution by representing the library point of view to local government, academic leadership, legislators and the media.

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tip sheet #3

Tools for Trustees



MISSION STATEMENTS

by Nicholas Spillios, Alberta Library Trustees, Canada

Have you ever wondered why your library exists? If you have, turn to your library's mission statement. It should give you the appropriate answer. And if it doesn't, now is an appropriate time for your library's Board of Trustees to review its statement.

Mission statements should:

1. Articulate the purpose for which a library exists.
2. Provide a focus for the library's activities.
3. Motivate the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, and donors.
4. Educate users about the library's importance and value.
5. Act as a public relations tool.

Who is your audience? The mission is intended to embrace the broad spectrum of library audiences, including:

- customers/users
- library Board of Trustees
- staff
- decision makers/municipal and state bodies
- funders
- foundations
- volunteers
- Friends of the Library groups

How does one write a mission statement?

Writing a mission statement is a complex and demanding activity, requiring an assessment and appraisal of the library's importance by Trustees. Trustees taking on this task must have an awareness and true understanding of the library, the scope of its services, and expectations by the public which it serves. Keeping these factors in mind, the following points are useful to consider:

1. Mission statements succinctly articulate a library's purpose in clear and narrow terms. Keeping this fact in mind, we can move on to some useful and specific steps.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #3, continued

2. Invite input from Trustees, staff, Friends, volunteers, and the public. Such input can provide support by key players.
3. Devote a special Board meeting to consider agreement on the mission. Brainstorm.
4. Consider the language you use. Be creative. Verbs that mission statements incorporate include “accomplish,” “embrace,” “implement,” “support,” “educate,” “sustain,” and “culture.” Purpose terms include “contribution,” “excellence,” and “access.” Try to incorporate such verbs and purposes in your statement.
5. Review the paragraph for clarity and succinctness. Is it too long? Too short? Do your Trustees agree that it covers the main points proposed? Hopefully, it is long enough and short enough to post in general library communication channels (i.e. library posters, newsletters, etc.).
6. Once you have completed the statement, get final approval from your Board.
7. Circulate the mission widely throughout the library system, using all available communication tools.

Here are two sample mission statements:

The Mission of the Beekman Library shall be to assure effective, expanding, free library service for the community of Beekman and to lead citizens in anticipating their future needs for library services.

The function of the Kent Public Library is to provide the people of its community, from pre-school through maturity, with access to a balanced collection of books and other materials which will serve their educational, cultural and recreational needs.

If you have done your homework and applied some or all of the above steps, your mission statement will not have to be reviewed for several years. Good luck!

For more information, see United for Libraries’ Toolkit #3, “Friends and Libraries: Working Effectively Together” in the Trustee Zone at www.ala.org/united. In addition, see the chapter on “Organizational Effectiveness” in *101+ Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends*, available in the Friends & Foundations Zone and the Trustee Zone.

Acknowledgments

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Fritz, Joanne. *Make Your Mission Statement Stand Out By Following These Simple Guidelines*.

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Reh, F. John. *How To Write A Mission Statement*. About.com.management

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tip sheet #4

Tools for Trustees



SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Sample Memorandum of Understanding Between Friends and Libraries

The following will constitute an operating agreement between the Friends of the Anytown Public Library (Friends) and the Anytown Public Library (Library). It will stand until and unless it is modified by mutual agreement of the Friends executive board and the Anytown Public Library administration. The Friends mission is to raise money and public awareness in the community to support the services and programs of the Library. As a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, however, it is a legally distinct entity and is not a part of the Library.

The Library agrees to include the Friends in the long-term planning process to ensure that the Friends are aware of the goals and direction of the Library.

The Library agrees to share with the Friends the library's strategic initiatives at the beginning of each fiscal year and discuss with Friends how their resources and support might help forward these initiatives.

The Library agrees to supply the Friends with a "wishlist" each year that indicates the anticipated needs for Friends support.

The Library agrees to provide the Friends with staff support to assist them with development of the newsletter, mass mailings, meeting coordination, and Friends promotional materials.

The Library agrees to provide public space for Friends membership brochures and promotional materials.

The Library agrees to provide the Friends with space in the Library for book storage and sorting, book sales, and office needs.

The Friends agree to publicly support the Library and its policies.

The Friends agree to include a member from the library's administration as a non-voting presence at all Friends' meetings and to allow room on the agenda for a library report.

The Friends agree that any and all monies raised will be spent exclusively for library programs, services, and other Library defined needs unless otherwise agreed to by both the Friends and the Library.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #4, continued

The Friends agree that the library administration has the final say in accepting or declining any and all gifts made to the library.

The Friends agree to engage in advocacy efforts on behalf of the Library under the guidance of the Library and the Library's Board of Trustees.

The Friends agree that if they cease to actively fundraise and promote the Library, they will disband, allowing for a new Friends group to be established in the future.

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tip sheet #5

Tools for Trustees



LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR FRIENDS ACTIVITIES

United for Libraries is often asked if library staff should spend some of their time working with Friends, or if a library should share some of its resources to help a group be successful. Some have even wondered if staff time or library resources spent on Friends is a conflict of interest or a misuse of tax dollars! What we have found is that some of the best and most successful Friends groups do, indeed, receive support from the library. Some larger libraries whose Friends groups raise hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars actually have a library staff member hired expressly to support the work of the Friends. It's called development! It's hard to argue that it's not in the library's best interest to spend, for example, \$2,000 of library time and materials on Friends promotion and development when they get back \$25,000 in gifts from the group each year!

Below are some frequently asked questions that can help guide the library in deciding just how much time and materials should be devoted to the Friends' work.

Is there a formula we should follow to know exactly how much library time and how many resources should be spent helping the Friends?

There really isn't any set formula, but some "common sense" rules can guide you. For example, the amount of library support should just be a fraction of the amount the Friends donate to the library each year. In addition, the amount may vary over time. Often, new Friends groups are created by the library staff or Trustees, and in the first year, this fledgling group will no doubt need a lot of support in terms of planning meetings, promotion, copies, flyers, brochures, and membership recruitment mailings. Once the group is up and running, however, it will be able to operate with less staff time (in meetings, for example) and perhaps in support for flyers and postcards.

Other groups will work more closely with the library by creating joint programs, working on grants together, sharing library and Friends promotional campaigns, or printing a joint newsletter. Staff interaction with Friends may spike significantly depending on circumstances; for example, if the library is trying to pass a bond issue or make the case for a new building and the Friends are on the front lines of promotion.

For every library, the support will vary based on the Friends' needs, the staff's time, and the benefit coming back to the library in terms of annual donations by the Friends.

Are there circumstances under which a library should withhold some level of support?

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #5, continued

Certainly if a Friends group is not contributing back to the library on an appreciable and regular basis, the library should discuss with the Friends the level of financial contributions the Friends should make in exchange for staff and library support.

Also, beware of “creep!” A Friends group is an autonomous organization with its own 501(c)(3) status. The group should be self-sustaining to a large degree, and should be running its own organization and planning its own fundraising events. A library staff that pitches in too freely with the work may be lessening the engagement by the group’s members, and this is not sustainable over the long term.

Are there other benefits to the library besides money that supporting Friends provides?

Absolutely. Friends are called “Friends” for a reason. The best libraries in the country have tremendous community support. When the library works actively with Friends, it is creating powerful community advocates and promoters. Nobody knows better than a library Friend the importance of the library in the community. The more closely the library and Friends work together, the stronger the message, and the better that message gets out to the community.

United for Libraries strongly recommends that Friends and libraries develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) so that as the players change, the commitment from the library and the Friends stays stable.

For further information on Friends donations and a sample of a MOU, see Fact Sheet for Friends and Foundations #23, “Guidelines for Giving,” and Tip Sheet #4, “Sample Memorandum of Understanding.”

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tip sheet #6

Tools for Trustees



EVALUATING THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

One of the most important roles the Board of Trustees has is to hire the very best library director possible, and then work with him or her to ensure that goals for service are consistently and exceptionally well met. This means that evaluation of the director is critical. Without a formal evaluation process, there is no concrete way for the director to know if he or she is meeting or exceeding expectations. Similarly, without the formal evaluation process, the board may be letting troublesome issues become worse, and the board also loses an important opportunity to put their appreciation of performance in writing.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, the board and director should set goals for performance and areas for evaluation. The performance goals should be achievable and should be determined in consultation with the director.

Areas to be addressed in setting goals should include:

- Staff relationships and management.
- Board relationship.
- Accomplishment of objectives set forth in the library's strategic plan.
- Financial responsibility and oversight.
- Overall quality of library services.
- Community relations.
- Facilities management.

Within each of these areas, determine how success will be measured. This is important because it will eliminate any hard feelings if the board feels the director has fallen short, but the director feels he or she is right on target. By setting the goals and performance measures at the beginning of the year, you will have inserted objective standards into the process, making the evaluation itself more meaningful and less personal.

The evaluation process at the end of the fiscal year should be a negotiated process. Even if you've agreed that circulation will increase 5%, for example, there should be an opportunity to discuss any unforeseen factors that made meeting this target impossible. Use this opportunity to coach the director in areas that need improvement and to praise the director for successes.

The end of the year evaluation process is the perfect time to set new goals for the coming year based on what's been accomplished, and what goals can make the library even better in the coming year.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #6, continued

Important Note: While it is sometimes difficult to give constructive criticism, it's important to let the director know during the year if you have any performance concerns. It's not good for the library and not fair to the director if you see areas of concern but wait until the formal evaluation to address them.

In the end, the best thing you can do to ensure that you have a high performing director is to provide constant and constructive feedback on how the library is doing, and to engage in a formal evaluation process at the end of each year.

For more detailed information on director evaluations, see *The Complete Library Trustee Handbook* by Sally Gardner Reed and Jillian Kalonick (Neal-Shuman, 2009). This book is available at a significant discount to all United for Libraries members. For more information, visit www.ala.org/united/products_services/publications.

The Trustee Academy series of courses includes the course "Evaluating the Library Director"; for more information and to register, visit www.ala.org/united/trustees/trustee_academy/course-info.

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tip sheet #7

Tools for Trustees



GOVERNING (INDEPENDENT) LIBRARY BOARDS VS. ADVISORY LIBRARY BOARDS: WHICH ARE BETTER?

Many library Boards of Trustees have given up their independence as libraries themselves, become departments of their city or county's government and management structure. Is this a good thing? Do libraries gain anything in such an arrangement, and more importantly, do people who use libraries realize better services and support?

United for Libraries believes that independent governing boards should resist efforts to place the oversight of the public library in the hands of municipal or country management and government. Here's why:

- Governing boards, by definition, hire and fire the library director. This creates an important level of protection for the library director in two important areas – collection development and advocacy.

Collection Development

One of the greatest attributes of the public library is its commitment to serve all people regardless of intellectual pursuit. Intellectual freedom, the highest guiding principle for library service delivery, demands that the needs of all members of the community are met in the library's collection. This can cause opposition and challenge when the views or information needs of a minority are unpopular with the majority. A library director is constrained in both selection of materials and the defense of the collection when he or she is an "at will" employee of the city/county management. Though professional dictates argue against censorship, the protection of one's job can and often does become tantamount. A governing board would have to have a majority opinion to remove materials from collections, and library boards are usually much more conversant with and supportive of the democratic principles of intellectual freedom and libraries than city management.

Advocacy

When the director is under the employ of a library board, he or she is able to speak out directly to the public as the library's number one advocate regarding such issues as the library's budget and issues regarding public votes for bond issues for new building projects or referenda on increasing per capita tax support for libraries.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #9, continued

When the director is an “at will” employee, he or she must first gain city/county management approval for things such as building programs, and then must follow management direction on how such programs will be financed. Additionally (and importantly), he or she cannot speak out publicly against budget cuts made by his or her employer without being insubordinate.

- Governing library boards can go out for funding independently! This is a good thing, because even in poor economic climates, citizens may support cuts in the city/county budget but simultaneously support funding the library. Citizens like libraries, and when they are able to vote for them independent of the city/county budget, they are more likely to vote for them as is evidenced by the fact that historically voters approve library bond issues significantly more often than they reject them.
- Governing library boards have sole authority for setting and defending library policies. Fundamentally, good library policies will ensure that library users are treated equitably and within a framework that best meets the needs of community and maximizes the library’s resources for the shared use of all patrons. This principle behind which library policies are developed is critical to excellent library services and should not be left (ultimately) in the hands of a city/county manager who may or may not have the library’s best interests in mind.

Trustees typically join the library board because they believe in the power of libraries to improve both individual lives and the life of the community as a whole. For board members, the library is a top priority. The power of the library board to make the case for their library at budget time and throughout the year by the development and defense of excellent library policies is diminished significantly when they do not also have governing authority to ensure this is the case.

Libraries belong to the public they serve. Library governing boards represent the very best and most direct link the public has to ensure that its library has the support it needs to deliver excellence in library services.

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tip sheet #8

Tools for Trustees



WHEN FRIENDS AREN'T FRIENDLY

Most Friends groups are indispensable to the libraries they serve. Sadly, though, some Friends groups get out of sync with their library, their mission, and their roles. When this happens, trust and goodwill evaporates and relationships break down. Some groups have disbanded over disputes that should never have happened in the first place, and there are library directors who hear about these stories and vow never to have a group of their own. The sad fact is, when the understanding of roles breaks down, the library suffers.

Though we normally hear stories of wonderful groups and their successes, we do sometimes hear from disgruntled groups and/or administrators who are in a conflict about what the Friends role is or should be. Typically problems arise because of the following issues:

- Friends are secretive and unwilling to share their organizational and financial information with the library.
- Friends don't invite the library's administration to their meetings.
- Friends believe that because they raise the money, they should decide how it is spent.
- Friends are withholding money for which the library has a legitimate need.
- Friends are opposing library policy and/or direction.
- Friends are giving their money to organizations or initiatives outside the library.
- Friends have become "club-ish" and follow their own agenda vs. that of their mission.
- Friends' officers don't turn over, and they begin to think of the money raised as their own.

In all the cases above, both a revisit to the group's mission statement and a look at United for Libraries' role table "The Model Friends Cooperative Network" at www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org/united/files/content/friends/orgtools/role.pdf and the United for Libraries Toolkit "The Expanded Model Friends Cooperative Network" (available to United for Libraries members) should help resolve the problems.

The typical mission of a good Friends group is to "support the library through fundraising and advocacy." This is a tacit agreement to also support the decisions of the Trustees and the library director. If this is not the case, then the Friends are not behaving as Friends. If the group cannot support the decisions of the Trustees and the library director, the group should disband. If an individual has a personal agenda that conflicts with library policy as determined by the Trustees, that person should resign.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #8, continued

In terms of spending decisions, the ideal model is one in which the library director presents the Friends with a wishlist from time to time in priority order, and the Friends provide funding for that wishlist. Remember that people in the community join and give money to the Friends because they believe that money is going to support the library as determined by the library, not as determined by your group.

Libraries need Friends – now more than ever. They need Friends who are positive about the library and its direction, who understand their important role for fundraising and advocacy, and who stick to their mission to support the library.

Other helpful documents are “Guidelines for Giving” (Fact Sheet #22); “Sample Memorandum of Understanding” (Fact Sheet #25); “Library Support for Friends Activities” (Fact Sheet #26).

Updated and adapted from “When a Friend Isn’t a Friend” by Sandy Dolnick.

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tip sheet #9

Tools for Trustees



TRUSTEE COMPETENCIES

1. **General knowledge** – Knowing the role of the Trustee and director, the library's mission in the community, current library issues, and state and national laws governing libraries.
2. **Board operations** – Familiarity with the agenda and order of business, making motions, voting, minutes approval, resolutions, ordinances, executive session requirements, and state Open Meeting Act requirements for the library board.
3. **Advocacy** – Participating in community events and promoting the library to local, state, and national elected officials. Attending political events to promote library issues and and to gain support from these officials.
4. **Decision making** – Using up-to-date information for decision analysis, being prepared for all meetings, and participating fully in board actions.
5. **Strategic planning** – Working with the director to develop a long range plan for the library with input from staff and citizens, as well involvement from community-based leaders.
6. **Finance** – Knowing and understanding the board's role in keeping the public trust. Understanding the budget process, being informed about finances, having adequate information and time for making decisions and knowing the impact on services, and being able to defend budgetary decisions to the citizenry through verbal and written communications.
7. **Fundraising** – Working with the Friends of the Library group, developing partnerships in the community, creating and supporting a Foundation for the library, and promoting these activities through available media outlets.
8. **Policy making** – Working with the director and staff to develop policies that become the basis for guiding the practices and decision making of the library administration and staff, and ensuring the rights and responsibilities of library users.
9. **Lobbying** – Continuously informing local, state, and national legislators about the needs of your local library and libraries in general. Knowing the decision makers, press members, local leaders/gatekeepers and telling them how they can help libraries.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #9, continued

Keeping contact information current. Sharing knowledge about the library's services and contributions to the community, the state and the nation as a whole. Explaining the Intricate issues involving libraries. Visiting groups in the community to stress your point of view.

10. **Professional development** – Participating in the orientation of new board members. Knowing the mission of the library and how the library functions to meet this mission. Understanding the role of governing, advising, supporting, and promoting the library. Joining regional, state, and national library associations and developing budgetary appropriations allowing Trustees to attend meetings and conferences at all levels, if at all possible, and if it will not impact staff development activities. Reading library journals and professional publications, and attending webinars to further educate Trustees in current and future trends of the library world.

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tip sheet #10

Tools for Trustees



HOW TO CHAIR A COMMITTEE

*Adapted with permission from the blog of Wayne Bivens-Tatum
(<http://blogs.princeton.edu/librarian/2013/02/how-to-chair-an-ala-committee-meeting>)*

1) Remember the Chair is in Charge

The committee chair is in charge, period. Everyone should participate and have a say. Decisions should be the result of group deliberation. But if something derails the meeting, it's the chair's job to get it back on track, even if that means being blunt or forceful.

2) Do Everything Virtually That You Can

This might seem obvious, but the pattern of work of some hasn't progressed along with the technological capacity for virtual work. The old norm was for long, multiple face to face meetings, because it was much harder to do group work at a distance. Email has modified that considerably, and tools such as www.gotomeeting.com and simple conference calls finish the job.

3) Give the Committee a Structure

Again, it seems like an obvious point, but it's not. Many people tend to be nice, democratic people. They want to solicit opinions, gather viewpoints, and then consider acting at some time in the future. Give people options: adopt this, critique it so that it can be improved, or ignore it and propose your own alternative. Everyone gets a say, but people are more likely to speak if they have something in front of them to critique.

4) Give the Committee a Deadline

To avoid procrastination, provide a deadline. Something like this usually works: "Here is a possible plan/revision/document that moves us along on the project we're working on. Please adopt it, critique it, or provide an alternative by one month from today. If I don't hear from you, I'll assume you approve." That last bit is crucial. Always take their silence for assent. People will usually respond, often enough with good criticisms of the proposal. Those who don't respond had their chance, and everyone knows it.

5) Call for Agenda Items

Agenda items should require in-person discussion and action. Calling for them includes everyone in the discussion.

6) Create an Agenda

If you can't come up with any agenda items that require in-person discussion or action, then you should cancel the meeting. Avoid announcements or anything that could just as easily be handled in an email.

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #10, continued

7) Send out Documentation Well in Advance

Any documentation that's necessary to understand the agenda items or prepare people for action should be sent out well in advance. A month is a good lead time, because it lets you wait to set the agenda, but gives people ample time to read the documentation. Announce that the documentation needs to be read in advance of the meeting.

8) Start on Time

Time is increasingly precious. Also, anyone who is late to a meeting (barring some sort of emergency or alternate commitments) is being discourteous to those who showed up on time. Don't do a further discourtesy to those people by saying, "let's wait another ten minutes to see if more people show up." Unless you have rules about quorums for votes, then who shows up shows up, and start on time.

9) Stick to the Agenda

After you start, stick to the agenda. You might move things around depending on events, you might even drop something, but don't add anything or allow for irrelevant discussions until you get through the agenda. People know the time and plan in advance, and respect them enough to stick to it. Focus, focus, focus.

10) Deter or Defer the Timewasters

Time wasting is relative. Committees need to get the work of the agenda done. If someone brings up an irrelevant and unimportant issue, acknowledge it but then say we have to move on and we can possibly discuss that after we've completed the business at hand, by which time everyone will have forgotten about it.

11) End on Time, or Early

Time is tight and people have other commitments. If they don't they'll still be tired of sitting in the same chair for an hour or two. End the meeting on time. If you run out of time, postpone the business to the next meeting.

updated 1/15

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tip sheet #11

Tools for Trustees



TWELVE GOLDEN RULES FOR BOARD MEMBERS

The following tips are excerpted from The Public Library Start-Up Guide by Christine Lind Hage (chapter 3, page 21), available at www.ala-store.ala.org.

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

continued on reverse

United for Libraries tip sheet #11, continued

9) A Trustee treats the staff members and the librarian in a completely impersonal fashion. Under no circumstances does a Trustee listen to grievances of staff members or treat individual problems on her or his own. The librarian is in charge of the staff and has administrative control until a grievance is presented to the library board as a whole.

10) A Trustee should know the funding sources of the library and be familiar with the library budget.

11) A Trustee must know the needs of the library and community and be aware of trends and new procedures in the library field. The best and perhaps only way to do this is to read professional library publications, meet with Trustees of other libraries, visit other libraries, and attend the annual conferences and meetings of Trustees and librarians.

12) A Trustee knows that all powers are always vested in the library board and none at all in the individual board member. The individual has no power to act for the library in any way, unless authorized by the board itself; it is always the board as a unit that holds the responsibility and the powers.

updated 1/15

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tip sheet #12

Tools for Trustees



PROTECTING YOUR LIBRARY'S COLLECTION

Libraries are often challenged by individuals and groups concerned about the availability of a wide variety of library materials to everyone. Addressing these challenges requires a balance of carefully crafted library policy, knowledge, and understanding of intellectual freedom principles, and sensitivity to community needs and concerns. It also requires effective communication. This tip sheet has been excerpted by a more comprehensive guide prepared by the Office of Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association (ALA) to help you plan for and deal with such challenges.

When responding to a challenge, you will want to focus on three key points:

- Libraries provide ideas and information across the spectrum of social and political views.
- Libraries are one of our great democratic institutions. They provide freedom of choice for all people.
- Parents are responsible for supervising their own children's library use.

Further tips:

- First, remember your role. As a library Trustee, you have a responsibility to speak your mind, and to argue forcibly for your point of view within the forum of the board. Once the board has made a decision, it is your responsibility to support the decision of the majority. If you disagree for whatever reason, do not speak out publicly. If, for reasons of conscience, you feel you cannot be silent, it is best to resign from the board before making your opposition public.
- Work with your library director to ensure that the necessary policies are in place and that they are reviewed regularly and thoroughly. Review and affirm your library's selection policy annually and make sure it is followed carefully.
- Insist that the entire board understands the library's collection policy and that it be involved in reviewing and reaffirming this policy annually.
- Be an effective advocate for the library. Use your contacts in the community to educate and mobilize others in support of the library.
- Bring what you hear back to the library director. Your roots in the community may be much deeper and of longer duration than those of the director. The things that people will tell you what they won't tell a director can provide valuable feedback.
- Be involved with the professional state and national organizations serving library Trustees.

continued

United for Libraries tip sheet #12, continued

Remember the roots of the word “Trustee.” The community has placed its trust in you to act as an effective steward for the library. This means representing the interests of the entire community, not just a vocal minority.

For more information visit www.ala.org/bbooks/challengedmaterials/support/strategies.

updated 1/15

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United for Libraries: Public Library Trustee Ethics Statement*Official Statement from United for Libraries*

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

Every Trustee makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to faithfully carry out his/her duties and responsibilities effectively and with absolute truth, honor and integrity.

- Trustees shall respect the opinions of their colleagues and not be critical or disrespectful when they disagree or oppose a viewpoint different than their own.
- Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their library.
- Trustees, in fulfilling their responsibilities, shall not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure or fear of criticism.
- Trustees shall not engage in discrimination of any kind and shall uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in the use of library resources.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.
- Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business and not disclose such information to anyone. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information laws
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained as a result of their position or access to privileged library information, for either themselves or others.
- A Trustee shall immediately disqualify him/herself whenever the appearance of or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees shall not use their position to gain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others from the library or from those who do business with the library.
- Trustees shall not interfere with the management responsibilities of the director or the supervision of library staff.
- Trustees shall support the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Signature _____ Date _____

Approved by the United for Libraries Board in January 2012

Working Together: Roles and Responsibilities Guidelines

| | Responsibilities of Library Director | Responsibilities of Library Board | Responsibilities of Library Friends |
|------------------------|--|--|---|
| General Administrative | Administer daily operation of the library including personnel, collection development, fiscal, physical plant and programmatic functions. Act as advisor to the board and provide support to the Friends and community groups. | Recruit and employ a qualified library director; maintain an ongoing performance appraisal process for the director. | Support quality library service in the community through fund raising, volunteerism and serving as advocates for the library. |
| Policy | Apprise library board of need for new policies, as well as policy revisions. Implement the policies of the library as adopted by the library board. | Identify and adopt written policies to govern the operation and program of the library. | Support the policies of the library as adopted by the library board. |
| Planning | Coordinate and implement a strategic plan with library board, Friends, staff and community. | Ensure that the library has a strategic plan with implementation and evaluation components. | Provide input into the library's strategic plan and support its implementation. |
| Fiscal | Prepare an annual budget for the library and present to the Board or Municipality for approval. | Seek adequate funds to carry out library operations. Assist in the preparation and presentation of the annual budget. | Conduct fund raising to support the library's mission and plans. |
| Advocacy | Promote the mission of the library within the community. Educate the library board, Friends and community regarding local, state and federal issues that impact the library. | Promote the mission of the library within the community. Advocate for the library to legislators and community members. | Promote the mission of the library within the community. Advocate for the library to legislators and community members. |
| Meetings | Participate in library board and Friends meetings. Ensure that there is a liaison from the board to the Friends and vice versa. | Participate in all board meetings. Appoint a liaison to the Friends Board and become a member of the Friends. | Maintain a liaison to the library board. |
| Networking | Join state and national professional organizations and participate regularly in professional development activities. | Join the Maine Library Trustees electronic discussion list – Melib-Trustee@lists.maine.edu | Join the Friends of Maine Libraries as a resource to better support the library – www.friendsofmainelibraries.org |

