

**Trustee 201—The Library Board as Employer**

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Winnefox Library System

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**Today's Topics**

- The Library Board's relationship with the Library Director
- Hiring and Evaluating the Director
- Disciplinary Issues
- Personnel Policies
- The Library Board and other Library Staff

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**The Library Board's Relationship to the Library Director**

- Primary role: Supervisor
  - Collectively as the Board of Trustees, not individually
- Secondary roles
  - Coach, mentor, partner

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**Library Board's Supervisory Roles:**

- Hiring a new director
- Setting director's duties & tasks
- Evaluating the director
- Disciplining the director, when necessary
- Firing the director, when necessary

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**The Library Board as Coach, Mentor, and Partner**

- Encouragement
- Advice
- Information
- Support

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**Having a Successful Working Relationship Requires:**

- Mutual trust and respect
- Clear, open communication
- Professional behavior

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## Hiring the Library Director

This is a singularly important task and will have far-reaching and often long-term effects.

Be prepared for a great deal of diligent effort--effort that will be worthwhile if you succeed in hiring the best person for the job.

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## Getting Started

- Appoint a search and screen committee
  - May be the entire board or a committee
  - May include staff and community members
- Plan 12 – 14 weeks between starting the process and the new director's start date
- Remember, committees established by the library board are subject to provisions of the Open Meetings Law

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## Review and Update the Job Description

- Make sure it accurately reflects duties
- Consider the library's long-range plan
  - What are the library's goals?
  - What skills will be needed to help the library reach those goals?
  
- Where do you want the library to be in 5 years?
- What kind of leader will get you there?

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### Creating the job ad

“How can we attract a talented person to work for our library?”

- Opening paragraph:
  - List 3-5 selling points about the position, the library, and the community
- Specifics:
  - General scope of work
  - Job requirements (education and experience)
  - Tasks the new director will be expected to do that may be specific to your library
  - Salary range and benefits available
  - How to apply and deadline for applications

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### Example of Selling Points

The Board of Trustees of the **Public Library of Youngstown & Mahoning County**, seeks a **dynamic, articulate administrator skilled in communicating, listening and responding** to lead the Library in providing quality programs and services for **this culturally rich and diverse community of 229,000**.

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### Post the Job Ad

- Library, Municipal building
- Local media
- Online
  - Library web site
  - System web site
  - WISPUBLIB
  - I Need a Library Job eResource center  
<http://inalji.com/>

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### Create List of Interview Questions

- Tailor questions to the skills you want your new director to have
- Questions should relate to this central theme: *“How are you qualified to perform the job you are applying for?”*
- Open vs. Closed questions
- Consult with City/Village Attorney or HR dept. to avoid legal pitfalls

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### Ask yourself...

- Is this information necessary to judge the individual's competence to perform this particular job?
- Does this question tend to disproportionately screen out minorities and females?
- Are there alternate nondiscriminatory ways to secure the necessary information?

*EEOC recommendations*

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### Questions to Avoid

- Age, date of birth, or graduation dates
- Race, religion, national origin
- Physical traits, handicaps, disabilities
- Sex, marital and family status
- Education (if the job doesn't require a particular level of education).

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### Review Applications

- Don't automatically look for a clone of the outgoing director
- Look for the "best fit"
  - No one candidate will be perfect or have everything you want
- Weed out and notify unqualified applicants
- Select candidates to interview

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### Background Checks?

- Commonly done
- Can be fairly simple or more in-depth
- Both state & federal law regulate how this information may be used

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### Conduct Interviews

- Use the same set of pre-determined questions with every candidate
- Interview committee should be the same for all candidates
- Library tour

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### Conduct Interviews

- Remember, you are selling the library and the community as a great place to work and live
- Check references
  - Go beyond just the references on the resume
  - Ask the same questions of each reference

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### Final Steps

- Search & Screen Committee offers position contingent on Board's approval and receives acceptance
- Committee recommends candidate to full Board for approval
- Confirm appointment, salary, benefits, and starting date in writing
- Notify applicants not selected

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### Contingency Plans

- The Search and Screen Committee may want to choose a second choice in case the top candidate doesn't accept
- If your choice(s) do not accept or if there are no suitable candidates it is probably better to begin again than to go with a poor choice
  - May need to re-evaluate the position or compensation

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### New Director Orientation

- How can you help the new director make a successful transition?
- First day of work—paperwork and introductions
- What does the new director need to know right off the bat?

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### Hiring From Within

- Even if you hire from within you should still conduct a full search process
  - You, the staff, and the community will be assured that the person chosen was the best available candidate
  - An individual may be excellent in a subordinate position but not have the qualities needed in a director

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### Hiring From Within—Pros

- Is a “known quantity”
- Probably gets along well with other staff
- May be inclined to maintain the “status quo” (this could also be a “con”)
- Less orientation needed
- An unsuccessful internal candidate may be resentful of an outsider getting the job

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### Hiring From Within—Cons

- Can be difficult to make the move from co-worker to supervisor
- May be difficult for staff to accept direction from former co-worker
- Hiring from outside more likely to bring in new ideas

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### Resources

- Trustee Essential # 5: Hiring the Library Director  
<http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/files/pld/pdf/te05.pdf>
- A Library Board's practical guide to finding the right library director  
<http://www.owlsweb.info/L4L/trustees/GuideToFindingTheRightLibraryDirector.pdf>
- Library System staff
- Municipal personnel or HR officer

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### Evaluating the Director

- Who?
  - Entire board or personnel committee?
- When?
  - Annually
  - Evaluate new directors at 6 months
- Why?
  - To provide formal feedback on performance
  - To set goals for the future year
  - To address any problems or concerns

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### Evaluating the Director

The evaluation should be based on four factors:

1. The director's performance as it relates to the job description.
2. A list of objectives from the preceding year jointly written and agreed upon by the director & the board.
3. The success of the library in providing service to the public and the director's contribution to that success.
4. Any problems or issues that have come up.

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### Evaluating the Director

- Tips for success
  - Be sure the director's job description is up to date
  - Have clear expectations for performance
  - Consider outside factors that may adversely influence performance

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### Resources

- Examples of evaluation forms:  
<http://extranet.winnefox.org/evaluations.html>
- Trustee Essential # 6: Evaluating the Library Director  
<http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/files/pld/pdf/te06.pdf>
- Library System staff

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**Dealing With Performance Issues**

- Deal with performance issues right away, don't wait until a formal evaluation
- Have an established, systematic and documented procedure in place for how the library deals with discipline and termination issues.
- Communicate performance issues to the director and discuss actions needed to correct the problem

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**Dealing With Performance Issues**

- Connect discussion to specific behaviors
  - "On [date] you were seen to [behavior]" or "[name] reported you said [item] on [date]"
  - Never generalize or make vague charges
- Use written documentation
  - Job description
  - Goals and objectives from previous performance evaluations
  - Library's strategic or long-range plan

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**Dealing With Performance Issues**

- Have 3<sup>rd</sup> party present for disciplinary meetings; never meet one-on-one
- Set goals for improvement or correction
  - Follow-up on a regular basis
- Document session with both parties signing goals statement

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**Progressive Discipline**

- Disciplinary action starts small and escalates if behavior continues
  1. Oral warning
  2. Written reprimand
  3. One-day suspension
  4. Three-day suspension
  5. Five-day suspension
  6. Termination
- However, any or all earlier steps may be omitted for sufficiently severe infraction.

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**Progressive Discipline**

- Document performance issue(s) and steps taken to address the issue.
- Escalate disciplinary actions per your written procedure
  - When considering past disciplinary actions don't go back more than 2 – 3 years
- Get legal advice before terminating the director

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**Resources**

- Resolving employee performance problems (from the University of Connecticut)  
<http://lr.uconn.edu/dis.html>
- How to Ensure Strong Employee Performance Management  
<http://managementhelp.org/employeeperformance/>
- Managing Your Problem Employees  
<http://www.performance-management-made-easy.com/poor-performance.html>

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**Personnel Policies establish:**

- General employment information
  - Conditions of employment
  - “At will” status
  - Employee status definitions: full-time, part-time, exempt, non-exempt
  - Staff conduct and ethical standards
- Wages
  - Pay periods
  - Payroll deductions
  - Overtime

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**Personnel Policies establish:**

- Benefits
  - Insurance – health, dental, life...
  - Retirement plan
  - Earning leave: sick, funeral, personal
- Work schedules
- Procedures for using vacation, sick leave, funeral leave, holidays, etc.
- Work rules and disciplinary procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Resignation and retirement

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**The Board can:**

- Adopt the municipality’s personnel or grievance policy as is
  - Ensuring that the library board’s control is not compromised
- Write a new policy with referral to sections of the municipal policy
  - Have policy reviewed by municipal personnel officer or attorney

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**Resources**

- *Trustee Essential # 10—Developing essential library policies*  
[http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld\\_te10](http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_te10)
- Wisconsin Public Library Policy Resources  
[http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld\\_policies](http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_policies)
- Library System staff

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**The Library Board and Library Staff**

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- **The Board of Trustees:**
  - Creates staff positions
  - Establishes staff duties, number of hours worked, and compensation
  - Adopts a personnel policy
  - Supervises the library director
- **The Board does not:\***
  - Schedule or supervise staff
  - Hire, evaluate, or discipline staff
  - The director may request a trustee be present, as an observer, for a disciplinary meeting

\*Other than the library director

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### Trustee Interaction with Staff:

- As a patron of the library
- In committee meetings
- In the planning process
- When staff make reports at a board meeting
- If trustees volunteer at the library
- During library social events
- In the wider community

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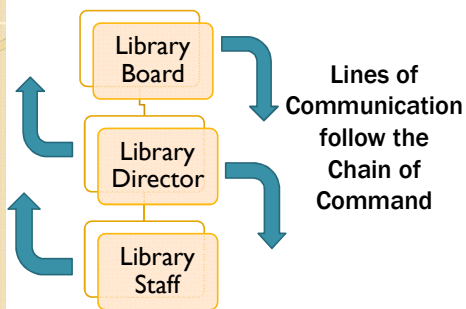
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### Chain of Command



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### What to do if a Staff Member Shares a Complaint

- Refer the person to the library director (or supervisor, in a larger library)
- Not resolved?
  - Follow the Library's grievance procedure

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**Resources**

- Your municipal personnel officer, clerk, and attorney
- Winnefox Library System staff
- Wisconsin Division for Libraries Public Library Development Staff  
[http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld\\_home#contact](http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_home#contact)
- *Trustee Essential #7—The library Board and Library Personnel*  
<http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/files/pld/pdf/te07.pdf>
- FAQs on Library Personnel issues  
[http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld\\_trusteefaq](http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/pld_trusteefaq)

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**Responsibilities under the Affordable Care Act (AKA Obamacare)**

- Employers with more than 50 FTE are covered
- Beginning 10/1/13 must provide all employees with information on health care exchanges.
- Beginning 1/1/14 must offer health care plan to employees and dependents or pay penalty.

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**Responsibilities under the Affordable Care Act (AKA Obamacare)**

- Health plan must cover certain expenses and cost to employee must be under certain limits.
- Beginning in 2015 must report health plan information to the IRS and employees.

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### Resources

- Your insurance provider
- Healthcare.gov  
<https://www.healthcare.gov/>
- Wisconsin Commissioner of Insurance  
[http://oci.wi.gov/healthcare\\_reform.htm](http://oci.wi.gov/healthcare_reform.htm)

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### Topics From the Floor? Final Questions?



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Thanks to Krista Ross of Southwest Wisconsin Library System for sharing her 2011 WLA presentation, on which this is based.

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