

2014 ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA  
JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2014

This year's ALA annual conference was informative and enlightening. The workshops I attended provided it's participants with valuable information. My focus was on the roles of boards and trustees. I also wanted information on the process of selecting an executive director. I was able to gather information on the two areas I wanted to focus on. In addition, it is always interesting to attend the board meeting of the governing body of United For Libraries. The leadership from Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Sims (both board members and BPL trustees), is evident in the meetings. They both know the laws and rules that govern the body of UFL and it is evident that they both will be missed. We congratulate them both on representing BPL on a national level.

Observations and sharing what Birmingham Public library does in several of the workshops was helpful for others as I watched them acknowledge and take notes of what was said. As trustees we must be informed on the running of the library and set appropriate policies. We must know our role as a governing board and what the law is on all issues. This was evident if workshops I attended.

I want to say that as I listened to other trustees from around the country and their situations, I am proud to be on the board for BPL. Legal issues, power struggles between board members, elected verses appointed boards, political agendas and other situations are impeding the progress of lots of library boards across this nation. BPL is in excellent shape compared to a lot of other boards.

I gained a lot of information and contacts that will assist in our quest in the process of selecting a director. Networking with other board members and getting workshop information from those who have had experiences, both positive and negatively, will greatly assist our process of selection.

Using contacts, technology, and the UFL office as resources will be a guide as we forge ahead with our upcoming plans.

Of course the highlight of the conference was receiving the John Cotton Dana Award and hearing Birmingham Public Library's name called as a \$10,000 award recipient.

The conference was successful, informative and the areas that I focused on gave me invaluable information. I have attached some information received from the ALA that I hope will be beneficial to all trustees.

Gwen Amamoo  
President



# tip sheet #11

## Tools for Trustees

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### 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](http://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.

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# tip sheet #1

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### 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.

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# fact sheet #5

## for Friends and Foundations

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### HOW TO ORGANIZE A TEEN FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY GROUP

Teens and libraries? YES! Teens can be excellent Friends and volunteers. It gives them a feeling of responsibility and a way to give back to the community. In addition, a Teen Friends group is a great way to nurture a love of reading at a time when so many other (and perhaps, less desirable) diversions are calling them!

1. Decide on goals for the group. These could include motivation to use the library or volunteer to help in the library by shelving books, decorating, assisting with story hours, etc. Parents or a member of the regular Friends group can serve as adult leader for this group. Youth Services staff can and should help, but to minimize the work for them, it is best to recruit parents or Friends to oversee this group.
2. Target the group's age range based on availability of adult sponsors. Typically 12-18 is good (though you are likely to get most from the 12-15 age range). Start with a workable group; you can always expand your goals.
3. Set dues, even if very low – it increases the importance of the group. The adult Friends may set aside funds for Teen Friends, especially in the formative stages, and provide refreshments, membership cards, etc.
4. Hold an organizational meeting. Depending on age of group, develop by-laws, determine dues structure, and discuss potential programs and projects.
5. Select/elect officers and encourage the group to act as any “official” group by following *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*. Well-run and organized meetings will help the teens learn valuable skills that will serve them well in the future.
6. Appoint task forces for achieving various goals, being sure to involve everyone in at least one task force. Consult with the youth services staff for potential task forces that might include: writing book reviews and recommendations (for the young adult collection), developing programs, projects, membership, and publicity.
7. Potential projects for Teen Friends are: writing book reviews for other teens, decorating for holidays, clipping for files, sponsoring for various contests, and helping with story hours and community festivities.
8. Keep work and fun projects in balance.

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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.

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# tip sheet #9

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### 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.

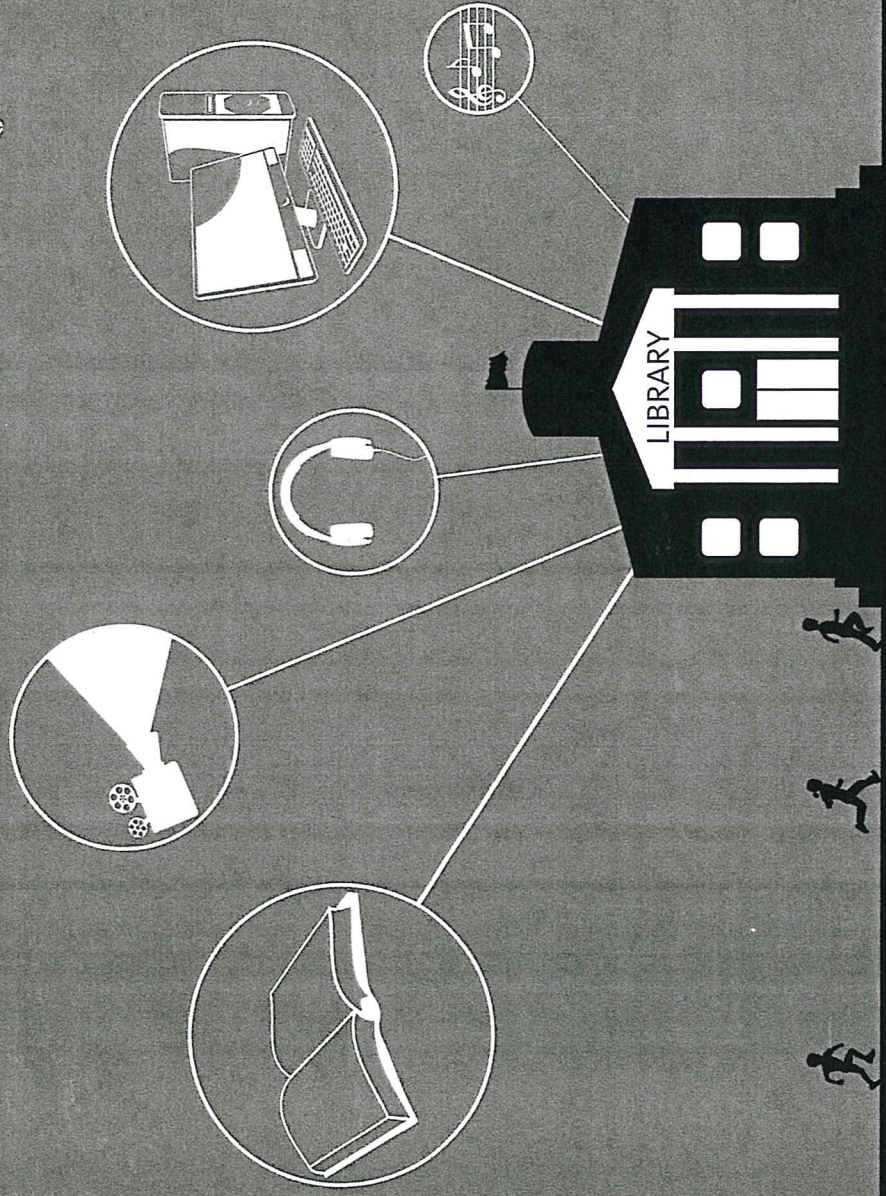
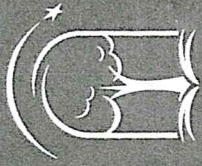
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2013 - 2017

# Strategic Plan

Bozeman Public Library



LIBRARY STRATEGIES™ A RAPID RESULTS™ STRATEGIC PLAN PREPARED BY LIBRARY STRATEGIES