

Director and Board: Roles and Responsibilities

Lakeland Library Cooperative

Board Orientation/Education

- Encourages understanding of library operations through formal/informal orientation and continuing education
- Clarifies Board and Director responsibilities and roles
- Used to audit compliance with legal and ethical standards
- Increases Board efficiency
- Allows for regular dialog and interaction among Board members
- Brings each Board member to the same level of preparedness
- Is a way to introduce new library trends and practices

Governing Documents

- **Library of Michigan**

- Michigan Public Library Trustees Manual
http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7-160-18668_18689---,00.html
- Michigan District Library Law, P.A. 24 of 1989; Cities, Villages and Township Libraries, P.A. 164 of 1877; County Libraries, P.A. 138 of 1917
- State Aid to Public Libraries, P.A. 89 of 1977
- Other Michigan Laws – Open Meetings Act, P.A. 267 of 1976; Penal Fines, P.A. 59 of 1964

- **All Libraries**

- Mission Statement
- Board Level Policies/Plans – Strategic Plan, Technology Plan
- Board Bylaws – periodic revision as necessary
- Library Policies

Common Board Structure

- **Officers: President; Vice-President; Treasurer; Secretary**
 - President – liaison to Library Director; guides Board
 - Vice-President– Chairs meeting in President’s absence; Chairs Personnel Committee; other special duties
 - Treasurer – Presents Report; chairs Budget/Finance Committee
 - Secretary – takes minutes; or reviews/presents minutes to Board
- **Ex-Officio: Library Director**
- **Recording Secretary (alternative option: takes minutes; often a library administrator (not Director) or staff member; helpful for full participation; access to technology; control of electronic record)**
- **Most of substantive work is done in Committees**
 - Standing Committees for Board Work: Budget/Finance; Personnel
 - Board Members on committee; Director Ex-Officio (liaison for staff)
 - Ad Hoc Committees created as needed – Bylaws; Library Improvement

Full Board: Responsibilities

- Library Trustees = stewards of the public interest
- Help develop and understand the library's "global view"
- Legally mandated entity authorized to:
 - Adopt Mission Statement and board governance rules
 - Maintain control over building and grounds
 - Approve annual budget and the expenditure of all funds
 - Hire the Library Director; provide guidance through policy
 - Adopt policies, rules and regulations
- Delegate daily management of library to Director
- Evaluate Director – Policy provides details for process
- Observe Open Meetings Act requirements

Individual Board Member Responsibilities

- Maintain confidentiality of Board matters
- Communicate effectively with the Director and each other
- Support the decisions of the Board and the Director; speak with one voice
- Conduct self appropriately at Board meetings and monitor the behavior of others; maintain rules of civility
- Become familiar with library services and programs
- Advocate for the library within community
- Recognize/Respect Board, Director, and Staff roles; avoid inappropriate communication/refer staff to Director
- Avoid Conflict of Interest

Library Director Responsibilities

- Keep the Board apprised of library operations; acts as library liaison/staff steward with the Board
- Assist the Board in strategic planning and making sound decisions
- Maintain a fiscally sound organization
- Manage and direct library personnel
- Create a strong, dynamic staff environment
- Provide services and collections for the community
- Participate in continuing education opportunities
- Advocate for the library

Board and Director Responsibilities

Board	Library Director
Hires Library Director	Hires , disciplines, and terminates library employees
Delegates management of daily operations to Library Director	Manages daily operations; keeps Board informed
Approves budget and monthly expenditures	Proposes and manages budget; conducts audit
Guides strategic planning; works through committees	Develops goals/objectives to achieve strategic plan
Works through committees to increase efficiency	Participates in committee work; provides support
Approves Board and library policies	Writes/administers policies governing library operations
Evaluates Director	Evaluates library employees

Director and Officers: Liability

- Maintain ethical behavior at all times
 - Open Meetings Act – Board adherence
 - Freedom of Information (F.O.I.A.) Requests
 - Avoid: “acts in excess of authority; errors in acts; nonfeasance; negligence; intentional violations of civil law”
- Conflict of Interest disclosure; written declaration
 - Legally and ethically obligated to disclose conflicts
 - Excuse self from discussion
 - Excuse self from votes
- Adequate level of Director/Officers insurance coverage

Meetings

- Agenda: Order of Business, Decision Making
- Room arrangement: Board and Public Seating
- Addressing the Board: Public Comments
 - Public Comments Notice on Agenda – beginning, end or both
 - Policy for comments - time limit and other limitations; form used
 - Speaker fills out form that states name and address; limitations
- Board Chair Response
 - Polite thank you
 - Reasons Not to Engage in Dialogue
 - Derail Board Agenda/not an item of business; Board and Director are prepared for the current meeting
 - Put Board in reactionary mode; not a time to put Board on spot
 - Give credence to issues that may not be valid; Board should not agree to any action under duress
 - Staff Comments – Member of the public; not an opportunity for dialogue with Board; undermines Director’s authority

Director/Board: Ultimate Goals

- Mutual Trust, Respect, and Honesty
- Considerate in Words and Actions
- Open Communication (Transparency)/Framing the Message for Your Community
- Understanding Diverse Opinions/Reaching Consensus
- Thinking for the Future/Watching for Trends
- Willingness to Change for the Good of Community
- Promise to Deliver, Deliver What's Promised

Questions?
Comments?

Contact 616-559-5253